

2025 FEB 25 AM 10: 19

REC'D BY: EMR

Minutes of the Suffield Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting
February 20, 2025

Members Present: Gayle Demko – Chair, John McGuire, Roger Murray, 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 January 16, 2025 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

3. Public Input -None
4. Discussion with Brian Casinghino, Suffield Parks and Recreation

Brian Casinghino addressed the Commission as a longtime member, and currently Chairman of the Suffield Parks and Recreation giving an overview of the services and programs provided to the community. He emphasized that they provide many programs in addition to the sports programs that are often better known in line with their mission to “provide affordable and accessible recreational, educational, athletic and social programs for the community year round for adults, youth and special needs individuals.” Director of Community Services, Peter Leclerc also spoke to the Commission about the programs and how they promote economic development in Town and create jobs particularly during the summer months which is their busiest season. He did stress that they run activities throughout the year. There was discussion of ways that the PRC and EDC can work together to promote Suffield by sharing information and using media and contact lists.

The use of the parks and other venues in Town, as well as events attracts people into Town. There was also discussion of having a park on Bridge Street at the former site of the Bridge Street elementary school. It was noted that this would draw more people to the center of town and help promote the businesses. There was also discussion about expanding the Senior/Community Center at some point. Mr. McGuire noted that community centers can often be revenue generating. Members agreed that it would be beneficial to learn more about the conceptual plans for the park and to work together with Parks and Rec in the future.

5. Commission Update – Gayle Demko

Ms. Demko noted that there have been three projects to report on which are the Community Ambassador Information, the New Small Business Passport and the West Suffield Town Center Accessibility Plan. Mr. Kuzontkoski showed a map that he is working on with an artist to show points of interest and businesses in Town, and reported on the contacts and progress to put together a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a design plan for the West Suffield Street Scape and Accessibility Project. The document is currently being reviewed by the Town Attorney. He is also working with an artist to come up with a new logo for the Economic Development Department and will send the Commission members samples when available. Ms. Demko distributed a two page questionnaire for the members to complete with information about the mission statement, goal setting, responsibilities of the members and information

about tourism.

6. 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 noting that at least three tenant spaces have been leased by property owners through the Loop Net advertising service that the Town uses. He also reported that both 41 and 178 Mountain Road properties have been approved by the Design Review Board for exterior renovations. He noted that the Suffield Garden Club will be participating in a traffic island beautification project this Spring with more details to come. He is also submitting a grant request to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for a Zac grant for a brochure, "Things to do in and around Suffield."

7. Adjournment

With nothing further to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:57 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellie Binns Recording Secretary