



EDC REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, **April 7, 2020 at 5:30pm**
Via ZOOM

APPROVED MINUTES

Chairman B. Mastroianni called the regular meeting of the EDC to order at 5:45pm.

Attendance:

Members Present: B. Mastroianni, S. Cherenzia, P. Simonds, J. Strunk, and W. Mason.
Members Absent: S. Grufstedt, N. Porter, J. Anderson and A. Mazzella
Staff Present: J. Hodge

Public Present: P. Lewis, N. Kincaid and B. Carlson

Additions to the Agenda: Motion made and seconded (J. Strunk/W. Mason) to add discussion about allowing additional temporary signage for the duration of the pandemic to the Agenda under new business. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the 2/18/2020 Regular Meeting, and the 4/1/20 Special Meeting were accepted as written.

Treasurer's Report: J. Hodge went over the most recent financials. The most recent charge was for the Chamber Event J. Hodge and B. Mastroianni attended in early March. B. Mastroianni discussed the recent cut to the EDC budget and was looking for line items that could be reduced in order to be able to still fund current initiatives. The Commission discussed the value of maintaining seCTer and Chamber of Commerce memberships given the high cost. Commission decided that each organization be given an opportunity to come before the Commission to better explain the services they do, or could provide.

PDZO Report: J. Hodge went over the highlights of her report. She reported that she has been calling businesses to check in and offer any support. She has created a summary of resources available and will keep this as up-to-date as possible. The information has been posted on the Town Website and EDC FB page.

New Business

- **Temporary signs:** B. Mastroianni suggested that the EDC support a request to PZC to temporarily lessen or eliminate the current restrictions on Temporary Signage so that businesses in town could better communicate with the public about their status and services/products available. This would apply to only the essential businesses that are still open. J. Hodge found sample language to use specifying size allowed and some basic restrictions having to do with the location of signs not restricting pedestrian access or sight lines etc. All commission members and all public present (as they are members of PZC and BOS) all thought it was a good idea. The signs would come down after the crisis has passed and all businesses go back to “normal.” Commission also briefly discussed some of the SBA loans available and the process of obtaining them.

Action item: B. Mastroianni to draft a letter to BOS and PZC asking them to approve the temporary use of additional signage as discussed. BOS to meet on Tuesday and will discuss this at their meeting as well.

- **Social Media Ads/Post Boosts:** B. Mastroianni has completed an ad for local restaurants and the Village Co-op. He will contact IT tomorrow about the process of paying for the ads. The Commission discussed which businesses would be included in the ads and decided that only brick and mortar businesses that are still open would be included, but that a list of other service businesses such as landscaping or other contracting services operating out of North Stonington or servicing residents in town could be mentioned (list) on an add as well. Some of the posts that have been created already for some of the restaurants in town have been widely shared on social media and seem to be reaching a lot of people. B. Mastroianni will provide information about the impact of the ads once they are run.
- **Concept Plans for Commercial District:** B. Mastroianni and S. Cherenzia will both contact people they know or have used in the past for similar projects. J. Hodge suggested contacting DJ Noyes who is a Landscape Architect who is working on a few local projects currently.
- **List of Businesses Open –** J. Hodge and B. Mastroianni gave an update on the businesses they have contacted. Businesses have been appreciative of this effort. Both will continue to call local businesses. Discussed the latest Executive Order regarding Hotels and Short-term rentals. Hotels can no longer rent to leisure travelers – only essential personnel or homeless persons. There have been no additional details provided by the State on this, particularly about reimbursement procedures. J. Hodge will continue to monitor the State Website for updates and has been attending APA policy briefings and virtual meetings with the Governor and Rep. Courtney when possible.

Old Business

- **Farmers’ Market – Subcommittee Report:** B. Mastroianni stated that J. Pensa was looking into a possible grant to get the market up and running. J. Hodge suggested that she contact Craig Russell, the newly hired part/time grants writer so that they could work together on that. Discussed the Co-op and that Carl and Brett are working on publishing a list of the products available as they become available or as farmers provide different produce etc.

Final Comments: B. Mastroianni asked if anyone had any final comments. B. Carlson asked Brett to reach out to A. Mazzella to see whether he was interested in remaining on the EDC as he has not been attending. N. Kincaid complemented Brett and the Commission on running a great meeting. Brett asked

the members about their thoughts on still holding 2 meetings a month during this time. The members decided to keep meetings as scheduled and if there were no business to discuss, they would simply cancel.

Motion was made and seconded (S. Cherenzia/P. Simonds) to adjourn at 6:45. Motion Passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Juliet Hodge, PDZO

Upcoming Meetings/Events

- EDC Next Meeting– Regular Meeting April 21, 2020