

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020

8:00 A.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Commissioners Present:

William Stanley, David Pelletier, Derek Gromko, Don Dobbs, Peter Nichols

Absent:

Dan O'Connell, Steve Sidoruk

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator,

Others:

Mark Thomas, Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, Caitlin Stryczula, ADVANCECT, and Arnett Talbot, Assistant Town Manager

I. Call to Order

Mr. Stanley called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.

II. Roll Call

The roll was called.

III. Determination of Quorum

A quorum was determined.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

V. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting June 16, 2020

Mr. Pelletier made a motion to accept minutes for regular meeting on June 16, 2020. Mr. Nichols seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VI. Communications

VII. Business

a) Discussion with ADVANCECT Re: Long-Term Recovery Committee

Long-Term Recovery Committees (LTRC) have been or are being organized by municipalities and will include members and participants from government, non-profits, and the private sector. Committee sub-groups may be formed as specific needs arise. The committees are known by different names in some towns.

Caitlin Styrzcula from ADVANCECT provided an update on the re-opening plan for the state which includes best practices, supporting health, happiness, and safety for all citizens. Currently, Capitol Region Council of Governments (CROG) is organizing bids for PPE from state vendors and small businesses. RFQ's for competitive bids are due on July 24th. A "one stop shop" website is being designed for registration of new businesses with user friendly helpful links filtering to the hub for streamlining. A "one site/one page document will be developed to assist municipalities with their needs. A demo of the website is scheduled on Thursday, July 23rd which will include a packet of "to do" forms needed for the registration process. The EDC members were pleased that this is being launched.

Best practices developed through experienced brainstorming could be part of a campaign to encourage people to come out and support their businesses. Best practices will be tracked regularly noting successes, needs and improvements.

Mr. Stanley said that the state needs to convey a positive message so people will come out. Measures should continue to reinforce the need for wearing a mask and staying safe.

Cheshire will begin scheduling meetings to put plans into action. Key areas of focus are daycare, retailers, public safety, health and human services and EDC's role in assisting with getting people back to work. A press release will be written by Jerry Sitko and Yetta Augur announcing the formation of the LTRC, its mission and goals. The committee may be composed of members of the EDC and chamber board.

When asked about Phase III reopening, Caitlin said that the state is being ultra-conservative about the specifics and that she will continue to provide updates.

Townpeople have raised concerns about bandwidth and slow reaction times as a result of the pandemic. Guest speakers from local cable companies will be invited to attend EDC meetings for a discussion. Peter Nichols will draft a communication mentioning that the EDC is being proactive about implementing solutions to the concerns of residents.

b) Speakers for Future Meetings

Garrett Sheehan and Anne Benowitz of the Greater New Chamber of Commerce have expressed interest in meeting with the EDC.

Representative from Cox Cable to discuss internet and bandwidth.
Peter Talbot will be asked for a contact name.

Hartford Healthcare previously scheduled to meet in March was cancelled.

c) Incentive Policy Committee

The town council unanimously approved continuation of the incentive policy for an additional three years. Chairman Stanley read a statement supporting the policy during the meeting on July 14, 2020. Messrs. Gromko and Dobbs also attended the meeting.

d) August Meeting

The Commissioners agreed to have a meeting in August. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 8:00 A.M. in council chambers.

e) Liaison Reports

Mark Thomas from the chamber of commerce said that the Chamber Golf Tournament is taking place today, at the Wallingford Country Club.

The town and chamber have sponsored the event "Eat, Shop, Win" for local businesses encouraging dining, shopping and doing business in Cheshire. Spending \$25.00 may win a \$100.00 gift card. Awards will be drawn at the chamber office.

f) Coordinator's Report

- Cheshire Craft Brewing submitted an application for a 2,400 sq. ft. building at 125 Commerce Court, Unit 7). The application was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on July 13, 2020.
- Mr. Sitko said that Counter Weight Brewery has indicated it's still planning to move to Cheshire.

- D-BAT baseball batting cage facility reopened on June 17 as part of the state Phase 2.
- The Richard Chevrolet body shop will be moving to a newly constructed 25,000 square foot building on 16.31 acres north of Realty Drive.
- Lakeside is a proposed housing development for 50 Hazel Drive (22-acre site of former nursing home), for 114 rental units.
- Globus Express (leased 49,438 SF at 615 West Johnson Avenue) for warehouse space.
- The town is nearing completion of phase one of the remediation of the Ball & Socket Arts property.
- Status of state owned land in the Interchange Zone. Birch Drive, within the zone, was never transferred from the state to the town. The Connecticut DOT is determining what land it will convey to the town for development purposes. 17 acres of land off Route 10 may be developed. 11 acres off Birch Drive may be residential. The property has a large amount of wetlands.
- Status of water service in the Interchange Zone. Discussion continues with the Regional Water Authority and Town of Southington.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Stanley adjourned the meeting at 9:00 A.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary