

**GUILFORD
Economic Development Commission
MINUTES**

March 2, 2021

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, Michael Meisel,
Wendy Dockray, J.P. Sullivan, Dave Egan (Alt), Karen Stephens (Alt)
Absent: Damian Gunningsmith, Tracy Brent Calafiore (Alt)
Town Officials: Sheri Cote, Interim Economic Development Coordinator
Guests: Ellen Carucci, Program Director, Shoreline Chamber of Commerce
First Selectman Matt Hoey (arrived 8:08)

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. Six Regular Members were present for a quorum with one Alternate seated to vote. There was no one present for Public Forum.

2. Guest Speaker - None

3. Approval of February 2, 2021 Minutes

Upon review,

Motion: Ted Sands moved to approve the February 2, 2021 minutes, seconded by Wendy Dockray.

*Vote: Carried – Amy Earls, Michael Meisel, Wendy Dockray, J.P. Sullivan, Ted Sands
Abstention – Alternate Dave Egan (February Absence)*

4. Economic Development Coordinator's Report

Interim Economic Development Coordinator, Sheri Cote, answered questions on her February report, which she emailed to EDC prior to this meeting. Sheri advised that she continues to work with other Town Departments and contacts businesses for updated information. She plans to create standard questions to collect data. The EDC 2021-2022 budget will be reviewed at the Board of Finance, March 2, online meeting at 7:30 pm. Ms Cote will attend the online meeting of the Northeast Economic Development Association (NEDA) on March 16. She continues to attend online Business Financial Assistance training by the State of CT and others, attends meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Design Review and Chamber of Commerce Legislative Forums. She supports the EDC Signage Committee work and collects marketing and social media information for the Town. (See Coordinator Cote's report)

5. Shoreline Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Program Director Ellen Carucci reported, yet not limited to :

*Ellen had attended the Chamber Legislative Forum online meeting with CT State Representatives.

*Webinars continue to be held online. The 'Business with a Twist', Women's meeting will be held online March 24.

*The 'Bring Your Own Blanket' program for outdoor dining will resume as weather permits.

*Net 90 meeting will be held in April outdoors and online.

*CPA Camille Murphy will present at an online Chamber meeting tomorrow.

*Bi-monthly Networking and Women in Business meetings continue via Zoom.com.

6. Chairman's Report

Chair Mark Wasserman reported :

*The Guilford Safe Streets Committee held an online public forum February 25 to review pedestrian safety. Issues include walking pathways and narrow streets. Mark will email EDC the 'Safe Streets' website.

*Some towns have initiated a "Bingo Card Event". Customers have their card stamped at businesses and may become eligible to receive a prize. WTNH Channel 8 has partnered with this program. Mark will email information to EDC.

Discussion was held on the issues with the unavailability of residential fiber optics from utility companies, Federal Communication Commission as the superseding authority, the Governor's Broadband Bill to create easier access and regulations. As a member of CT Council of Municipalities (CCM), First Selectman Hoey advised that the group is working on this issue. Fiber is being installed in the center of Town. Residents complain about problems with services especially as most people are working from home during the pandemic.

7. Subcommittees

Signage

Michael Meisel reported that the Welcome to Guilford signage project is in Phase 3 of the fundraising campaign. Donations total \$17,900 of which \$12,500 was received from Guilford Preservation Alliance (GPA). Contributions from other sources include family foundations, Webster Bank and a pending grant from Guilford Savings Bank. The GPA will be the applicant for a \$6,500 grant for EDC. Wendy will continue to work on these efforts. Focus will continue on soliciting law firms, CPAs and real estate companies. Ted Sands offered to contact the Bank of America. Tracy Brent Calafiore will contact Yale New Haven Hospital.

Michael Meisel recommended including resident Sue Robbins as a new member of the Signage Committee since she has been assisting the Committee. Econ. Dev. Coor. Sheri Cote requested EDC assistance with researching information about larger businesses to include in her data collection. The fundraising goal is approximately \$45,000.

At the Committee's March 12 meeting, discussion will include new articles to alert the public of the campaign providing ways to donate. Dave Egan offered to contact Damian Gunningsmith and Paula Baraket to provide them contact information on law firms.

Economic Development Tax Incentives Committee

Amy Earls reported there was no new information from the Board of Selectmen regarding the EDC proposed Economic Development Tax Incentive Program. First Selectman Hoey advised that an outline for a plan is available and will be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen prior to their March 15 meeting. It is expected to be approved to go to a Town Meeting to be adopted as an ordinance. The Committee had recommended to include business and residential incentives, though the BOS does not support residential at this time. There is some support for affordable housing proposals since the CT legislature is currently reviewing proposals, federal requirements and impacts to municipalities.

Discussion reviewed potential affordable housing locations, sanitation requirements and challenges including deed restricted set asides.

8. 2021 EDC Initiatives There was no further discussion.

9. New Business

Chair Wasserman reported that the BOS has received from a local dance studio to temporarily allow them to use the Town Green during the pandemic. Regulations only allow non-profit organizations. The BOS will request review of the application and recommendations from the Town Green Committee. First Selectman Hoey requested that EDC discuss this issue and provide input.

Discussion reviewed the potential to support businesses in the Town center through activities or events on the Town Green.

10. Old Business There was no discussion.

11. Approval of Bills

Motion: Ted Sands moved to approve the Recording Secretary January invoice for \$53.25, seconded by J.P. Sullivan.

Vote: Carried – Unanimously

12. Adjournment

Motion: At 8:55 a.m., Dave Egan moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Wendy Dockray.

Vote: Carried – Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Anderson Castellano