



**Town of New Fairfield
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, Connecticut**



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, August 23, 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 6:05 pm by Mr. Furhman.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes – July 21, 2021 Regular Meeting

*Mr. Furhman moved to approve the minutes of July 21, 2021, seconded by Ms. DiTullio and passed 6-0.
Aye: DiTullio, Werner, Kloos, Kiviat, Manning, Furhman*

4. Opening Public Comment & Participation

There were none.

5. Correspondence & Announcements

There were none.

OLD BUSINESS

6. Beautification Project – Signs Update

Mr. Manning said he has not been able to reconnect with the State yet. He will continue his efforts on the sign project.

7. Local Business Promotion.- Video project

Mr. Furhman said he has made a request for a video carousel on the website so that the videos being produced are not just stacked one on top of the other. He also said he was going to have time to start filming again and asked if the commissioners thought they should reshoot without masks. Mr. Manning asked if there was any possibility of shooting outdoor scenes – Portofino’s had a band outside for instance. Mr. Werner said the band was to celebrate their 30th anniversary but they do have outdoor seating. Ms. DiTullio said the yoga center does outdoor yoga on weekends. Mr. Furhman said they could look at restaurants with patio space, ice cream shops, landscaping, etc.

8. Small Business Grants

Mr. Kloos has not heard anything from First Selectman DelMonaco but will try again.

9. Branding/Logo Update

Mr. Kiviat had worked with Godfather Promotions to order two banners which will cost \$120 and will be available in time for upcoming events.

Mr. Furhman said the logo is starting to be used – the agenda, FaceBook, and website.

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

A. Parks and Recreation feedback - Manning

B. New Year's Eve Event

C. Restaurant Week/Weekend

Mr. Furhman said they did have a call with Parks and Recreation about events they are doing and how EDC can work with them or fill in on dates they don't have anything going on. Mr. Manning said Parks and Recreation is sponsoring a 5K road race on November 21st and the tree lighting will be November 27th with a rain date of the 28th. They will be running the Great Light Fight again and will be judging for a winner this year which they did not do last year. EDC could sponsor a window dressing contest with a prize. Sip and Stroll will be postponed due to Covid and possibly be held next summer. They might do a luminaria lighting with a Christmas choir that could stroll through the businesses. They will also sponsor a drive by Santa opportunity and would like to hand out goodie bags during that event.

Parks and Recreation also mentioned New Fairfield Day and asked EDC to consider a \$300 sponsorship for a band, and maybe a photo contest or a calendar.

Mr. Furhman suggested a carol sing at the gazebo. All that would be needed would be a PA system and a song book. Mr. Manning said he liked the idea and said after the tree lighting there are three open weekends that could be considered. Ms. DiTullio suggested one weekend be chosen and make it an annual event to be built on over the years. Mr. Furhman suggested vendors could be invited to set up tables. He said a date should be set so advertising can begin. Mr. Werner suggested December 11th as a possible date because the weekend before is in the middle of Hanukkah. Mr. Furhman asked how the gazebo was secured? Mr. Manning asked if they want to only be at the gazebo or would they go through the businesses? Mr. Werner noted the tree will be down by the gazebo. Ms. DiTullio said that Halloween was difficult with people crossing the roads and the drivers were getting upset so the event should be at one location. Mr. Manning said he would reach out to the First Selectman's office or Parks and Recreation to reserve the gazebo for December 11th for the hours from 5 pm to 8 pm. Mr. Manning asked if there would be lights as it would be dark at this time of year and Ms. DiTullio said Parks and Recreation has light towers. Mr. Furhman said they would call this a Community Carol Sing and send an e-mail to the businesses to see if they wanted to participate.

Mr. Furhman said a New Year's Eve event would not happen this year and perhaps a restaurant week should be held in the Spring.

12. EDC Commission Participation in upcoming New Fairfield Events

Mr. Manning noted New Fairfield Day is coming up and said EDC has a table at the event. He asked what the Commission wanted to do at their table. He said he would be unavailable to participate but he has the tent, tables, etc. for use. Mr. Kloos said the EDC just needs to be present and do some networking and with the new banner they can showcase the logo. Mr. Furhman said he is more inclined to use the EDC funds for a giveaway versus a sponsorship. Mr. Kloos suggested a car magnet. Mr. Manning suggested buying enough to hand out for New Fairfield Days and the December 11th carol sing. Mr. Kiviat said Godfather could probably print the magnets. Mr. Kloos said he would ask them for a price. Mr. Werner suggested a sticker versus a magnet. Mr. Manning said to do both.

Mr. Werner moved to spend up to \$500 for a combination of logo car magnets and logo stickers, seconded by Mr. Manning.

Mr. Manning said these should be used for 9/18 and 12/11.

The motion passed unanimously.

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

Mr. Manning said that by December the Commission should work out what events it wants to be involved in for 2022 given how quickly time goes by.

11. New Fairfield Town Postcard

Mr. Furhman asked Douglass Ridgeway to present his concept of the front of the postcard. Mr. Ridgeway discussed the designs he was suggesting including a straight photograph of Candlewood Lake, for instance, with text; the windmill with manipulation; oil based manipulations; posterizing methods; and an atlas map of New Fairfield from 1867. Ms. DiTullio said she liked the windmill postcard and asked if there could be more than one. Mr. Furhman said there should be as the natural beauty doesn't necessarily speak to the business recruitment. Ms. DiTullio said most of the businesses that are here started after a person moved to New Fairfield and then started their businesses. Mr. Kiviat said he liked the windmill postcard but also a shot of fall foliage. Mr. Manning suggested either the Candlewood Lake photo or the windmill design could be turned into a picture that Mr. Ridgeway signs, then EDC framed it as a potential raffle drawing. Mr. Furhman said the next step is the information on the back of the postcard. Mr. Manning said he had used CERC for the initial information on the back. Mr. Werner said the 2020 Census Data just came out and he can pull that information together. Ms. DiTullio said she could help with the real estate information.

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

Ms. DiTullio said she saw the proposed sign at an athletic facility when she attended a lacrosse tournament. She said there were a lot of people in attendance and the sign let everyone know more about the community. She felt this could be placed at the high school when people come to sports events. She also felt a brochure holder could be placed on it for the new postcards. She will resend the photo of the sign that she took for a future discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

14. New and Prospective Businesses

A. Return of New Fairfield EDC Happy Hour – Sept/Oct

Mr. Furhman said the discussion about the Happy Hour will have to be tabled for now given the Covid variant outbreak.

Ms. DiTullio said she and Mr. Kloos had stopped by Froggy's, the new deli in town, to discuss any issues they had with the Town permitting process. The deli was extremely busy when they went and they purposely went after lunch time. The owner said he had no issues with the Town, that he was able to get is permitting in about one month and noted another business owner in Danbury took two months to get their permit. Mr. Furhman asked if they had difficulty hiring help and Ms. DiTullio said they did not ask but the deli seem well staffed when they were there.

Mr. Manning felt the community, and perhaps the Commission, could do better in terms of welcoming new businesses or recognizing milestones. He noted the 30th anniversary of Portofino's and thought either the First Selectman or the Commission should make up a proclamation or organize a ribbon cutting for a new business. Mr. Furhman said the proclamation was in the purview of the EDC and felt that the Commission needed to somehow be part of the process for a new business.

15. Return to in-person meetings

Mr. Manning suggested this item be taken off the agenda until the beginning of next year since the virtual format was working for this Commission. Mr. Werner asked if the Town was able to do a hybrid model where the public could participate virtually. Paul Gouveia said the Town cannot yet offer that opportunity as there are technological items needed for hardware. He also said the space is an issue as on any given night there could be two or three groups meeting but only one room might be available for the hybrid model once equipment is procured.

16. Closing Public Comment

There was none.

17. Adjournment

Mr. Furhman moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 pm, seconded by Mr. Werner and passed unanimously.

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

Minutes recorded by:



Recording Secretary

**Received by email on 8/25/2021 @ 8:30 a.m.
by: Holly Z Smith, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield**