

**GUILFORD  
Economic Development Commission  
MINUTES**

**February 4, 2020**

**8:00 A.M.**

**Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room, second floor**

Commissioners: Chair Mark Wasserman, Vice Chair Ted Sands, Amy Earls, Dave Egan (Alt),  
J.P. Sullivan (Alt), Tracy Brent Calafiore (Alt) (8:08)

Absent: Damian Gunningsmith, Wendy Dockray, Michael Meisel

Town Officials: Brian McGlone, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests: Town Planner, George Kral (left 9:05)  
First Selectman, Matt Hoey  
Human Resource Director, Mitchell Goldblatt (left 9:05)  
Town Engineer, Janice Plaziak (left 9:05)  
Selectwoman, Sandy Ruoff (8:10)  
Chamber of Commerce, Jim Rochford (8:10)  
Tax Assessor, Jennifer Bernardo (9:00-9:30)  
REX Executive Director, Ginny Kozlowski (8:00-9:05)  
REX Marketing Director, Barbara Malmberg (8:00-9:05)

**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.

The Chair, three regular members and three alternates were present. All alternates were seated to vote.

There were no Public Forum comments.

**2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

*Motion: Amy Earls moved to approve the January 7, 2020 minutes with amendments, seconded by J.P. Sullivan.*

*Vote: Carried - Dave Egan, Amy Earls, J.P. Sullivan, Mark Wasserman  
Abstained - Ted Sands (Absent January)*

**3. Guest Speakers from REX Development :**

**Ginny Kozlowski - Executive Director and Barbara Malmberg - Marketing Director (8-9 AM)**

REX Development Ex. Dir. Ginny Kozlowski and Marketing Director Barbara Malmberg provided a powerpoint presentation on their company's research and data collection assisting municipalities in the CT South Central Region. The directors reviewed demographic and socioeconomic data for the New Haven County labor market and region. They advised that REX works with the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG) ([www.scrkog.org](http://www.scrkog.org)), which the Town of Guilford is a member.

Data reflected that in 2011 Guilford's average age was 37 years old versus 2019 at 49 years old and that most residents do not work in Guilford, the same as a city where workers live in suburbs. A high percentage of workers in the region work for a business with under fifty employees and less than average or no healthcare insurance. Information from the Business Development and Recruitment data used the "CEDAS Best Practices" program (cedas.org). REX is working with Economic Development Fellows to conduct surveys on what is working for businesses to keep growth moving forward.

Some REX research revealed, yet not limited to :

- Additional workforce is needed in the healthcare and hospitality industries.
- The State of CT requires municipalities to plan for and increase affordable housing to accommodate residents who are young adults and seniors. Both these communities desire to remain in home towns where they have established roots and support.
- Maintaining infrastructure, including public transportation, is necessary for municipal growth and services for residents.
- At this time, Milford, CT is listed as the most desirable town in the United States.
- Airports are being expanded, Comcast and other industry must install 5G services to meet CT's residential and business requirement, and new renewable energy options are needed.
- The Wilbur Cross Parkway project to repair tunnels will close traffic in that area for a few years. There is no rail service available.
- Train service for Shoreline East, Metro North and Amtrak have reliability issues, New Haven Harbor is an under utilized Port. It must be dredged to allow for larger vessels.
- Real Estate, Land Use & Sustainable CT : REX and SCRCOG work with Sustainable CT who provide grants for eligible projects.
- CT Census 2020 is vital to obtain correct number of residents in order obtain federal funds including the S.N.A.P. program.
- Small Business Employers require employees with trade skills. To retain businesses, towns can provide low income housing and public transportation.

Director Kozlowski and Director Malmberg were thanked for their presentations.

#### **4. Guest Speaker, Jennifer Bernardo, Guilford Tax Assessor (9:00-9:30)**

Tax Assessor Jen Bernardo provided information on her department's responsibilities answering EDC questions submitted to her prior to this meeting. She explained that business and residential properties are annually assessed as of October 1. Three approaches are used :

Market Approach - Sales comparison to establish values

Cost Approach - Brick and Mortar cost to reconstruct a property

Income Approach - Property is creating income which establishes market value.

Examples and criteria of each approach were reviewed, as well as, rental properties. Assessor Bernardo described her responsibilities and submitted State Statutes regarding abatements (discount incentives). These include multi-family housing, construction to rehabilitate a property, manufacturing, personal property, contaminated property, affordable housing, deed restrictions, and urban industrial.

Discussion was held on criteria to determine an annual assessment for various properties and additional EDC questions. The State of CT requires that all properties be re-evaluated every five years. Owners can come before the Board of Assessment Appeals. If a property is renovated or changed between October 2 and the following October 1 of a given year, the updated value would be included in the following July bill. Eversource utility company is the highest taxpayer in Guilford. Chair Wasserman will compose a summary of EDC questions and Assessor Bernardo's answers. She will review and clarify if necessary.

Assessor Bernardo was thanked for her presentation.

**5. Approval of Bills**

*Motion: Ted Sands moved to approve the Recording Secretary November invoice for \$70.00, seconded by Dave Egan.*

*Vote: Carried - Unanimously*

**6. Adjournment**

*Motion: At 9:34 a.m., Dave Egan moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Amy Earls.*

*Vote: Carried - Unanimously*

Respectfully Submitted,

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*Judith Anderson Castellano*  
Recording Secretary