

Town of Winchester - City of Winsted
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 6:00 PM
Lee Ann LaClair Room (Blue Room)

COMMISSION

Thomas Carter, Chairman
Deweese Yeager, Vice Chairman
Gary Giordano, Treasurer
Dennis Dressel, Commissioner
Alan Colavecchio, Commissioner
Jess Tessman, Commissioner
Stephen Plumlee, Commissioner

ALTERNATES

Eric Richard
Jamie Coligan, Secretary

TOWN OFFICIALS

Paul Harrington, Town Manager
William Pozzo, BOS Liaison
Kevin Bishop, BOS Liaison
Geoff Green, Director of Land Use
and Development

1. Call to Order and Roll Call - Called to order at 6:00 pm by Thomas Carter. At the meeting were Thomas Carter, Deweese Yeager, Gary Giordano, Alan Colavecchio, Dennis Dressel, Stephen Plumlee and Jamie Coligan with guests Michael Ferreira, Ashley Gath, Rista Malanca, Grace Rennison, and Veronica Zecchin. Absent/excused were Jess Tessman and Eric Richard. Voting rights given to Jamie Coligan.
2. Agenda Review - Motion to approve by Deweese Yeager, second by Alan Colavecchio. Vote 7-0-0.
3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:
 - Motion to approve the minutes of August 4, 2026 by Gary Giordano, second by Stephen Plumlee with corrections noting Eric Richard was absent/excused not absent and numbering on page 3 to be 7, 8 and 9 in lieu of 6, 7 and 8. Vote with changes 7-0-0.
4. Public Comment
 - Ashley Gath may be interested in joining us. She spoke about her background and has come back to the area (in Winchester) after various stints with major companies in the States and abroad. Affinity for social media.
5. New Business
 - Restaurant Week
 - Michael Ferreira discussed the results of the survey completed by 8 restaurants.
 - Overall a good event. Participants noted business as same/less/more
 - Best practices to go out to restaurants to aid in planning
 - Need to make decision in the next couple of months if we do it again in 2027
 - NHCOG/CT Main Streets Promise Program
 - Rista Malanca and Grace Rennison gave an overview of what the Promise Program is and what it hopes to accomplish

- Reviewed the Downtown Engagement and Interest Form and left copies
 - Discuss what business owners we want to reach out to
 - Find people who want to participate in making vision come to life
 - Asked commissioners to put on their thinking caps to get this rolling
- Job Fair 2026 - will be the 5th annual.
 - 18 signed up so far and 11 are paid
 - Payment method seems to be working well
 - Shane to send report on Mondays with Companies and payments
 - Tom and Gary have a table set up plan
 - College will provide another room as a food area and the EDC will set up a charging station area or two
 - Noujaim's will do the catering this year
 - Next Zoom call is Tuesday, September 1, 2026 at 11:00 AM
- Fall 2026 Function is on Tuesday, October 13th from 5:00-6:30 PM
 - At Little Red Barn Brewers
 - Paul Harrington to give State of the Town address
 - Alan and Jess are on it and invitations will be going out soon
 - See if CT Rides, LiveGreen CT, FOMS, Cultural Committee are interested
- What's happening in Town?
 - 508 Main Street waiting on demolition contractor
 - Wallens Hill project - proposals still in negotiation process with the town
 - Bringing in an outside Real Estate Agent to see if \$500k-\$600k homes will sell in the area
 - 24-26 Center Street - not big enough for Trinity Health for offices
 - Deli Mini Mart to open soon in former Cumberland Farms building
 - Former IGA building front retail space area fell through
 - Law Works building by Cumberland Farms building outside of the BAR Grant area
 - They have reached out again to O&G for reassessment of work needed
 - Would be open to selling if there was an interested party with a good plan
 - Highland Lake Apartments did not get abatement requested but work continues
 - Health Center Project/Makerspace
 - open house on 8/26/26 6:00-8:00 pm (Dennis, Jamie and Gary hope to attend)
 - Buildings will need to be demolished as too costly to repair
 - New renderings will be submitted to town
 - Presentation to be made at our next meeting on September 2, 2026
- Liaison Updates
 - SS4A (Safe Streets for All) possible meeting in September
 - EDC/PZC/Town Mgr meeting this Thursday
 - Cultural District Commission meeting this week on Thursday
 - Sue Grossman Trail - Cardinal Engineering should have some survey information next week

- Water Quality - back seat to new housingDeli Mini regulations but behind the scenes work continues
- Business Visitations
 - Dewey, Gary, Dennis visited Noli's - excellent food
 - Tom visited Toby's - they have a cook and one counter person
- Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies
 - Laurel City Gardens & Gifts - Friday, August 21st at 4:00 pm
 - Noli's Restaurant - Saturday, August 22nd at 11:30 am
 - Gages Retro Rewind - Saturday, September 12th at 12:00 pm
 - Jessica's Barbershop - Tom will reach out
 - Reach out to Park Place Hardware
 - Reach out to Deli Mini Mart in old Cumby space once open
 - Knick Knack Nook - some time in September
- Spotlights
 - tbd

6. Communications

- Barkhamsted EDC
 - Dennis reached out and they meet once a month
 - Barkhamsted to discuss meeting with us at their next meeting
 - Stay tuned for plan going forward
- Should we also reach out to other neighboring towns?

7. Old Business

- BAR Grant
 - Discussed thoughts on the presentation made at LRB
- Real Estate Committee – no update
- Awecast PO presented to town and awaiting payment

8. Adjournment - 7:56 pm motion by Dennis Dressel, second by Dewey Yeager. Vote 7-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,
Jamie Coligan