

**TOWN OF ASHFORD  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
5 TOWN HALL RD ASHFORD, CT 06278  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016**

**PRESENT:** J. Rettenmeir, G. Lawrence, M. Gantick, R. Fenn,  
R Williams, M. Chatey

- 1. Call to Order - 7:33 PM**
- 2. Seating of Alternates - None**
- 3. Approval of Minutes – Lawrence/Rettenmeir; passed**
- 4. Budget**
  - a. Motion to accept report – Fenn/Chatey; passed
- 5. Communications and Announcements**
  - a. Announcements -
    - i. none
  - b. News from Other Commissions
    - i. none.
  - c. ABA News
    - i. The Business Expo was a success with 150 – 200 attendees and all tables sold out. Exhibitors were pleased
    - ii. Membership is increasing with new members from surrounding towns, including Mansfield. Membership is now over 60.
    - iii. Car shows will resume again in May on the last Thursday of the month each month until September
  - d. Correspondence and Meetings
    1. none
  - e. Presentations - none
- 6. Old Business**
  - a. Website Modifications (Darcy, Chatey, Gantick) -
    - i. Darcy prepared a suggest SOW for the website. The draft was discussed by the group and several edits made.
    - ii. Much discussion as how best to proceed. Decided best to migrate to a new platform like Word Press. Also, it was agreed the platform should be mobile friendly. Keep same structure and reuse artwork. Make changes as a “phase 2” effort in the next fiscal year.
    - iii. Chatey had run the SOW past several potential (small) vendors and had got a positive response. She felt a reasonable phase 1 could be done for \$1,500.
    - iv. MOTION – Chatey/Darcy will take the revised SOW and RFP to 3 or more vendors to get a quote NTE for phase 1 in this fiscal year. Fenn/Lawrence; passed.

- b. Our Town Our Future (Fenn, Gantick).
  - i. Again, discussed the status of the active projects. See the OT-OF Facebook page for details.
  - ii. A public meeting on the UConn lead landscape design for the West Ashford/Warrenville SPA will be held on March 9 at 7:00 PM in Knowlton Hall.
  - iii. The BOS have designated OT-OF a special committee reporting to the BOS with limited, but renewable, authorization.
  - iv. The Ashford Arts Council is “getting organized”. They hope to engage a consultant that will help them determine the structure and how best to move forward. One of the questions that will be addressed is should they be part of Town government or a standalone 501(c)(3).
- c. Retail and Services Enterprise Zone (also includes Branch Bank Solicitation Project (Chatey, Lawrence, Williams))
  - i. Bank Solicitation – First Niagara indicated that they were not interested in locating in Ashford. They are in the process of being acquired by another bank and all such activities are on hold. The team plans to reach out to another bank; likely The Savings Institute.
  - ii. Enterprise Zone
    - 1. Lawrence contacted, the owner, Terry Hoffman of Ellington, on the 19-acre property at Rt. 44/ Rt. 74. The letter to the owner outlined our interests in marketing the property to drug store chains. Still no response to date. Gary will call the owner.
    - 2. Gantick, Lawrence, and Williams met with the Eastern Highlands Heath District on 12/11/15. They agreed to participate in a multiple commission meeting at a future date. Williams invited the PZC and they are interested in participating. Fenn has invite the IWWC. Need to set a date, but the commission agreed to push this out several months because of other priorities.
    - 3. Fenn prepared a position paper and information package on how to bring the town owned property in West Ashford into productive use. He also distributed copies of an Economic Development Opportunities in Ashford Study that was done in 1999. Surprisingly very little has changed in 17 years!!! The EDC will review all of these materials for further discussion at the next meeting. Thanks to Ray for putting together the package!
- d. The POCD (Williams)
  - i. The POCD is complete, approved, and effective as of 2/1/16. A PDF is on the Town website and limited hard copies available at the Town Clerk's Office and Building Department. This subject will be removed as a recurring agenda item.

- e. Wagon Shed Property (Darcy)
  - i. Darcy, Williams, and Mike Zambo met with the Town attorney, Ann Catino, on 3/17/16. There was considerable discussion as to the best way to proceed. The possibility of doing a new Phase I environmental study was proposed, as was having another meeting with DEEP. Darcy will research when the last Phase I was done and if there have been any substantive changes to the property since then.
  - ii. The EDC recommendation is still to send letters to both the DEEP and AG, and solicit support from CCM, COST, and our legislative representatives. Ashford is a member of both the COST and CCM organizations. However, these actions will be dependent upon the results of a meeting with the full BOS on 3/21/16.
- f. Buy Local Initiative
  - i. No report

**7. New Business**

- a. None

**8. Input from Public - None**

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

**10. Adjournment - 9:15 PM**

Prepared by R. S. Williams, Chair