

TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Economic Development Commission

302 Main Street □ Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475
Telephone (860) 395-3139 □ FAX (860) 395-3125

MEETING AGENDA

(November 14, 2013)

Present: Carol Conklin, John Decristoforo, David Cole, Bruce Greenfield, Jim Keating, Maura Richards, Liz Swenson and Susan Beckman, Lauren Ashe (late)

Absent: Todd Roberts

1. Call meeting to order 7:06 P.M.
2. The meeting started with a welcome for our new Executive Director Susan Beckman and a thank you for the Interim Executive Director Commissioner Decristoforo. Cider and sweets were served.
2. Accept Minutes from September 12, 2013.
 - On a motion (Cole/Greenfield) the Minutes of September 12, 2013 were accepted. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Old Business:**

-Rt. 1 Task Force Joint Meeting (ZC/EDC)

Commissioner Keating reported that the Mariner's Way report has been well received. From an EDC perspective the Post Road East neighborhood was identified long ago as the section of Old Saybrook most in need of a plan. Development of a hotel, an academic institution and a large format retail store would go a long way to reset the grand list to the level of a decade ago. Other aspects of the plan will provide a path for walkers and bikers and a much improved appearance. The next step is an implementation plan which will involve our new Executive Director Susan Beckman.

-Chamber Expo

The EDC shared a table with Score, Commissioners Greenfield and Decristoforo met with a number of businesses. It was concluded that the EDC needs a "Tabletop Banner" for such events.

-River COG Questionnaire

Commissioner Decristoforo reviewed his draft responses to the questionnaire, he and Susan Beckman and Christine Nelson will complete it. .

5. **New Business:**

-Approve 2014 Monthly Meeting Schedule

- On a motion (Cole/Greenfield) the meeting schedule for 2014 was accepted. The motion passed unanimously.

-CT Tourism Letter (Re CTVISIT.COM)

Commissioner Decristoforo has drafted a response; Executive Director Beckman will complete it.

-Saybrook Events Article (Approve/Edit)

Commissioner Decristoforo has completed a draft for submission next week.

-Hartford Courant Article, dated 10/22/13 – Commissioner Cole

Commissioner Cole questioned if a Tax Incentive program as used in Rocky Hill would be appropriate for Old Saybrook. Executive Director Beckman will research the subject and we will discuss it at our December Meeting.

-Max's Place Question – Commissioner Conklin

Commissioner Conklin proposed that the EDC approach Ron Lyman about an Old Saybrook Welcome Center kiosk at the new Max's Place. Commissioner Decristoforo and Executive Director Beckman will speak to Ron Lyman and also explore the possibility of a Tourism Grant to pay for it.

-Town Web Site Review Committee Update

Larry Hayden, the new town IT person, is developing a mission statement for the Old Saybrook website. Executive Director Beckman is on the committee.

-Business Cards

- On a motion (Greenfield/Richards) each of the EDC Commissioners will be given a small number of business cards. The motion passed unanimously.

-Main Street Business Association Dues and Saybrook Stroll Support

- On a motion (Greenfield/Conklin) the EDC will join the Main Street Business Association (\$50 Annual Dues) and support the December 6, 2013 Saybrook Stroll (\$100).. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Interim Executive Director Report

-New Executive Director

Executive Director Susan Beckman spoke briefly of her interest in Economic Development and the Promotion of Old Saybrook. Her resume indicates that she will be an excellent leader for our town. Susan reported that First Selectman Fortuna has asked her to develop a STEAP Grant request for the new Police Station.

Commissioner Decristoforo prepared and delivered an extensive list of activities the EDC should consider going forward.

-YTD Budget Review (Update)

Commissioner Decristoforo reviewed our current budget status. The consensus was that the EDC should develop well defined plans for the next year's budget.

Commissioner Decristoforo reminded everyone to sign up on the Town of Old Saybrook web site for copies of all agendas and minutes from OS boards and commissions.

7. Comments from Chairman Swenson

Chairman Swenson reported that she had met with Commissioner Decristoforo and Executive Director Beckman and discussed a number of topics.

One topic was the matrix of EDC Relationships. This led to the EDC participation in Chamber of Commerce Board meetings. They will continue to assess the level of our participation.


Chairman Swenson spoke of the quest for employers who might pay a "living wage" in Old Saybrook. One suggestion was attracting employers in the biomed businesses. Several Commissioners suggested that Dr. David Shearer could provide some guidance to the EDC. Commissioner Keating will contact Dr. Shearer and invite him to an upcoming EDC Meeting. There were also discussions about a solar energy company.

Commissioner Greenfield reminded us that the EDC (and his other activity SCORE) need to focus on both attracting business and retaining business.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:50PM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James D. Keating", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

James D. Keating – Secretary