

Brookfield Economic Development Commission Regular Meeting
MINUTES
Tuesday, Sept 17, 2019 7:00PM
Brookfield Town Hall, Conference Room 209

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Present: Chairman J. Fisher, Commissioner P. Gerardi, Commissioner A. Walp, Commissioner D. Matte and Commissioner M. Butow

Absent: Vice Chair G. Dembowski, Commissioner R. Reynolds and D. Ferraro, Community Development Specialist

Also Present: A. Kennedy, Recording Secretary

2. APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES-8/20/19

M. Butow made a motion to approve the minutes from 8/20/19. A. Walp seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman J. Fisher asked P. Girardi if he had a chance to follow up with Mary about the donation from the Four Corners Group, and P. Girardi said he has not connected with her yet.

Chairman J. Fisher said he did not check the demographics for the last two years on the CERC website as previously discussed. He said G. Dembowski was supposed to send out a link for the members to sign up for the CERC newsletter and encouraged the members to sign up. He said he attended the Board of Selectmen meeting last Monday and discussed the concerns of 5G service coming into town.

Chairman J. Fisher said Brookfield Village finally signed the agreement with the town and Mother Earth and the Subway building will come down within thirty days.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Senior Population Trend – Ellen Melville-

P. Girardi said that the Commission has discussed one of their SMART goals is to stay ahead of some of the changing demographics in town and E. Melville has a good handle on some of the changing demographics including the senior community.

E. Melville said she is the Director of Senior and Social Services for the Town of Brookfield and gave a brief description of the staff she works with. She read some information she got today from a website called CT Data Collaborative (aging.ctdata.org) regarding increasing numbers of older adults in CT. She gave statistics regarding the increase in the senior community in Brookfield. She noted some of the issues they handle for seniors including Police, Fire and EMT services, people falling in the home, refusing medical care, medication issues, caregiver issues. E. Melville thinks Brookfield needs more transportation for seniors. She explained the transportation in place now, including the Sweetheart Bus, which is for seniors and disabled. She said many towns around Brookfield have bought their own buses, which is a large expense. She also

noted they have the FISH service, it is a national program, made up of volunteers taking people to and from medical appointments. E. Melville also discussed a lack of housing that seniors can afford to live in. She also discussed the Senior Center, noting they have about 600 active members for classes, programming, flu shots, etc. Everyday they have about 70 people coming through the center.

E. Melville also discussed issues with social services in Brookfield. She said this year they are receiving 6-8 new clients per month. She explained the Section 8 apartments are bringing people to Brookfield, and these people need assistance with other services including transportation, affordable daycare, etc. She also discussed the food pantry, noting they see approximately 385 household members. They have 50-100 families through there per week. She said they shop from the CT Food Bank, but the problem with Federal and State budget cuts is that the CT Food Bank doesn't have as much goods. For example, they haven't been able to buy meat for the past month.

P. Girardi asked E. Melville if there are any specific initiatives that the EDC could help with. E. Melville discussed the need for low income housing, the need to keep supporting the food pantry, the need for another full-time person for the Social Services Department, and she said the biggest need is probably transportation.

b. Website Analytics- Joseph Singer, Merged Analytics-

P. Girardi said another initiative for the EDC is to target and identify prospective businesses to come to Brookfield. He said he did some research on businesses such as Google Analytics. He introduced J. Singer, noting he is local, from New Fairfield, and works in this business.

J. Singer explained his product is a software tool that let's you know what companies are visiting your website. They would be able to tell you who visited the website and what pages they clicked on. He went on to explain the way the technology works how it can be applied. He noted it can be used to support existing customers as well as prospective customers. He distributed a handout, which gives information on this program. He also noted they could do a monthly or annual contract for services.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. 2020 BUDGET - Dana

b. COMMUNITY SPECIALIST UPDATE - Dana

c. STRATEGIC GOALS and ACTION PLAN UPDATE –

Chairman J. Fisher reviewed the EDC's strategic goals, and noted which responsibilities are being handled by each Commission member. He discussed D. Ferraro contacting Photronics for a visit to the business.

P. Girardi said he went to the school project meeting and said he wanted to note they are doing a traffic analysis to see what the impact is to the town, and he also discussed fields being built along Nabby Road, which are not going to be part of the school, the fields will belong to the town.

P. Girardi asked about the permit process for businesses in Brookfield. He said he has spoken with business owners that seem frustrated with the way the process works, going through different departments and it being a slow and lengthy process. Chairman J. Fisher said he thinks that the process has changed, and noted meetings where developers can ask questions about prospective business plans and different town departments can comment to help expedite the process.

6. ADJOURN

M. Butow made a motion to adjourn at 8:44 p.m. A. Walp seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.