

GUILFORD
Economic Development Commission
DRAFT MINUTES
September 7, 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, Wendy Dockray, Amy Earls, Dave Egan,
Damian Gunningsmith, J.P. Sullivan, Karen Stephens(Alt),
Beth Brause (Alt)

Absent: Michael Meisel

Town Officials: Sheri Cote, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests: Ellen Carucci, Program Director, 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. One Alternate was seated to vote.

There was no one present from the Public.

2. Guest Speaker – None

3. Approval of August 3, 2021 minutes

Upon review,

Motion: Dave Egan moved to approve the August minutes, seconded by J.P. Sullivan.

Vote: Carried - Amy Earls, Wendy Dockray, Dave Egan, J.P. Sullivan, Beth Brause

Abstained: August Absence : Damian Gunningsmith, Karen Stephens

4. Economic Development Coordinator's Report

Economic Developments Coordinator Sheri Cote reviewed highlights of her report that she had emailed earlier, including yet not limited to:

- Sheri will be assisting *Guilford Green Merchants' Association* with the process to place a large advertising banner. They had met August 31.
- Ribbon Cutting on September 17, 1 pm, at '*All Eyes on You*' salon, on Water Street.

- The Town is researching developing a business and nonprofit website with no fee for participants.
- Request for EDC input toward a concept to create a grant program, funded by the federal American Rescue Plan, for all Guilford businesses to beautify their location.

Discussion was held regarding possible criteria for outdoor decorative lighting, repairs, plantings, and other suggestions. A subcommittee was created to include Karen Stephens, Beth Brause, Chair Wasserman and Ms. Cote who will report to EDC..

5. Shoreline Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Program Director Ellen Carucci reported, on webinars, online events, training and support for business owners and financial assistance programs, including yet not limited to:

- *Corona Virus 19 safety concerns have returned most meetings and events to outdoor venues.
- *Monthly Net90 will be held at the Guilford Yacht Club, Thursday, 9/16.
- *Businesses After Hours was held outdoors at a business in Branford. The September 28 meeting will be held in Guilford hosted by Page Taft Real Estate and Bishop's Farm Market at their outdoor tent.
- *NetWalking will be held 9/21.
- *Annual 'Women of Excellence' event will be held October 12, 2021 at the Guilford Yacht Club, 12-1:30 pm, with Channel 8 News Anchor, Ann Nyberg, as Master of Ceremonies. Women representing the four Chamber towns will be honored. The sponsor is Guilford Savings Bank.
- *Shoreline Chamber won the trophy for the Annual Wellness Challenge. The \$1,000 award was donated to the Diaper Bank of CT.
- *October Business After Hours will take place at Guilford Texaco with an October Fest theme.

6. Chairman's Report

Some members reported on businesses with temporary closings or shorter hours and new business preparing to open.

7. Subcommittees

Signage

Chair Mark Wasserman reported for Michael Meisel on the Welcome to Guilford sign

project. The north and south signs for Exit 59 have been ordered and will be installed during September and October. Michael is working with Coordinator Cote on obtaining federal funds for the remaining two signs. Planning will begin to create 'way signs' to local businesses.

Wendy Dockray reported that currently GPS directs people to Exit 59 from north and south and not to Exits 57 and 58. Chair Wasserman explained that part of Phase 2 and 3 of the project is to create signs that show the name *Guilford* in addition to a street name.

8. New Business

Chair Mark Wasserman reported he had received emails from commissioners :

Tracy Brent Calafiore submitted her resignation and thanked EDC. She will be working with Coordinator Cote on the digital advertising campaign. Mark expressed EDC appreciation for her work.

Amy Earls submitted her resignation and thanked EDC. She has been asked to run for election to the Board of Finance. Mark expressed EDC appreciation for her work.

Chair Wasserman advised that his EDC term will expire in November. An election will be held at the October meeting for a new Chair and Vice Chair. Wendy Dockray has agreed to be nominated for Chair. Commissioners please contact Chair Wasserman if interested in Vice Chair.

State Legalized Recreational Marijuana

Chair Mark Wasserman reviewed :

- *Guilford D.A.Y. Program (Developing Assets for Youth) supports prohibiting medical marijuana dispensaries in town and not legalizing recreational use.
- *The State of CT has recently approved statutes legalizing the sale and use of recreational marijuana. Medical marijuana dispensaries were approved a few years ago.
- *Current Guilford regulations prohibit medical marijuana dispensaries or locations to grow it.

Discussion was held on recommending to the Planning and Zoning Commission that regulations be updated to prohibit locating these storefronts in Guilford. The existing medical marijuana regulations could include recreational. Coordinator Cote advised that new businesses have inquired to locate these in town.

- *In this case, Town regulations supersede the State of CT.
- *Other towns have placed moratoriums on the issue until regulations are updated.
- *Planning and Zoning Commission has been in the process of updating all regulations.
- *Some Towns have regulations on where recreational use can be done similar to alcohol use.
- *State laws will be similar to liquor stores and other alcoholic beverage sales.

Coordinator Sheri Cote will email EDC information on the process of establishing a moratorium.

By Consensus: It was decided to research the current State of CT and Town regulations on medical and recreational marijuana.

Chair Wasserman will email EDC the State and Town regulations on this issues.

9. Old Business

Annual Christmas Tree Lighting

Chair Wasserman recommended that EDC sponsor this year's community Christmas Tree Lighting, in person, on the Town Green, December 3. (Held virtually last year due to Covid 19 public safety)

Discussion reviewed logistics. Parks and Recreation Dir. Rick Maynard and Econ. Dev. Coor. Sheri Cote have planned to organize the event. Sheri requested EDC assistance with suggestions and contacts. Public safety changes will be made for Covid 19 if needed.

10. Approval of Bills There were no bills.

11. Adjournment

Motion: At 8:58 a.m., Dave Egan moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Karen Stephens (Alt).

Vote: Carried – Unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith Anderson Castellano