



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2024, 7:00 PM

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT

REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: In-Person: Chairman Sean Kelly and Regular Member Cynthia Soto; Via Zoom: Vice Chairman Donna Resutek, Regular Members Chris Todd and David Hurley (arrived at 7:08 PM), and Alternate Amos Smith.

ABSENT: Alternates Sam Chang and Michael Swanson

STAFF

PRESENT: Via Zoom: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner; In-Person: Ashley DuBois, Recording Clerk

OTHERS

PRESENT: None

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): None

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

- a. Report concerning referral to the Board of Selectmen to consider establishing a new ordinance pursuant to CGS §12-81m, a municipal option to abate up to fifty percent of property taxes for dairy, fruit, vegetable, nursery, tobacco, and nontraditional farms.

Chairman Kelly thanked all individuals who attended the recent Board of Finance (BOF) meeting on behalf of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) and the proposed new ordinance. The BOF rendered a unanimous vote and referred the proposal back to the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Lisa Houlihan reported the potential new ordinance passed the Town Ordinance Committee and the BOS unanimously too. The Town Meeting vote and Public Hearing will be Monday, September 9, 2024, at 6:00 PM at the Town Hall. Lisa will forward the EDC members a copy of the agenda when it is published. Lisa will continue communicating with Seth Bahler, Oakridge Dairy. Chairman Kelly inquired about the attendance of the Board of Finance for the above discussed meeting.

2. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

- a. 2024 Tolland County Chamber of Commerce Business Awards Nominations

The general guidelines and categories were reviewed. Categories for nomination include economic development, corporate citizen, beautification, and best new business. Lisa

reported a new category was added for non-profits. Vice Chairman Resutek noted that businesses are required to be a member of the Chamber of Commerce to receive award.

Vice Chairman Resutek suggested Juliano's Pools as a nomination for beautification. Chairman Kelly supported the suggestion. Commissioner Todd requested a list of businesses to review and discuss. Lisa shared that nominations are due by August 29, 2024, but stated the Chamber of Commerce has a list of members on their website. Lisa noted that Juliano's is not a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Commissioner Todd suggested nominating the Ellington Racquet Club. Vice Chairman Resutek offered Agway and Chairman Kelly suggested The Barn Yard, however both were recently nominated and granted award. Commissioner Smith inquired about how many non-profits were established in Ellington and Commissioner Soto stated that Ellington does not have any reported non-profit chamber members. Commissioner Todd offered LuAnn's Bakery and Vice Chairman Resutek answered that LuAnn's Bakery was previously nominated. Vice Chairman Resutek inquired if J. Rego's Restaurant was a Chamber of Commerce member and Commissioner Todd responded no. Vice Chairman Resutek mentioned Cooley's kitchen, however it was confirmed they are not members. Commissioner Todd mentioned Keith Gavin Roofing and it was noted the company is a positive influence on the town. Commissioner Amos inquired about Big Y's membership, and it was reported they are not members. Commissioner Amos raised the question about business membership, whether there is a lack of informing businesses versus a given policy not allowing membership. Commissioner Soto suggested The Ivy assisted living facility for beautification. It was confirmed they are Chamber of Commerce members but were previously nominated for beautification after the facility was built. The Commission returned to discussing Keith Gavin Roofing and Vice Chairman Resutek stated their website shares their community involvements. These involvements include donations to LuAnn's, sponsoring Little League teams, and offering significant rebates for military members. Commissioner Hurley offered Cornerstone as a business for nomination for their charitable involvement. Commissioner Hurley added Hockanum Valley Community Council and Stop & Shop in the discussion. The commission concluded in support of nominating Keith Gauvin Roofing for the corporate citizen category. Vice Chairman Resutek noted Keith Gauvin Roofing website for specifics of the nomination write up.

BY CONSENSUS, NOMINATED KEITH GAVIN ROOFING FOR CORPORATE CITIZEN FOR THE 2024 TOLLAND COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS AWARDS.

3. Agricultural Initiatives

a. Ellington Farm Day 2024

The Ellington Planning Department continues to recruit farms for Ellington Farm Day 2024. Lisa reported Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 10 AM - 3 PM is this year's event. Confirmed attendance includes the Ellington Farmers' Market, Oakridge Dairy, farm display at Ellington Historical Society, Sunset Valley Farms, Greenwood Holistic Farm, and Farm Fresh. DeCarli Equestrian Farm and S. J. Ranch acknowledged interest in participating and will confirm later this month; withstanding invites will be followed up on. Lisa shared that in support of advertising for the event, a partnership with Oakridge Dairy has proved helpful but adjustments for the event advertising flyer are needed. Round table discussion ensued.

MOVED (TODD), SECONDED (SMITH) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE SPENDING UP TO \$500.00 FOR FARM DAY POSTCARDS.

4. Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) Best Practices – Customer Service Satisfaction Survey Results

Chairman Kelly applauded the efforts and praise from the survey results for the Planning Department. Commissioner Amos inquired if other departments also utilize surveys to gather customer satisfaction. Lisa stated she is not aware of other town departments using customer satisfaction surveys. Commissioners acknowledged the survey was implemented to meet a best practices recommendation.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

Starbucks experienced supply chain delays and is projected to open by the end of September 2024. The storage facility on Route 83, next to Ellington Printery, is expected to open shortly. No Coast Kitchen restaurant will open where Holiday Pizza was previously located.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget & Expenditures Update.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.

2. Approval of the June 12, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (KELLY) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JUNE 12, 2024, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence/Discussion:

- a. North Central District Health Dept. Ellington Annual Report July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.

Chairman Kelly noted receipt of an inquiry for the commission to become a sponsor at the CEDAS annual event. The commission declined submitting sponsorship.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (SMITH) SECONDED (TODD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley DuBois, Recording Clerk