

Economic Development Commission Special Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday, February 19, 2019 7:00 PM

Brookfield Town Hall, Conference Room 209

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER: Chairman J. Fisher convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman J. Fisher, Commissioner P. Gerardi, Commissioner R. Reynolds and Commissioner D. Matte

Absent: Vice Chairman G. Dembowski

Also Present: D. Ferraro, Community Development Specialist and A. Kennedy, Recording Secretary

2019 BUDGET UPDATE-D. Ferraro handed out a breakdown of this year's budget, noting they have \$1,100 to spend by July 1, 2019 and will lose that money if it is not spent. D. Ferraro reviewed the breakdown and discussed suggestions for next year's budget. She explained that her proposal is for approximately \$200 more than the past year's budget, and that reflects the goal to be more involved in the community. Chairman J. Fisher asked about the recording secretary's salary and if that was accounted for in the budget. D. Ferraro explained that salary had been coming from the Land Use Department, but it is being changed by the Finance Department and will be coming from the EDC budget in the future.

COMMUNITY SPECIALIST UPDATE-D. Ferraro said the Town has received a grant for extending Greenway behind Town Hall. The grant is for construction only and is approximately \$207,000. The project will be going out to bid after the approval process and D. Ferraro is waiting to hear from the project manager for the grant regarding the guidelines. She said Vice Chair G. Dembowski will be assisting with the grant and bid process since he has had a lot of experience with this. D. Ferraro reviewed a map of future Greenway site with the Commission. P. Gerardi asked if the Town will be contributing any money to this project. D. Ferraro said the grant is for construction only and they already have most of the materials since it is an extension of the existing path. She said the Town will have to contribute some money but that is still being discussed. Chair J. Fisher noted there is discussion regarding extending Greenway to New Milford and he noted how many people are using it. P. Gerardi asked if there was any discussion of connecting the Greenway to Danbury and their Still River efforts. Chairman J. Fisher said that is more of a long-term goal.

D. Ferraro discussed creating folders for the Commissioners to contain meeting handouts. The Commissioners discussed ways to maintain files, handouts, etc. R. Reynolds noted a binder that can be updated might be more helpful than a new folder for each meeting. P. Gerardi asked about files being emailed to them each month, along with the previous meeting's minutes for review. D. Ferraro will post the agendas and minutes on the Town website going forward. Chairman J. Fisher asked to add a

website tutorial to the next agenda to refresh Commissioners on how to access agendas and minutes on the website.

D. Ferraro noted biographies for the Commissioners can be posted online and she will need everyone's email addresses to accompany the biographies, in an effort to have the public address questions directly to the Commission members.

D. Ferraro discussed the Brookfield Farmers Market and the Concert Series and the idea of having an EDC member either attend and walk around or have a table to talk to vendors. P. Gerardi said he can help with that. Chairman J. Fisher said he can attend once or twice over the summer. D. Ferraro created a new "Open for Business" graphic for handouts to be put in folders which are distributed during the Development Services Team meetings. The folder also includes a short letter with contact information, applications, incentive tax ordinance, Town Center for Business membership application, Chamber application, etc.

RESIGNATIONS-Chairman J. Fisher noted two Commissioners have resigned and the EDC is looking for new members. He discussed what the EDC is looking for in a skill set for new members. P. Gerardi said he would like to see a new member that is either a small business owner or a developer. Chairman J. Fisher said it might not be a good idea to have a developer from Brookfield on the Commission due to possible conflicts of interest. P. Gerardi asked if the Commissioners could each bring in some suggestions or a list of names for possible candidates to next meeting. R. Reynolds discussed targeting a company and then identifying a person within that company.

STREETSCAPE UPDATE-D. Ferraro said Vice Chair G. Dembowski would like to host another ground breaking event in April/May for Phase Two of Streetscape. She has created a draft for an invitation and showed the Commission a sample. The date, time and location is still to be determined. D. Ferraro suggested possible speakers including possibly a business owner from the Four Corners. The Commission discussed possibilities for events to bring more foot traffic to the Four Corners.

D. Ferraro said she is working on new banners for the TCD for the different seasons and showed the Commission examples. These banners will come out of her budget.

D. Ferraro has spoken with Jen Dwyer from Peoples United Bank, who is looking to get more involved with the community, and with Nelson from the Connecticut Small Business Development Center, who has offered to be the first speaker for the series the EDC is looking into hosting. D. Ferraro also suggested Devin from Chik-fil-A as a possible speaker. The Commission discussed possible partnerships for the series and collaboration between different organizations. They discussed possible panel discussion ideas, and format ideas including moderated panels, Q & A, etc.

D. Ferraro read Streetscape Phase Two notes from Vice Chair G. Dembowski.

STRATEGIC GOALS UPDATE-Chairman J. Fisher said Vice Chair G. Dembowski emailed the Commission's Draft Strategic Plan to the different Town Commissions and they have received some feedback. D. Ferraro read the response from the Library Board and the response from N. Malwitz from the WPCA. The Commission discussed the proposed idea regarding a highlight of the month, with a spotlight on individual businesses. D. Ferraro said she has come across the EDC newsletter email list, which was created by B. Paynter. D. Ferraro suggested utilizing that list, since it contains a lot of businesses in Town. D. Ferraro will develop guidelines for this business highlight idea for discussion at the next

meeting. P. Gerardi discussed using the Patch, News Times, Town Appeal, etc. to get the concept out there.

SCHOOL PROJECT DISCUSSION-Chairman J. Fisher said this will be in the news coming up in the next few weeks. He said the school is doing presentations and the local papers are discussing the project. P. Gerardi said he thinks they are doing a really good job on the efforts to get the information out there and be transparent. He said they are looking for volunteers to make phone calls to get information out there. P. Gerardi asked what can the EDC do to help address the 65+ community in town, since this is the group likely to not be in favor of this project. The Commission discussed how this project is going to affect taxes and how the 65+ community would be affected.

The Commission discussed the EDC possibly voting on whether or not to be in favor of the school project. Chairman J. Fisher thinks Vice Chair G. Dembowski should be present to vote. D. Matte will send out an email to the Commissioners to vote on the new school referendum.

R. Reynolds made a motion for the EDC to support Branson Ultrasonics coming to Brookfield. P. Gerardi seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

P. Gerardi made a motion for the EDC to support the extension of the Greenway. R. Reynolds seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

R. Reynolds made a motion for the EDC to support the Brookfield Senior Living project. D. Matte seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.