## **Logo, company name Description automatically generatedTown of New Fairfield**

**4 Brush Hill Road**

**New Fairfield, Connecticut**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, July 21, 2021**

**Present:** Myke Furhman

Greg Manning

Kathleen DiTullio

Mark Werner

James Kloos

Michael Kiviat

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Mr. Furhman.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Approval of Minutes – June 21, 2021 Regular Meeting**

*Mr. Furhman moved to approve the minutes of June 21, 2021, seconded by Mr. Werner and passed 5-0-1*

*Aye: DiTullio, Werner, Kloos, Kiviat, Manning*

*Abstain: Furhman*

**4. Opening Public Comment & Participation**

There were none.

**5. Correspondence & Announcements**

Mr. Furhman said he hopes the Commission would have a new commissioner on board by the next meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**6. Beautification Project – Signs Update**

Mr. Manning said the sign project suffered a setback as the State denied the two applications that were submitted. He said the State seemed challenged with the graphics as the Commission had hoped to have a photo of Candlewood Lake with the logo and Welcome to New Fairfield. He felt the State could not get past the busyness of the sign as they look for the more normal green background with white lettering on the signs.

Ms. DiTullio asked if a sign could be placed in front of the Consolidated property as that might not be State highway property.

Mr. Furhman asked about the signs that New Milford has placed on Route 7 and wondered if because they were wood and more ornate if the State might approve of that type of signage. He said it sounds like the photo realism sign is an issue for the State. Mr. Manning said the New Milford signs might be far enough back where the New Fairfield sign is clearly on State property. Mr. Furhman asked how far off the road the state control goes and Mr. Manning said it was his understanding that it was three feet.

Mr. Manning was looking for input on next steps and Mr. Furhman said the commission would need to find a more suitable location for the proposed sign than the intersection. Ms.DiTullio noted the WestCOG story in the paper about Route 37 and 39 and suggested the Saw Mill Road island might be a good spot for this sign.

Mr. Manning said he would reach out to Public Works regarding Town owned sites and maybe to get guidance on other sites. He said he would send a picture to the State of the wooden sign in New Fairfield Center to see if the State might approve of that type of sign.

Mr. Furhman suggested a sign could be placed along the Squantz Pond area since it is heavily traveled.

Mr. Manning will continue to pursue sign options with the Town and the State.

**7. Local Business Promotion.- Video project**

Mr. Furhman said he has been busy with work but was hoping to get back to the project in August. He asked the Commission members if they felt the videos that were shot with masks should be reshot and they felt it would be good to do so. Mr. Manning asked if they should purchase space on FaceBook to post the videos that were done and Mr. Furhman said they could do that especially with the ones without masks. This can be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Furhman said there was some discussion in the minutes about the Town website having old videos and he said a video postcard could fall under the EDC purview but did not feel some of the website videos would.

**8. Small Business Grants**

Mr. Furhman said he has been away and asked if Mr. Kloos or Mr. Kiviat had heard anything more about this. Neither Mr. Kloos or Mr. Kiviat had heard but Mr. Kloos said he would reach out.

**9. Branding/Logo Update**

Mr. Furhman said he had put in for payment for Doug Ridgeway’s work on the new logo. He said the discussion now is around use of the brand in terms of stickers, etc. Mr. Kiviat and Mr. Kloos met last week to discuss. Mr. Kloos said they discussed a big introduction to the branding logo perhaps starting with a press release. They could also get a banner, put it on FaceBook, the Town Tribune, maybe do a video with Mr. Ridgeway on how he came up with the design. Mr. Kiviat said the press release would be the easiest part but they could get a banner for high school games or for the center of Town for events such as the Sip & Stroll, for instance. Mr. Furhman said they could just start using the logo and then roll things out over time. He said the FaceBook profile and EDC website would need to be updated.

Mr. Werner said at Sip & Stroll they received a wine glass to go around to the participating shops and perhaps the new logo could be placed on that glass. He said he would be willing to discuss this with Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Furhman said the logo could be put on several items and even suggested a wine cooler kit that could be made a raffle prize. Mr. Kloos noted that the New Fairfield Town Fair is slated for September 18th and EDC has had a table in the past.

Mr. Furhman said he does not want EDC to ask local businesses for gift certificates to give away but wanted a draw for people to come to the EDC tent. Mr. Manning said EDC could buy a gift card to support local businesses. Mr. Furhman suggested a 50/50 raffle drawing which could help EDC purchase the gift cards and Mr. Manning reminded him that there is only one meeting between now and the Town Fair. Mr. Manning said this is why he suggested stickers with the logo because people could take them and put them on laptops, refrigerators, cars, etc. There was further discussion about what could be offered which would have the logo on it and Ms. DiTullio suggested someone check with Parks and Recreation so as not to duplicate what other groups might be doing she also suggested having a banner printed. Mr. Furhman looked up the price of a banner to be done by Staples to get a price and thought one could be done for around $200.

Mr. Manning said the Parks and Recreation events that are upcoming include Sip & Stroll, Trick or Treating, Turkey Trot, and the Holiday Light Parade. He suggested EDC might consider organizing a restaurant week during October.

Mr. Furhman said the banner could be ordered and used at all events.

*Mr. Manning moved to spend up to $200 on a banner that would fit a table and one that would fit a canopy, seconded by Ms. DiTullio and passed unanimously.*

Mr. Kiviat said he would get a price from the local printer.

Mr. Ridgeway asked about the logo and the discussion that was held about adding Economic Development Commission on the bottom in a semi-circular style. He asked if it was meant to just be an EDC logo or a Town logo and Mr. Furhman said he would not mind other departments using it and thought adding EDC on the bottom might show them how to make it their own. He also felt Parks and Recreation should want to use the logo. Mr. Kiviat asked if t-shirts and hats were produced would it be printed with EDC on it and Mr. Furhman said he felt the wine glass should certainly have the EDC logo but t-shirts would have the general logo.

**10. Family Event Discussion to draw people to New Fairfield**

Ms. DiTullio said creating an event would require some lead time. She suggested a holiday window design contest with a logoed item as a prize. Mr. Furhman said he had suggested an Octoberfest a couple of months ago but now obviously they have had to move to a holiday discussion. He suggested reaching out to the property owners about either all white lights or colored lights to light up the Town. He said EDC has about $250 to spend per event and he already has Santa on standby.

Mr. Manning said this was part of his conversation with Parks and Recreation about partnering with EDC. He said he invited the Director but she was unable to make this meeting but would invite her to the next meeting.

There was discussion about putting together a raffle prize and allowing people to go to businesses in Town to turn their receipt in for a raffle ticket. Mr. Manning suggested they might want to talk to the Town Attorney to make sure this could be done without issue but thought this was a doable idea. He also suggested a restaurant weekend say on a Friday and Saturday where restaurants offer a price fixe menu.

Mr. Furhman suggested a New Years Eve event. Mr. Manning said Danbury is hosting a Downtown Grub Crawl and he said businesses had said in the past they would like a summer sip and stroll to capture the summer residents. Mr. Furhman said the New Years Eve event could give people reason to go out.

Mr. Manning said he would send an email to Parks and Recreation to invite them to the next EDC meeting to develop a plan about how they can work together.

**11. New Fairfield Town Postcard**

Ms. DiTullio said she, Mr. Kiviat and Mr. Ridgeway met to discuss the current postcard and felt there was too much information on it. They discussed a redesign of the front to make it more pleasing and then the back would have a map highlighting important locations.

Mr. Ridgeway said the front would have a photograph of something "New Fairfield" and the other side would have three to five key points.

Mr. Furhman reminded all that the old postcard was meant to be handed to realtors and prospective businesses for economic development. He said the design can definitely be improved but he didn't think too much information should be taken off. Ms. DiTullio felt the information could be placed in a more appealing way.

Mr. Kiviat said he now understood how the postcard was intended to be used originally. Mr. Furhman said there could be more than one postcard - one for business and one for tourism. Ms. DiTullio said the business and real estate postcard should be the priority.

**12. EDC Commission Participation in upcoming New Fairfield Events (July 4 parade, Sip & Stroll, etc.)**

Mr. Furhman said this item had been discussed in regard to other items on this agenda.

**13. Potential Signage at High School (per Kathleen DiTullio photo)**

Ms. DiTullio asked to table this item to the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**14. New and Prospective Businesses**

Mr. Furhman said there is a new deli getting ready to open and noted the information Mr. Manning had sent out about New Fairfield residents opening a brewery in Danbury. Mr. Manning suggested someone should reach out to the new deli owners about their experience in opening their business in New Fairfield. Ms. DiTullio said she would go in and speak to them once they opened. She said she had heard from another business about issues they were having but did not want to discuss it in public.

Mr. Furhman suggested they should restart the business Happy Hours so they could hear from businesses in an informal setting about any concerns they had. Mr. Manning felt the September/October timeframe would be a good restart for this.

**15. Return to in-person meetings**

Mr. Furhman said in polling the members of the Commission the majority seemed to want to continue the virtual meetings so the next meeting would be virtual.

After a brief discussion it was determined some members could not make the scheduled meeting of August 16th so it was decided to cancel that meeting and reschedule a special meeting for August 23rd at 6 pm.

**16. Closing Public Comment**

**17. Adjournment**

*Mr. Furhman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 pm, seconded by Mr. Manning and passed*

*unanimously.*

Minutes recorded by:



Recording Secretary

Received by Email on 7/23/2021 @ 10:14 am

by Pamela J. Dohan, Town Clerk, New Fairfield