

**TOWN OF ASHFORD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, March 25, 2015**

PRESENT: M. Gantick, John Rettenmeier, Ray Fenn, M. Chatey, G. Lawrence
W. Darcy, R Williams, J. Calarese, Art Talmadge (guest)

- 1. Call to Order - 7:40 PM**
- 2. Seating of Alternates - None**
- 3. Approval of Minutes -** motion to approve Gantick, second Fenn; passed
- 4. Budget**
 - a. Reviewed expenditures YTD
 - b. Motion to approve expense report Margaret, second Gantick; passed.
- 5. Communications and Announcements**
 - a. Announcements
 - i. March 19th Ashford Ag Comm. hosted meeting on Helping Farmers
 1. Meeting was well attended and generated many action items
 2. A request was made if the EDC could help with Ag business development. Suggestions included updating the Ag brochure and, paying for printing and mailing. General consensus within the EDC was positive depending upon costs and availability of funds. M. Chatey will take the lead and report back to the EDC.
 - b. News from Other Commissions
 - i. Art Talmadge, Chairman of Agriculture Commission, presented a proposal to make smaller Farm Stores a permitted use. Presently all Farm Stores require a Special Permit.
 1. Many of Ashford farm businesses would like to remain open year round. This would allow them to transition to a smaller permanent structure without the expenses of applying for a Special Permit.
 2. Proposed changes to the Land Use Regulations were discussed and the EDC was generally receptive to supporting the Ag Commission.
 3. Action - Art Talmadge will draft the proposed changes to the regulations and send a copy to the EDC for review.
 - c. ABA News
 - i. The ABA now has 47 paid members. The highest number since the group was reformed.
 - ii. The Car Cruises will be held again this year at the Midway, with the first one planned for May
 - iii. The ABA officially obtained their 503(c)(6) designation on 3/3/2015.
 - d. Correspondence and Meetings - Ray Fenn discussed the University of Connecticut Technology Incubation Program and suggested that the EDC

explore how to become engaged. Action - Williams will send email and ask that we be put on their distribution list.

e. Presentations - none

6. Old Business

a. Website Modifications (Darcy, Chatey) -

- i. Invoice for the website work has been received from Eliza. Gantick will forward it to Williams for payment.
- ii. Logo has been finalized and Gantick circulated a sample home page to the group.
- iii. Williams requested that the structure be similar to that of the Mansfield Tomorrow site.

b. Our Town Our Future (Fenn, Gantick)

- i. Gantick recapped the inputs generated at the March 10th Public Meeting
 1. Attendance was less than the previous two meetings
 2. Summary documents are complete and will be posted on the new website when it is ready.
- ii. Next Public meeting is planned for May (date TBD)
- iii. Core Group has been focused on identifying projects.

c. Branch Bank Solicitation Project (Chatey, Lawrence, Williams)

- i. Date has been set (4/24/2015) to meet with Liberty. Chatey, Lawrence, and Calarese will attend for the EDC
- ii. Since the likely site for a bank branch is in the Rt. 44 / Rt. 74 area it was agreed to fold this activity into the larger planning project for this area

d. PZC and the POCD(Williams)

- i. The PZC held a Special Meeting on the POCD on 3/24/2105 that was poorly attended by the other commissions
- ii. Alex Hastillo hand delivered a letter to the EDC requesting that they attend a 4/13/2015 7:00 PM meeting to formally organize the POCD working group
- iii. The EDC discussed how they best could participate in developing the POCD. M. Chatey nominated B. Darcy as the EDC representative; second by J. Calarese; passed

e. Wagon Shed Property (Fenn, Darcy)

- i. Discussed the need for a Executive Session with the BOS
- ii. Williams has yet to hear back from M. Zambo; will stop by his office and discuss

f. Buy Local Initiative - Next steps discussion

- i. M. Chatey will follow up with the ABA on Small Business Saturday initiative and report back to the EDC

7. New Business

a. none

8. Input From Public - none

9. Member Input for Next Agenda - None

10. Adjournment - 9:40 PM