

2024 DEC 26 AM 9:38

REC'D BY: me

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting  
December 19, 2024

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

Also Present: Chad Kuzontkoski – Economic Development Specialist, Ellie Binns – Administrative Assistant

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

The minutes of the November 18, 2024 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

3. Public Input - None

4. Ms. Demko introduced Denise Whitford, of the Connecticut Small Business Development Center (SBDC) who gave a comprehensive presentation explaining the services offered by the SBDC and the role they play in assisting small businesses. She shared many examples of the ways in which the organization, which is headquartered at University of Connecticut, can assist startup businesses as well as established businesses. They offer a wide range of services online and in person. Ms. Whitford also discussed the workshops and area presentations that they offer. Their services are free of charge and she suggested signing up for their newsletter to keep informed or to initiate contact for their assistance. The web site is CTSBDC.UConn.edu. Commission members thanked Ms. Whitford for her in depth presentation and felt that the SBDC would be a valuable resource for Suffield business people. They discussed the upcoming presentation in the region that would be helpful to tie into rather than doing a separate educational workshop for local businesses.

5. Review 2025 Meeting Schedule

The meeting schedule was unanimously approved, with meetings following the same schedule of the third Thursday morning of the month at 8:30 AM.

6. Commission Update – Gayle Demko

Ms. Demko reported on the informational kiosk by the library which she will be presenting to the Board of Selectman with a cost estimate. The kiosk would have easily accessible information linked to the Town website, including police updates, suicide prevention, drug questions, local events, business listings, library, parks and recreation programs, town events, and historic walking tours. She also spoke of the upcoming budget process, and Mr. Kuzontkoski reviewed the budget increase request that would be proposed to cover continuing successful programs and expanding investment in infrastructure, marketing and promotion.

7. EDC Projects Report – Chad Kuzontkoski

Mr. Kuzontkoski distributed his written report which summarized the activities in the Light Industrial, Commercial and Town Center Village District zones for the month. He also noted the success of the Small Business Week Passport program which was expanded this year and the annual Suffield ALight event. It was noted that Suffield Village Market worked with Suffield Community Aid to give 10 local families Thanksgiving baskets which included a turkey and traditional side dishes. Mr. Kuzontkoski also noted that a 32 unit age restricted condominium project (Eastwoods Phase II.) is currently before the Conservation Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) for their review. Mr. Girard mentioned that he would present information on the PZC sign regulations at the next EDC meeting.

8. Adjournment

With nothing further to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:46 AM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellie Binns Recording Secretary