

Brookfield Economic Development Commission
DRAFT MINUTES
7:00 PM Tuesday, March 20, 2018
Town Hall, Room 209, 100 Pocono Road, Brookfield, CT 06804

1) Convene Meeting

Chairman Fisher called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Present: Chairman J. Fisher
Vice Chairman G. Dembowski
Commissioner P. Gerardi
Commissioner C. Rositano

Also Present: B. Paynter, Economic and Development Manager and A. Kennedy, Recording Secretary

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting:

- **February 20, 2018**

Chairman J. Fisher noted in the minutes from February 20, 2018, that he did not say “six new businesses were coming to Town” but that “there were six applicants talking”.

Vice Chairman G. Dembowski made a motion to approve the minutes from February 20, 2018. C. Rositano seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

3) EDC Budget

- **Actual vs. Plan**

B. Paynter reported on the remainder of this year’s budget. She said they will probably have to use some of that money for the logo.

B. Paynter said she has submitted the new budget for this year, with \$800 allocated for the website maintenance. Chairman J. Fisher asked about moving the website over to the Town’s website, and B. Paynter said they are not doing that at this time because it would be a \$4,000 investment. For now, they will have an outside service handle quarterly maintenance for a few hundred dollars.

B. Paynter discussed the new sustainability ad-hoc committee, and their discussions regarding a “Buy Local” campaign to encourage people to patronize local businesses. She said the Commission may want to consider for next year putting together a marketing packet for businesses and include literature on this campaign.

4) Update-Brookfield Town Center

Vice Chair G. Dembowski said there is no update on Phase One. He is going before Inland Wetlands on Monday to apply for a permit to update the storm drain outlets.

Vice Chair G. Dembowski said the public hearing for Phase Two is now going to be held a half hour before the Board of Selectman's meeting in May.

B. Paynter said in Town Center they are taking down the snowflake banners and they have one designed with a boat for Candlewood Lake. Chairman J. Fisher asked about designing banners in the future with the Brookfield Bobcat, with the possibility of having the booster club fund it.

B. Paynter discussed the possibility of the EDC helping to fund some beautification projects in Town in the future. She mentioned they are working with Shakespeare's Garden to get flower pots soon. Vice Chair G. Dembowski said the issue with the flower pots is the cost to water and maintain them, which is approximately \$2,000 a summer, with the Parks and Recreation Department. Shakespeare's Garden will store the plants over the winter.

Vice Chair G. Dembowski said there are a lot of little things to be done in Town Center. Specifically, he said the asphalt plants open on April 9th, and they have to set one more catch basin.

- **Discuss Town Center ribbon cutting and block party**

B. Paynter said the Town Center Business Group is putting together a ribbon cutting on June 1st and a block party on June 3rd and suggested supporting these events in some fashion. B. Paynter said she could come up with some ideas and noted the Town Center Business Group is having another meeting on April 10th at 5:30pm, if anyone is interested in attending.

5) Economic & Community Development Manager's Update

- **Review EDC logo designs**

B. Paynter distributed a copy of the EDC full page ad for the Brookfield phone book, which is delivered to every resident and business in Brookfield. She said the purpose of the ad is to drive traffic to the website. She asked the Commission to think of where else they would want to advertise. B. Paynter also distributed copies of possible logo designs for review and comment. The Commission voted on their two

preferred versions of the logo, and B. Paynter will ask Dan to make color renderings of them for the Commission to review.

6) Update on Website Functioning & Newsletter Contact List

- **Mission Statement**

Vice Chair G. Dembowski asked for a volunteer to take the lead to create a mission statement, and email a draft to the Commission for review and revision before the next meeting. P. Gerardi volunteered. Vice Chair G. Dembowski suggested looking at Ridgefield's example and the POCD pages 13 and 29. He also suggested the mission statement be one paragraph or less.

- **Discussion of website with the EDC goals**

Chairman J. Fisher discussed setting goals for the EDC for this year and noted he sent the Commission members the link to the Plan of Conservation and Development. B. Paynter said developing a mission statement should be one of the goals. Chairman J. Fisher discussed branding as another goal.

Chairman J. Fisher asked for ideas from the Commission on the mission statement. P. Gerardi said the current mission statement mentions "working with existing businesses" and he asked in what ways are we doing this and how we are equipped to handle this. Chairman J. Fisher said adding the position of Economic and Development Manager to the Town has been a huge success for the Commission, as B. Paynter works with existing businesses every day. P. Gerardi said he believes working with existing businesses should be the core of our mission statement. Chairman J. Fisher said he agrees, but thinks it should be two-fold, including working to bring in new businesses as well. B. Paynter said she attended the Governor's Annual Conference for Economic Development and one of the speakers from CBRE suggested trying to grow 80% of your business base and about 20% of your attention to be on recruiting new business because the growth opportunity of growing existing businesses is a lot stronger than a new business to come in and spend millions of dollars to bring in a whole new workforce.

C. Positano asked about the number of businesses leaving Brookfield for other locations. Vice Chair G. Dembowski said there is a spreadsheet of all the businesses in Brookfield, but it was an offline spreadsheet that hasn't been updated in years. He said a lot of businesses are small and work out of their homes. B. Paynter said she got a list of all the manufacturers from the Assessor and put them in a

spreadsheet. Her goal is to set up an appointment with each of them, starting with the largest manufacturers, to talk with the business owners about their obstacles/concerns and make suggestions on how to help them promote their business. C. Positano said these visits should be a goal of the Commission. He suggested setting up a list of what the businesses are looking for, and if a general trend emerges from multiple businesses, possibly the EDC could help. B. Paynter suggested setting a goal of one visit every other week. C. Positano talked about how we would measure success of these goals.

7) Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

- **Action items for Economic Development Commission**

Vice Chair G. Dembowski read action items for the EDC from the POCD, and suggested these be the Commissions objectives. First, evaluate and implement strategies for the four corners initiative. Second, encourage collaboration between the Chamber and the EDC to implement formal programs, workshops and training to maximize effectiveness and grow existing businesses and attract new businesses. Third, develop a strategy, action plans, resources and performance metrics with the goal of maximizing economic growth. Fourth, collect contact and business information for all businesses and add that information into the EDC Business Directory and email distribution list. Five, provide additional resources to assist the Economic Development Commission in achieving it's goals. Next, consider how to best develop the area bounded by Federal Road, Junction Road, Silvermine to incorporate transitional zones and note patterns to protect adjacent residential properties and support alternative transportation modes. Next, revise zoning regulations as desired to meet the objectives above. Vice Chair G. Dembowski noted many of those goals are underway.

Chair J. Fisher suggested putting these goals on their minutes and keep track of the progress of each one.

B. Paynter suggested the Chairman of the Commission meet with the First Selectman once a month to go over objectives and strategies. Chairman J. Fisher asked B. Paynter to set up the meetings.

8) Other Discussion

B. Paynter discussed getting business cards for the Commissioners once the logo is finalized.

P. Gerardi discussed a meeting he attended last month where he heard about a website that includes a free service available to businesses with a

community board, as well as a paid feature to the website available upon upgrade, to increase visibility. P. Gerardi will send a link to the website to the other Commissioners.

Chairman J. Fisher mentioned a free FOI workshop that is available on April 18th at 6:30 PM.

9) Adjournment

Vice Chair G. Dembowski made a motion to adjourn at 8:05pm. C. Rositano seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

*****Next regularly scheduled Economic Development Commission meeting: April 17, 2018*****