



TOWN of
THOMPSON

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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Linda Paradise
TOWN CLERK ASST

Economic Development Commission
Wednesday, August 15, 2018
Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

I. The Call to Order was by Chairman Brian Yacino at 6:30 PM

Present: Chairman Brian Yacino
H. Charles Obert
Tyra Penn-Gesek
JoAnn Hall
Brian Santos
Robert Larkin

Absent:
John Sharpe

Also present: Brian Loffredo, First Selectman Ken Beausoleil
Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary

II. Approval of Minutes from June 20, 2018

Motion C. Obert seconded by R. Larkin, with T. Penn-Gesek abstaining, carried unanimously. Note was made that Quadick Corner Pizza is also called the Quadick Country Store.

*There was no July meeting.

III. Reports

- a). Chairman B. Yacino - the annual Business of the Year recognition will be on October 6 (Community Day). The nominations will be reviewed at the September EDC meeting and the awardee selected. EDC members should have additional names in mind for that meeting, as not all worthy candidates may have been nominated. The plaque will be obtained soon, and be ready for engraving when the selection is made. K. Beausoleil – ask R. Waldron to put information that the nomination process is underway on the town's facebook page. Arrangements are being made for WINY talk show time. The Thompson Business Association has hard copies and provides access to an email-able application form.
- b). Treasurer – the new fiscal year is underway. A financial statement will be requested for next month. Funds which were encumbered before the end of the previous fiscal year will be handled appropriately.
- c). Other reports: K. Beausoleil – at the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities convention, recognition is awarded to outstanding activities in the member towns. Nominations for Thompson were submitted.

IV. Update on Businesses in Town:

- The “Quinn Shirt Shop” renovation is underway. Three floors will be apartments with commercial space on the bottom floor. The lot is about 49 acres; a significant solar field will be installed to power mini-splits (the heating and cooling system).
- Copies of applications for 4 new businesses were distributed
- The Riverside/TRex mini-golf is open and families seem to be having fun. The animatronics are impressive; perhaps this could become a destination business.
- Anya’s soft opening has led to a reservation-only period of time. Those members who have been there have observed the restaurant seemed busy even early in the week. Several have spoken with the owner and staff to welcome them.
- TBA (Thompson Business Association) has been reaching out to new businesses.
- A new yoga place is opening
- Neil Patel’s Thompson Liquors has announced their 7th anniversary.

V. Citizen’s Comments Pertaining to Agenda Items

- Pomfret seems to be starting its own Branding Committee.
- C. Obert – The Mill Study group has not communicated with the Branding Subcommittee. The UCONN study resulted in work that has not been seen and therefore it can’t be utilized. Thompson still needs an actual strategic plan, with visuals, that can excite the community. A “vision” for the town is something *people need to be able to see*. There is still not a clear goal or set of goals.

VI. Old Business

a). Branding Implementation Plan/Strategy Update – underway

b). BAR Grant report (Brownfields) - K. Beausoleil noted the selectmen waived the bid policy regarding the next phase for engineering and project management at the recommendation of the DECD. Thompson will stay with the engineering services of CME, who has handled the project to date.

c). Status of Town Planner position – applications are slow to arrive. The position is being broadly posted. Thompson needs a person with a strong background, especially in grant administration. Putnam and Enfield are also advertising for a new Planner.

d). 929 Riverside Drive Update – Funds are remaining due to the efficiency of the work done to date; additional improvements are being considered. Retailers are being sought for the available units.

e). Website Status - Marie Mongeau and Renee Waldron are working within the town hall to keep the facebook page current. They serve on the website committee as well; the third iteration of the site is being reviewed; a draft may be 8 weeks out, possibly around November 1. Once agreement is reached on the structure and basics, all of the rest of the pages and links will fall into place. The Branding subcommittee is handling the website project. C. Obert – we at EDC should expect to be approached for content on our page. R. Larkin – let’s add the topic to the October agenda to begin discussion. J. Hall- consider a “Shout Out” page as a place to notice new businesses or expansions, changes of ownership; add hyper-links from the EDC page to our local businesses.

f). Zoning Regulations revision status – T. Penn-Gesek noted the process is well underway, with simplified language being presented by John Filchak a section at a time for Planning and Zoning review and comment. The RT 131/RT 12 corridor is not yet addressed. The agenda is always posted; all are welcome.

VII. New Business: B. Santos – status of Recreation Director’s position? K. Beausoleil commented that applicants look strong and the selection process is moving as planned. B. Santos – Turkey Trot update? B. Loffredo – all coming together for 11/11. Putnam Bank remains the primary sponsor, with about \$5,000 in sponsorships so far, with a goal of about \$2,000 more. The sponsors cover the operational costs, while runner registrations constitute the contribution to TEEG. The basics such as ambulances, portas, sound system, as well as other aspects are resolved.

Community Day update: the event has been pushed ahead a week, to October 6. The EDC can put flyers on a table; maybe utilize the visuals prepared by the UCONN students. The team of leaders, including B. Loffredo and C. Obert, are working well with REC and TEEG.

VIII. Correspondence: K. Beausoleil distributed copies of the Small Business Association Magazine which he received at a meeting this day.

IX. Comments by Commission Members: C. Obert – Perhaps consider inviting a commercial banker to join us at a meeting to review procedural details and supply ideas as to how to move ahead with marketing commercial property.

- K. Beausoleil – if the EDC so desires, it can schedule a meeting with the marketing team for the Belding site and ask about their plans.
- B. Loffredo- the town needs lodging. Is this part of the marketing plan?
- K. Beausoleil - NECCOG is offering grants for sidewalks upgrades.
- C. Obert -the text on the Chamber website about Thompson was sent along for our review. Modifications were made and it has now been submitted.
- R. Larkin- we should utilize the large signs nearby to promote Thompson.
- K. Beausoleil – yes, but wait for the new website to be operational so people can be referred to it.

X. Next Meeting: September 19, 2018: 6:30 pm, Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall
--To be confirmed: EDC Branding Subcommittee meeting on September 5 at 6:0 PM

XI. Adjournment was at 7:59 PM by Chairman B. Yacino

Respectfully Submitted; Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary *Dorothy Durst*

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Economic Development Commission. Please refer to next month's meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.