

**TOWN OF ASHFORD  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2015**

**PRESENT:** Ray Fenn, M. Chatey, G. Lawrence, J. Rettenmeier, J. Calarese,  
R Williams

- 1. Call to Order - 7:40 PM**
- 2. Seating of Alternates - None**
- 3. Approval of Minutes -** Approved minutes for the April meeting - Lawrence/Fenn; passed
- 4. Budget**
  - a. Discussed how the remaining funds of \$650 have been allocated. The EDC Buy Local brochures are being updated and 500 copies printed. New features were added to the OT-OF website. A balance of \$260 remains and will not be spent.
  - b. Motion to accept report - Darcy/Chatey; passed
- 5. Communications and Announcements**
  - a. Announcements
    - i. Kari Olson's appointment to Alternate was approved by the BOS
  - b. News from Other Commissions
    - i. None.
  - c. ABA News
    - i. Membership has now reached 50
  - d. Correspondence and Meetings
    - i. Margaret attended the Regional Economic Development Meeting in Mansfield on May 28th. The meeting was well attended. Some highlights include:
      1. Tim Sullivan gave an overview of CT priorities: restore brown fields; reuse of legacy industrial sites; expand tourism; and revitalize commercial ports.
      2. Willington EDC is finding a study on how to best develop their I84 corridor. (AEDC needs to get the details)
      3. Coventry, Mansfield, and Bolton have a CT grant to assess the impact of the UConn growth on their towns (Is there a potential for Ashford, Willington, and Chaplin to get a similar grant?)
      4. Coventry is developing a Strategic Arts Program
    - ii. Gary Lawrence had a meeting with an Iowa company interested in relocating to Ashford area.
      1. Food processing business that would require 50,000 sq. ft. facility with highway access
      2. Potential for Exit 72 or Wagon Shed??
      3. Gary will get more info and report back to AEDC

e. Presentations - none

## 6. Old Business

a. Website Modifications (Darcy, Chatey) -

- i. EDC website is stable and does not currently need any updates. However, release of new POCD may require quite a bit of changes. Margaret will investigate email links on site to make sure all of the old email addresses are deactivated and removed.
- ii. OT-OF website is "live" and populated. A comments function is being added.
- iii. POCD section is operational. Content will be added when first clean draft is complete.

b. Our Town Our Future (Fenn, Gantick)

- i. A Public meeting was held on June 9th. Attendance was light but enthusiastic. The meeting focused on defining and staffing of the projects (see the website for details). An Ashford Arts Association was proposed and the group is in the process of applying for a grant.
- ii. The OT-OF Facebook page needs to get more "likes" to be effective. Those with many FB friends were encouraged to ask them to like the page.

c. Retail and Services Enterprise Zone ( also includes Branch Bank Solicitation Project (Chatey, Lawrence, Williams)

i. Bank Solicitation

1. No new feedback from Liberty Bank. Need to contact Trish Lagasse.
2. Discussions with Deb McCracken at First Niagara have resulted in a meeting planned for 7/16 at 2:00PM in Storrs.

ii. Enterprise Zone

1. Marketing of the town owned property on Rt. 44 was discussed. It was suggested that we speak with the other business owners located near the property to get their input.
2. The property is currently listed at \$175k. Gary felt it worth closer to \$89K in today's market. Group agreed that other opinions were required. ACTION- Gary will valuations from two additional realtors.
3. The process of how the sale would be "approved" was discussed. A special Town Meeting is required, but exactly how that is structured was not known. ACTION - Williams will get details.

iii. Existing Buildings and Businesses

1. The rest of the post office building is rented out to a "wholesale antique" business. Will pay a visit when they open next month.(ACTION - Williams) This building is now 100% occupied.
2. Owner of the building that housed the Tavern Grill contacted Williams for help in marketing his space. ACTION - Williams will contact him and identify possible dates for a meeting.

- d. PZC and the POCD( Williams)
  - i. The POCD Committee continues to meet every other Monday.
  - ii. The group is about 85% through reviewing and revising the old POCD
  - iii. The meetings are public meeting and open to anyone interested.
- e. Wagon Shed Property (Darcy )
  - i. Met with BOS on 6/1 and presented plan get environmental lien lifted. They approved and authorized a meeting with DEEP; and drafting a letter ,after that meeting, that would be sent out by the BOS.
  - ii. Met with DEEP on 6/23. They were generally supportive and offered "help" and suggested that Ashford do a study/survey using outside consultants. After some discussions it was concluded that this step was not needed. Instead, Ashford will draft letter to be sent to the Commissioner. They will work up the management chain from their end. Ashford should also start to the application process for several state programs.
- f. Buy Local Initiative - Next steps discussion
  - i. Buy Local brochure is being updated and printed at Anything Printed.

**7. New Business**

- a. none

**8. Input From Public - none**

**9. Member Input for Next Agenda - None**

**10. Adjournment - 9:37 PM**