

DRAFT MINUTES
BROOKFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, January 17, 2017 ROOM 209
7:00 PM

Convene Meeting: Chair Kurfehs called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM with the following in attendance:

Present: Chair Hal Kurfehs; Secretary Dave Matte; Commissioner Jim Fisher; Commissioner Carmine Rositano; Commissioner Paul LaTerra

Absent: Vice Chair Greg Dembowski

Also Present: Betsy Paynter, Economic & Community Development Manager; Emily Cole Prescott, Recording Secretary

Approval of Meeting Minutes (12/20/16): Commissioner Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes [of the December 20, 2016 meeting as presented]. Secretary Matte seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

EDC Budget – Actual vs. Plan: The Commission reviewed the year-to-date budget report. Commissioner Fisher suggested that the Commission request additional budget funding during the 17/18 FY. Additional funds could be used to host events, support studies, and update the website when necessary. Chair Kurfehs replied that the EDC should have some discussions about what to achieve next fiscal year. Commissioner Fisher requested that the Commission consider requesting \$1,000 to host two events to discuss development, possibly to be hosted in the town center or other relevant area. B. Paynter shared ideas for events, such as a Manufacturers Breakfast and Flag Day appreciation event. **Commissioner Fisher made a motion that an additional \$1,000 is requested in the budget for special events (i.e., ribbon cutting ceremonies, business outreach, business thank you breakfasts and lunches) to be justified with plans to spend that money. Secretary Matte seconded the motion.** Commissioner Rositano stated that there should be additional documentation that specifies the plan of the Economic Development Commission. **The motion carried, 4-1, with Commissioner Rositano voting in opposition of the motion, and Chair Kurfehs, Secretary Matte, Commissioner Fisher, and Commissioner LaTerra voting in favor of the motion.** Commissioner Rositano asked if both the Economic Development Commission's and the Economic & Community Development Manager's budget may be combined.

Update: Town Center District: B. Paynter stated that work is being done with property owners on easement acquisitions necessary for the streetscape.

The Commission discussed the February 7th referendum. Chair Kurfehs stated that Brookfield Village needs to have the first phase of the Town's streetscape complete before issuance of their certificate of occupancy. Commissioner Rositano noted that only the streetscape work needs to be complete, which does not require amenities to be done. Commissioner Fisher questioned how the Town will have streetscape without amenities, such as street lamps and benches. Commissioner Rositano stated that he would like the Town to present the entire project not in phases but as one plan with the total projected cost of all of the work. Commissioner Rositano also mentioned that the referendum amount would add five percent to the Town's debt, which he

said should not be overlooked. B. Paynter shared the proposed work for phase one of the streetscape. Chair Kurfehs mentioned that streetscape can bring a very high return on investment for both the Town and property owners. Commissioner Fisher stated that he believes the Town will not be able to grow if this referendum does not pass. Commissioner Fisher also indicated that the tax revenue to be generated from Brookfield Village and other approved developments in the area will far outweigh the cost of the initial investment. Chair Kurfehs expressed concerns that if this referendum is not approved, it will set a negative tone for developers. Commissioner Rositano stated that he had moved to Brookfield for the school systems, not for retail or restaurant uses. Commissioner Rositano listed the projects in which the Town may have to soon invest. Commissioner LaTerra asked Commissioner Rositano how he would see the town progress, and Commissioner Rositano replied that he would see private business build development. Chair Kurfehs explained potential investment for the town, especially in the Town Center District where the density of development is higher per acre and therefore additional tax revenue per acre is available. Commissioners shared the reasons they had first moved to Brookfield. Chair Kurfehs noted that there are 169 towns throughout the State, and Brookfield must attract developers if it is to build a town center. Chair Kurfehs and B. Paynter explained to Commissioner Rositano that phase one of the streetscape work has nothing to do with the next potential phases of the project. Commissioner LaTerra also mentioned that before any work can be done for phase two, the Town would need to host another referendum for approval of the funds for the work. Commissioner Fisher stated that he is not sure if the Town would be able to grow with Commissioner Rositano’s mindset. Incentive programs of other towns were also mentioned.

Chair Kurfehs asked the Commission for votes on the following questions:

1. Are you in favor of the Phase One Streetscape Plan? **Chair Kurfehs called for a vote on the question. The following voted in favor and in opposition:**
In Favor of Phase One Streetscape Plan: Chair Kurfehs; Secretary Matte; Commissioner LaTerra; Commissioner Fisher
In Opposition of Phase One Streetscape Plan: Commissioner Rositano
2. Are you in favor of spending \$1.7 million to complete Phase One? **Chair Kurfehs called for a vote on the question. The following voted in favor and in opposition:**
In Favor: Chair Kurfehs; Secretary Matte; Commissioner Fisher; Commissioner LaTerra
In Opposition: Commissioner Rositano

Chair Kurfehs explained that the purpose of his calling a vote was to obtain information from the Commission so he may notify the rest of the Town and speak with the press to make others aware of how the Commission views this referendum question. Commissioner Rositano requested to represent the Commission with Chair Kurfehs, and Chair Kurfehs replied that he will represent the Commission as the Chairman. **Commissioner Fisher made a motion to authorize the Chair to write a letter on behalf of the EDC in support of the bond issue and to urge people to support the bond funding. Commissioner LaTerra seconded the motion.** Commissioner Rositano stated that if the Chair is to write a letter in favor of referendum approval, he will write a letter in opposition. Chair Kurfehs stated that Brookfield Village has a commitment to the Town and the Town has a commitment to the developer. B. Paynter stated that she has met with business owners who would like to see support for this referendum. Commissioner Rositano stated that he is planning to resign from the Board, and he will submit

his resignation letter next week. **The motion passed, 4-1, with Chair Kurfehs, Commissioner Fisher, Commissioner LaTerra and Secretary Matte voting in favor of the motion, and Commissioner Rositano voting in opposition to the motion.**

Update on Website Functioning & Newsletter Contact List: Fact Sheet Revision –

Commissioner Fisher asked that photos be updated on the website. E. Cole Prescott will present the Google Analytics Report for the quarter and the Fact Sheet Revision at the next meeting. Commissioner Fisher stated that the EDC may want to support a buy local campaign. The Craft Center and the Library would like to add an innovation center, and B. Paynter encouraged the three entities (Craft Center, Library, Economic Development Commission) to work together on this endeavor. B. Paynter noted Brookfield’s highly educated workforce as an asset to such endeavor.

Information for News & “Blurb” Write-Ups: B. Paynter sends updates to E. Cole Prescott to post on the website.

Other Discussion – EDC Roles: Chair Kurfehs shared his draft of the Commission’s duties to better define how the roles of the Commission and manager can work together. B. Paynter shared some of her daily roles with the Commission, which include working with developers to find locations to outfit, disseminating information to businesses and residents, and hosting meetings about economic development. Her primary goal is to increase communication throughout the Town. Chair Kurfehs asked B. Paynter to add more detail to the information sheet about her role and return it to him. Chair Kurfehs also asked the Commissioners to review the draft of the EDC roles and return with their comments. B. Paynter asked the Commission if they would like to send her content for the newsletter. She asked that information be sent to her by February 15th. Commissioner Fisher asked for B. Paynter’s assistance with a project he is compiling to demonstrate the benefits of development throughout the town, and to show that the recently approved apartments are not increasing school enrollment rates.

Other Discussion – Upcoming Focus Groups: Chair Kurfehs explained that the Western CT Council of Governments will be hosting a focus group about real estate on February 15th and about small business on March 7th and he will moderate both groups.

Other Discussion – Resignation: Commissioner Rositano’s resignation was briefly discussed.

Adjournment: At 9:00 PM, Commissioner Fisher made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner LaTerra seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.