

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
October 19, 2023

Members Present: Gayle Demko – Chair, John McGuire – Secretary, Jack Henrie, Maria Silvestri, Jeff Girard, Bob Kelly

Also Present: Chad Kuzontkoski – Economic Development Specialist, Ellie Binns - Recording Secretary

1. Gayle Demko called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.
2. Minutes

The minutes of the September 21, 2023 regular meeting were approved unanimously.

3. Public Input – None
4. Old Cemetery Walking Tour

Jackie Hemond a member of the Suffield Historical Society (SHS) presented the plans for the upcoming Old Cemetery Walking Tour to be held on Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> from 1-2:30 PM. They will feature the stories of ten historical Suffield residents with reenactors/impersonators playing the parts. Jackie is doing this as a pilot program working with Jan Peake and Bill Sullivan. They plan to accommodate 30 guests and hope to expand the program in the future to visit other cemeteries in Town. They would also like to develop audio tours that could be taken out of the Kent Memorial Library. There was discussion about the Economic Development Commission helping with this event with funding in the future and collaborating with the SHS.

5. Discussion – TIF Matching Grant Responses

Mr. Kuzontkoski reported on the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) District Grant Program noting that an amendment to the TIF District master plan has been proposed, to add verbiage to allow the Matching Grant program that was discussed at the last EDC meeting. The creation of a brochure to hand out to businesses and property owners in the TIF district has begun, as well as a webpage to outline the program. He noted that he has spoken to other towns about the success of their programs

6. Staff Report

Mr. Kuzontkoski reported on a recent collaboration between the Economic Development Department (EDD), the Bradley Development League and local manufacturer MetFin, which brought students from Suffield High School to an open house and presentation at the MetFin plant to speak about the benefits of a career in manufacturing. Another collaboration has begun with the Youth Center and local businesses and EDD to have events on an ongoing basis. Plans are also in the works for a job fair for the

students. He also noted the Small Business Saturday promotional campaign is scheduled for November 25<sup>th</sup> and will have a “Small Business Passport” distributed for the event. Mr. Kuzontkoski reported on progress for the Suffield Town Video. A draft of the video will be distributed to the EDC members for their input. He also noted that the Suffield Winter Farmers Market will be held on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9AM to 1PM, at the Suffield Agriscience Large Animal facility.

7. Commission Project Possibilities Update – Gayle Demko

Ms. Demko had distributed a list of possible projects to the members and discussed the possibility of taking advantage of federal funding and partnering with other organizations. There was discussion about an Art Walk in the Spring with the Suffield Academy and the Connecticut Antiquarian & Landmarks Society. There was also discussion about recruiting new business and providing information about existing businesses.

8. Adjournment

With nothing further to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Binns, Recording Secretary