

**GUILFORD  
Economic Development Commission  
MINUTES**

**September 3, 2019**

**8:00 A.M.**

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

*DRAFT*

Commissioners: Chair Mark Wasserman, Wendy Dockray, Amy Earls, Fran Paranto, Michael Meisel,  
Tracy Brent Calafiore (Alt), Damian Gunningsmith, J.P. Sullivan (Alt)

Absent: Vice Chair Ted Sands, Dave Egan (Alt)

Town Officials: Brian McGlone, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests: None

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

At 8:06 am, Chair Mark Wasserman called to order the regular meeting. There were no comments for communication or public forum.

The Chair, six regular members and two alternates were present. In addition to the regular members, alternate Tracy Brent Calafiore had voting privileges.

**3. Approval of August 6, 2019 Minutes**

*Motion: Wendy Dockray moved to approve the August 6, 2019 minutes, seconded by Amy Earls.*

*Vote: Carried - Amy Earls, Fran Paranto, Tracy Brent Calafiore, Damian Gunningsmith, Michael Meisel.  
Wendy Dockray*

**4. Economic Development Coordinator's Report**

Econ. Dev. Coor. Brian McGlone had emailed EDC commissioners his monthly report (below). He reported that he will contact ST. George Church regarding the final agreement on the sidewalk and parking lot project.

Discussion was held on the use of CGI, a video service (see August minutes) that has approached the Town of Guilford. They offered free services in exchange for local business sponsorships advertising on the video websites. Brian will review the EDC site with First Selectman Hoey, which features tourism and attracting business to Town. "North Branford recently developed a video internally in conjunction with their local cable TV operator, and retired film producer. Total investment was approximately \$3,000." Tracy Brent Calafiore and Brian McGlone will meet to review potential use of CGI services.

## "Business Report

**1) St. George Church Parking** – the final agreement from the church has not been received, however it is expected any day now. Once received, we'll approach each of the merchants with the sub-license agreement which defines the "rules of engagement", upon their signature, they will be issued the merchant parking tags. A vendor is ready to paint the parking spaces for identification, again, once the church agreement is finalized. We are working with Todd Taylor and the church to have the connecting sidewalk installed. The church wants to remove a large tree before we start the sidewalk. The pieces are coming together, albeit, a little slower than we anticipated.

**2) EDC Development Incentives** – our sub-committee of Mike, Amy and Wendy met to begin discussing this topic. I shared copies of programs available from Madison, North Branford and Durham. We may widen our review of neighboring towns as well. We agreed we need to learn more of the "obstacles" developers may be facing when considering Guilford. As such, we'll be scheduling meetings with several noted commercial realtors for their input, especially since they will be able to share perceptions of Guilford vs other towns. We also want to learn more from our Assessor about methods of evaluation, so we don't recommend a program that might not fit within our system and capabilities. Our next meeting is scheduled for Sept 11 at 3:30. We'll be inviting realtor(s) to attend.

**3) Guilford Videos-CGI Program** – We are moving forward with this project. Matt and I need to agree on the "major chapters" including the key topics within each one. Our next scheduled call with the producer is Thursday, Sept 5 at 10:30am.

**4) Guilford Commons "Parking Lot Party"** – scheduled for Saturday Sept 14 from 11am to 4pm. ALL of the merchants are planning family friendly activities, special offers and experiences, promoting their locations and the Commons. A live band will perform from 12-4, food trucks will be on-site, including a beer tasting area. All proceeds from the entry fee to the beer tasting will be donated to the SARAH Foundation. The merchants want to give back to a local charity.

**5) Branford EDC** – Tery Elton, retired from his position effective Aug 2, 2019. No word yet on his replacement or who will represent Branford on the **5 Town Project**. No meetings have occurred since the initial conceptual planning meetings, primarily impacted by summer vacation schedules.

**6) Guilford Performing Arts Festival** – in the final planning stages. Set to occur Sept 26 thru 29, 2019 with 70 performances occurring over the 4 days in 13 venues around town. See website [www.guilfordperformingartsfest.org](http://www.guilfordperformingartsfest.org) for more details. ALL performances are free but goodwill donations will be accepted. A farm-to-table dinner will occur on the Green on Thursday evening at 6:15, which will include live music. Seating is extremely limited with admission by donation (in advance) to the festival of \$150 per person. The promotional reach for the Festival is extensive with the goal of attracting many visitors to our fine town.

**7) David Lehman – new DECD Commissioner** - came to the Guilford Community Center on Aug 7 as part of the Shoreline Chamber's Legislative program. He overviewed his vision for growing the state's economic base and listened to the many local businesses in attendance.

5. **Guest Speaker, None**

6. **Chamber of Commerce Report** Chamber Chair Sheri Cote was absent.

7. **Chairman's Report** Chair Wasserman had no new information to report.

## 8. Subcommittees/Board Liaison Reports

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

Fran Paranto advised there was no new LAC information to report.

- **Signage (Meisel, Egan)**

Michael Meisel reported (emailed):

- Under the Adopt-a-Ramp program, the CT Dept. of Transportation (DOT) has approved the sign design for the proposed "Welcome to Guilford" signs at exit ramps off I-95. This program allows use of state owned property by a sponsor, subject to DOT guidelines, which requires the sponsor to maintain adopted ramp areas as described in a permit. "Maintenance includes the entire ramp area and requires periodic grass mowing during the growing season and litter pick up. DOT will continue to maintain highway signs, guardrails and existing trees."
- "Over the past two years, the Town Joint Signage Committee has developed the sign, obtained models from a signage contractor, and solicited advice from a landscape architect. Brian McGlone has prepared necessary easements and presented the plan to the Board of Selectmen (BOS), which they approved. With the DOT having defined its maintenance requirements, Brian will now seek further approval from the Town on accepting this responsibility." (emailed by Chair Wasserman) : " Chair Mark Wasserman requested further clarification from the DOT as to what parts of the ramps would the Town be responsible for maintaining. Is it just the general area around the sign, the center strip or left, right center ?"
- "Assuming the Town approves the maintenance requirement, the next step will be for the Joint Signage Committee members to seek private sponsors to finance the cost of the signs and installation. The estimated cost will be \$40,000. The Guilford Preservation Alliance has expressed a willingness to assist with this project."

- **Parking (Sands, Paranto, Orce)** Information was reviewed earlier in the meeting.

## 9. New Business

Wendy Dockray advised that the public is invited to a CT Tourism presentation on October 1, 2019, at the Guilford Library, on the General Lafayette Trail through Connecticut. The General had visited Guilford on his post Revolutionary War, U.S. tour. Wendy will email the EDC more information.

## 10. Old Business

Amy Earls had emailed Brian McGlone her notes from the recent EDC Public Forum and will also send to EDC members.

**11. Approval of Bills**

*Motion: Damian Gunningsmith moved top approve the Recording Secretary August invoice for \$113.75, seconded by Tracy Brent Calafiore.*

*Vote: Carried - Unanimously*

**12. Adjournment**

*Motion: At 8:57 a.m., Wendy Dockray moved to adjourn the meeting seconded by Tracy Brent Calafiore.*

*Vote: Carried - Unanimously*

Respectfully Submitted,

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*Judith Anderson Castellano*  
Recording Secretary