

GUILFORD
Economic Development Commission
MINUTES

August 4, 2020
8:00 A.M.

**Due to the Coronavirus 19 pandemic, Town meetings are held
Online via Zoom.com go to [www.http//ci.guilford.ct.us](http://ci.guilford.ct.us)**

Commissioners: Chair Mark Wasserman, Vice Chair Ted Sands, Amy Earls, Wendy Dockray,
Michael Meisel, Damian Gunningsmith, Dave Egan (Alt)(arrived 8:10)

Absent: J.P. Sullivan, Tracy Brent Calafiore (Alt)

Town Officials: None

Guests: Sheri Cote, President, Shoreline Chamber of Commerce

1. Communication and Public Forum (limited to 5 minutes) / Call to Order

At 8:04 am, Chair Mark Wasserman called to order the regular meeting.

The Chair and five regular members were present for a quorum with one alternate.

2. Guest Speaker - None

3. Approval of July 7, 2020 Minutes

Upon review,

Motion: Ted Sands moved to approve the July 7, 2020 minutes, seconded by Michael Meisel.

*Vote: Carried - Ted Sands, Amy Earls, Wendy Dockray, Michael Meisel
Abstained : Damian Gunningsmith (July absence)*

4. Economic Development Coordinator's Report

Chair Mark Wasserman reported that due to the retirement of Economic Development Coordinator Brian McGlone, he will assume some of Brian's duties in collecting information on Guilford businesses. He asked EDC commissioners to also provide him with updates on status of businesses as they are able and provide a monthly report.

Chair Wasserman will replace Coor. McGlone at the monthly Shoreline Chamber of Commerce meetings until the Town hires a new Coordinator. Mark will contact First Selectman Matt Hoey regarding whether a EDC replacement is needed to attend the weekly Town Staff meeting. Discussion reviewed the former "55 and over community" development project across from the Guilford Commons. Planning and Zoning Commission had tabled the project under the original developer, then later rescinded the restriction for "55 and over" housing for a new developer. A road is currently under construction.

5. Chamber of Commerce

Chamber President Sheri Cote reported on several chamber events, including yet not limited to :

- The Chamber continues to hold Zoom.com meetings.
- Virtual Training Sessions to serve businesses and nonprofits at no charge continue to support each other and share concerns. These were created at the beginning of Covid-19.
- The annual July “Wellness Fair” was held 4-1/2 hrs. was held by webinars. The November “Wellness Fair will take place online as well.
- Supporting the Guilford/Branford Annual Sidewalk Sales.
- Round table nonprofit CEOs meeting will continue now every two weeks.
- Online Dale Carnegie Course on August 12 will continue.
- Annual Women in Excellence Awards , October 8, 2020 News 8 Anchor Ann Nyberg will host the virtual event.
- Chamber is looking for new office space possibly in Guilford.
- Online "Town Hall" meetings with legislators are held as needed.
- Annual Taste of Shoreline will be held September 26 on the Town Green.

6. Chairman's Report

Chair Mark Wasserman reported :

- There was a Drive By Parade, in front of Town Hall, in honor of Economic Development Coordinator Brian McGlone upon his retirement. First Selectman's Executive Assistant Karen Quercia assisted Mark in coordinating the celebration with Selectman Hoey along with the Police and Fire Departments. Brian is credited for his ability to connect with so many in the community.
- Businesses are happy to be open again and following Gov. Lamont's public health safety guidelines.
- “Plimpton and Hills” is under construction originally expected to open in September.
- Mark will email local businesses asking to update the EDC on their status' in order for EDC to coordinate support.
- Restaurants are missing the Bar revenue.
- Amy Earls advised that “Onyx Hut” clothing store will be closing.

7. Subcommittees

Signage

Michael Meisel reported that he and Chair Wasserman, Dave Egan and First Selectman Hoey met regarding the CT Dept. of Transportation (DOT) “Adopt a Ramp Program” and signage. Michael will schedule a meeting with DOT and Guilford Public Works Director Tom Fillion to discuss the “Welcome to Guilford” signs, maintenance and grounds at Guilford I-95 exits. Clarification is needed regarding the Town responsibilities. Other towns have hired landscape contractors.

Economic Development Incentives

Amy Earls reported that the subcommittee on tax incentives (Amy, Damian and J.P.) had met with First Selectman Hoey on business tax incentives. Residential and commercial have different targets. Incentives for Town and private property must be tailored to each one.

A concierge may be necessary to assist with applications and other work previously done by the Econ. Dev. Coordinator. The subcommittee will meet again to review options.

Discussion reviewed ways to obtain information on potential properties for development to recommend to the Board of Selectmen, the Town relies on residential taxes versus business, decline in school enrollment, and other issues that impact tax revenue.

8. New Business

Shared Economic Development Coordinator Guilford/Madison

First Selectman Matt Hoey has requested that the EDC review the option to replace Economic Development Coordinator Brian McGlone by sharing a Coordinator with the Town of Madison. The Madison Coordinator recently retired.

Discussion was held on the benefits of this proposal as well as concerns that Guilford may not be served as well as before. The current Guilford/Madison Transfer Station in Guilford is a coordinated effort funded by both towns.

An effective coordinator would possess managerial skills and be adept at addressing each town's unique community and character. Chamber of Commerce President Sheri Cote advised that Branford's Coordinator has also retired and that a Regional Coordinator may be best for all three towns. Discussion reviewed the benefits of a full time coordinator for Guilford.

It was decided that the Town should explore the details of Guilford/Madison Coordinator and whether it would be beneficial for Guilford. Chair Wasserman will compose commissioners' recommendations and submit to First Selectman Hoey.

9. Old Business There was no further business.

10. Approval of Bills

Motion: Wendy Dockray moved to approve the Recording Secretary July invoice for \$62.13, seconded by Dave Egan.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

11. Adjournment

Motion: At 9:22 a.m., Ted Sands moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dave Egan.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Anderson Castellano