

## **EDC REGULAR MEETING**

Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 5:30pm

Via Zoom Meeting

Approved Minutes

**Call to Order:** Brett Mastroianni called the meeting to order at 5:32pm

**Members in Attendance:** Brett Mastroianni, Nicole Porter, Will Mason, Jennifer Dayton, Jennifer Anderson and Salvatore Cherenzia.

**Members absent:** Jennifer Strunk, Paul Simonds, Stefan Grufstedt and Anthony Mazzella (alternate).

**Staff present:** Juliet Hodge, PDZO

**Public Present:** Robert Carlson, Selectman and Mike Uργο, First Selectman.

**Public Comment:** Mike Uργο explained why the proposed P/T Economic Development Coordinator position included in proposed 2022 budget was not approved. M. Uργο discussed the prior request he made for a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Departmental Review that was rejected by BOF and the less comprehensive review done in house to determine staffing/administrative need. He felt the town was doing well with respect to economic development, and that the money would be better spent elsewhere. B. Carlson did say he was in favor of the position and would have voted for it to be approved. B. Mastroianni believed he was not even given the proper opportunity to defend and explain the position to the BOS and BOF.

**Additions to the Agenda:** None.

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** February 2, 2021 minutes approved as written.

**Treasurer's Report:** There was expenditure for \$300 for invoices for the radio ads for the Shop Local Campaign.

**PDZO Report:** Committee reviewed J. Hodge's activity report. Some of the topics discussed:

- The most recent Jovial Foods plans were reviewed.
- The Fox Trail Lodge site plans are still being revised.
- The Tin Peddler will be opening soon.
- Little Man's Bakery is open.

### **New Business:**

- a. **Update on Budget:** There was a continued discussion surrounding the 2022 budget and the cutting of the P/T Economic Development Coordinator position that had been submitted by the EDC. B. Mastroianni stated he felt the decision to eliminate to proposed position was possibly politically motivated. B. Mastroianni encouraged all EDC members to call in to the BOS and BOF meetings to show their support for the position. B. Mastroianni stated he was going to attempt to get on the agenda for the BOS meeting to discuss further and attempt to get the 20 hour administrative position reinstated into the 2022 EDC budget. J. Hodge encouraged the EDC to develop a strategic plan with action items clearly identified and tied to the Econ. Dev. Coordinator position.
- b. **Future Meeting Strategies/Schedule:** B. Mastroianni made a suggestion that the EDC move to one meeting a month with possible workshops scheduled for other nights when initiatives need more attention.

**A motion was made and seconded (N. Porter/S. Cherenzia) to hold the EDC meetings on the first Tuesday of every month as currently scheduled, with workshops held as needed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. Motion passed 6-0.**

B. Mastroianni stated he would reach out to Anthony Mazzella and Paul Simonds to confirm their continued interest in the EDC or ask for their resignation.

**Old Business:**

- a. Update on potential Facility for Workforce Development/IT Training program in NS (J. Dayton): There are no updates.
- b. Buy Local Campaign Update: There was a discussion around how to increase participation in the campaign. Members suggested some type of employee incentive to make sure they are encouraging shoppers to take a picture with the sign and post on social media.
- c. Business List/Directory: B. Mastroianni is still trying to finish the directory. He will enlist the help of Tom March from North Stonington, who offered to help.

**Motion to adjourn at 6:57 pm (S. Cherenzia/J. Dayton) Motion carried 6-0.**

Next EDC meeting is schedule on March 2, 2021 at 5:30p via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Porter & Juliet Hodge