



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020, 7:00 PM
ZOOM MEETING
(IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE NOT PERMITTED DUE TO COVID-19)
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROVIDED VIA ZOOM)**

PRESENT: Chairman Sean Kelly, Vice Chairman Chris Todd, Regular Members Donna Resutek and David Hurley, and Alternates Stefanie Cunningham and Bryan Platt

ABSENT: None

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Christine Post, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Sean Kelly called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (on non-agenda items): **NONE**

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

Chairman Kelly made an announcement that due to COVID-19 and the strain on town resources, including the Planning Department, the main focus of the Economic Development Commission will be to provide support in assisting local businesses to reopen instead of the usual agenda items.

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Nothing new to report

2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Nothing new to report

3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices

a. 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development, Chapter 6 Summary, Considerations/Strategies for Economic and Commercial Development

Ms. Houlihan updated the Commission that due to COVID-19 the Town has gone through different processes to adhere to social distancing and health guidelines, such as Zoom meetings. Prior to COVID-19, one of the Commission's goals was to

potentially create a long-term strategic plan. She reported that the communities she reached out to have been using their Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) guidelines, instead of creating a separate long-term strategic plan, to stay on task with priorities.

4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Ms. Houlihan reported that there are no new abatement applications at this time. The Big Y Express should be in line to get their Certificate of Occupancy very soon and the Planning Department is working with them to get their businesses open.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

a. Discussion – Plan to Reopen Connecticut associated with COVID-19.

Chairman Kelly opened up this topic for discussion as to what the Commission can do to help support local businesses as they start to reopen and noted that the Town has already suspended regulations regarding temporary signs with regards to maximum number of signs and time limits so that businesses can communicate with the public alternate hours, take-out options, etc.

Commissioner Hurley asked Ms. Houlihan if she had been receiving emails from UCONN's economic development list-serve. Ms. Houlihan reported that early on during the pandemic the Town sent out an email blast to local businesses and posted on social media the information Chairman Kelly mentioned regarding temporary signage. She further stated that the Town has received many emails from many different sources and they have been going through them to find reputable and pertinent resources to disseminate to the public which they share with the First Selectman's office for posting on social media. First Selectman Spielman organized a Zoom meeting with all local restaurants to discuss plans to reopen and the Town will be distributing a 1 page document with instructions on how to apply for temporary outdoor dining certificates or expansions of existing outdoor dining facilities.

Chairman Kelly indicated that there is information available from the Town Planner's Office regarding SBA loans and other state relief programs posted on the Economic Development Commission's (EDC) webpage.

Commissioner Hurley initiated discussion regarding outdoor dining requirements and Ms. Houlihan reviewed with the Commission the Governor's latest official Executive Order which can be found on Ellington's website. Vice Chairman Todd wanted to know if the Town was planning on providing concrete FAQ's for local businesses regarding the reopening process. Ms. Houlihan replied they are in the beginning stages of addressing the Governor's Executive Order and she imagines general guidelines being shared via a possible press release, social media updates and the EDC business distribution list.

Commissioner Platt will continue to work on a Disaster Management Plan.

Ms. Houlihan will email an article from the May 2020 issue of Connecticut Magazine about The Milk Man for the Commission to review. Ms. Houlihan reported that Ms. Spielman stated that Oakridge Dairy's home delivery is now over 2,000 per week.

Vice Chairman Todd praised the town's COVID-19 resources link on the town's webpage but indicated it might be more beneficial to list out the resources by business and category.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the February 12, 2020 regular meeting minutes

MOVED (TODD) SECONDED (PLATT) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 12, 2020 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

2. Correspondence:

- a. Announcement to Ellington Businesses for Relaxed Temporary Sign Regulations to Help Advertise Alternative Hours & Business Offerings Associated with Executive Orders for COVID19.
- b. Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development Announcement: Small Business Administration Assistance, Department of Revenue Services Filing Extensions, and Unemployment Assistance Associated with COVID19.
- c. AdvanceCT Surveys to Help Reopen Connecticut for Businesses and Employees.

Commissioner Hurley explained that this email went out to whomever AdvanceCT had contact information for and asked that it be forwarded by the initial recipients.

- d. Small Business Administration Economic Injury Disaster Loans for U.S. Agricultural Businesses.
- e. Sample Letter - Invitation to Join Ellington Business Email Distribution List.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (PLATT) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Post, Recording Clerk