

**GUILFORD
Economic Development Commission
MINUTES**

October 1, 2019

8:00 A.M.

Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room, second floor

DRAFT

Commissioners: Chair Mark Wasserman, Vice Chair Ted Sands, Wendy Dockray, Amy Earls, Michael Meisel, Damian Gunningsmith, Dave Egan (Alt), Tracy Brent Calafiore (Alt), J.P. Sullivan (Alt)

Absent: Fran Paranto

Town Officials: Brian McGlone, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests: Town Health Director, Dennis Johnson (arrived 8:20)
Chamber of Commerce, Pres. Sheri Cote

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

At 8:03 am, Chair Mark Wasserman called to order the regular meeting. There were no comments for communication or public forum.

The Chair, five regular members and three alternates were present.

2. Guest Speaker - Town Health Director Dennis Johnson

Director Johnson arrived later in the meeting.

3. Approval of September 3, 2019 Minutes

Motion: Michael Meisel moved to approve the September 3, 2019 minutes, seconded by Wendy Dockray.

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

4. Economic Development Coordinator's Report

Econ. Dev. Coor. Brian McGlone had emailed EDC commissioners his monthly report (below).

Guilford Performing Arts Festival Numerous "last minute" details were worked on to implement this outstanding event, completed Sept. 26-29. 73 performances occurred in 13 venues around town. Weather couldn't have been better. A "kick off" dinner was held on the Green Thursday evening with 110 patrons in attendance. This may have been a first, having a complete dinner with food / refreshments, music and more on the Green. All immediate feedback was positive. The committee will be formally doing a debrief, quantifying attendance and requesting participants to respond to an email survey. We were not aware of any negative issues, all seemed to go very well.

St. George Church Parking Project The agreement between the church and the Town has been signed. We haven't authorized the painting of the parking spaces yet pending approval of the sidewalk easement. A couple of issues have just surfaced concerning the easement that needs to be addressed. We won't start using the St. George lot until this is resolved, so we haven't started approaching merchants yet to sign their agreements. Additionally, two trees need to be removed before sidewalk construction will commence. St. George and Todd Taylor are responsible for the trees which we are anticipating removal later in October. Although we missed the prime summer season, we are still striving to complete this project for the holiday season and be ready to support the 2020 tourism season.

CGI Video Project - Numerous conference calls have occurred, primarily with me, Matt, Amy and Tracy, reviewing our past video to aid in defining our new video series. Our video chapters will be : Welcome-Quality of Life-Attractions-Education-Business & Industry-Real Estate and Relocation-and Community Organizations. We generated a basic letter in collaboration with Sheri /Shoreline Chamber, that CGI will use as they target businesses for sponsorship. A "Coming Soon" link is on our Town website homepage. The letter will be there and an intro video that Matt filmed. Amy and Tracy provided much support with the chapter copy. We are now defining the pictures/video opportunities to align with the copy. The videographer will be in Guilford 10/10 and 10/11 and I will take he/she around town for efficiency. It will then take 6-8 weeks for the final video to be completed. Paul Freeman and the school system are handling the Education section.

Guilford Commons "Parking Lot Party" – took place on Saturday Sept 14 from 11am to 4pm (although cut almost 45 minutes due to a rain shower). Very well attended, much excitement and exposure for the location and stores. Beer tasting area yielded almost \$1,000 for the SARAH Foundation. Everything went well with no complaints reported. They hope to make this at least an annual event and possibly even a semi-annual (spring-fall) event.

EDC Development Incentives - meeting scheduled for Sept. 11 was cancelled as we targeted 3 commercial realtors and none were available at that date/time. We will try again within the next month. In collaboration with the North Branford EDC, coordinating an October visit by new CERC CEO - Peter Denious and Courtney Hendricson with Brook and Whittle principals to discuss what the state is doing to help businesses stay and grow in CT. Incentives expected to be a part of the discussion.

5 Town Project - prepared responses to a 5 question questionnaire as a preplanning exercise. Expecting team members to gather within the next 30 days.

Miscellaneous

- **Fair Street Advisors** opened at 101 Fair Street (historic dark red building at corner of Route 1).
Principals, Vin Esposito, Connor Dolan and Steve Cortese.
- **Jersey Mike's** opened in Big Y Plaza.
- **Hair Teaching School and Salon** (need correct name) also opened in Big Y Plaza.
- **Vietnom's Restaurant** opened last week (former Sunnyside Up location).

- **Hamden Incubator "Burrough 496"** participated in CERC incubator training and toured 25k sf building to be used for start-ups and small businesses, owned and operated by the Hamden Economic Development Corporation. Ten year project requiring about \$12 million investment, obtained through state and federal grants, private donations and limited borrowing from a bank.
- **Guilford Events Magazine** 4th quarter input submitted, magazine due week of October 7.

5. Chamber of Commerce Report

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce Chair Sheri Cote reported on several activities including a list of upcoming events from October 1 through November 13 and a flyer for "Women of Excellence", 4th Annual Women of Excellence Awards, Thursday, October 3, 2019. Honorees include Guilford resident and former Selectwoman Atty. Cindy Cartier. Sheri advised that the Chamber Board of Directors has created a strategic plan to create a survey of businesses to help brand the Chamber in the shoreline. There is also a Chamber vacancy for a full time Event Planner.

6. Chairman's Report

Chair Wasserman reported :

- Fresh Market store is holding an event
- The Guilford Fair, in September, continues to be a major family and community event.
- Jersey Mike's had a four day Grand Opening event. Economic Dev. Coordinator Brian McGlone advised that, for every sandwich sold those four days, the company made a monetary donation to the Guilford Foundation.
- Sweet Frog frozen yogurt store had abruptly closed due to lease negotiations with the building owner.
- Sheri Cote advised that new business Oxygen Bar & Wellness had closed. When their lease expired they were unable to find a less expensive location in town.
- There had been an article about Guilford in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal.
- Long term business, Breakwater Books, is for sale.

2. Guest Speaker - Town Health Director Dennis Johnson

Town Health Director Dennis Johnson presented a description of his position which he has held for over twenty years. His department is responsible for public health and water safety by inspecting, permitting and testing water quality at facilities, residents, waterways and Long Island Sound. Pertaining to local businesses, including septic systems by assisting residents and businesses through the permitting process, drainage and waste water disposal inspections, and evaluate and calculate capacity of water use. Most businesses are unaware of requirements. Applicants must be approved by the Health Dept, Planning and Zoning Commission and Inland Wetlands before building permits are issued. Big Y water systems are under the authority of the State of CT, DEEP. Dir. Johnson gave examples of his recent work with Jersey Mike's and TG Hair Academy, as well as, with the DEEP redesigning waste water systems to comply. His department has the authority to inspect and enforce ordinances and cite violators as needed. Inspections are conducted for every food vendor and other waste water disposal at the Guilford Fair and all Town events. He works with other Town departments and other agencies, with architects, contractors, and on variances. Each property must have a Permit of Discharge. The Health

Dept. has data on water usage, which is also provided to the Town and businesses by the CT Water Company.

Discussion reviewed how the EDC can support Dir. Johnson and department. EDC can alert business owners to the procedures required and to contact the Health Dept. Michael Meisel praised Dir. Johnson on his professionalism at all times and his recent work on the Mulberry Point water main and the public fire safety project to replace the older water main on Route 146. Chair Wasserman expressed EDC appreciation to Dir. Johnson.

7. **Subcommittees/Board Liaison Reports**

- **Land Acquisition Committee (LAC) (Paranto)**

Fran Paranto was unable to attend to report.

- **Signage (Meisel, Egan)**

Michael Meisel reported that clarification is needed for ramp maintenance for the DOT Adopt-a-Ramp program. The Town has been approved to install "Welcome to Guilford" signs at I-95 exit ramps in Guilford.

- **Parking (Sands, Paranto, Orce)**

Ted Sands reported that the Town, St. George Church and owner of the parking area behind businesses along Whitfield Street continue to work on finalizing an easement agreement. (see Coor. McGlone report) After agreement, the Board of Selectmen must approve and a Town hearing is required. EDC continues to review any proposals for additional parking in town center.

8. **New Business**

Chamber Chair Cote submitted a "Local First#Your Community" flyer for a 'shop local' event being planned for the holiday season.

Discussion was held on the need for an EDC subcommittee to review all signs in town and their locations. Public safety and advertising must work together. Obstruction of driver site lines must be avoided. State laws, local ordinances and enforcement will be reviewed. Further discussion will be held at subsequent meetings.

9. **Old Business** There was no business.

11. Approval of Bills

Motion: Ted Sands moved to approve the Recording Secretary September invoice for \$70.00, seconded by Michael Meisel.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

12. Adjournment

Motion: At 9:34 a.m., Damian Gunningsmith moved to adjourn the meeting seconded by Ted Sands.

Vote: Carried - Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Anderson Castellano
Recording Secretary