

**TOWN OF ASHFORD  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
5 TOWN HALL RD ASHFORD, CT 06278  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, March. 28, 2018**

**PRESENT:** M. Chatey, R. Ignatowicz, R. Williams, T. Wakeman  
J. Rettenmeir, G. Lawrence, R. Fenn, M. Fontaine  
Guests – Mark and Sandy Pensa

1. **Call to Order** – 7:38 PM
2. **Seating of Alternates** – Fontaine for Gantick
3. **Approval of December Minutes** – Mike/Bob – passed  
**Change order of Agenda** – Move agenda item 6.d.iii to front – Williams/Fenn/  
passed. Discussion reported below.
4. **Budget**
  - a. Anything Printed made 25 copies of the UConn study for the ABA Expo and the RSA activity – J. Rettenmeir will get invoice to Williams for payment.
  - b. Members wanted a copy of the NECCOG CEDS – J. Rettenmeir will get 8 copies made.
  - c. Discussed the need for generic EDC business cards – Williams will do a design and look into ways to produce a small number.
  - d. Approval of report – Bob/ John R- passed
5. **Communications and Announcements**
  - a. Announcements –none
  - b. Presentations – none
  - c. News from Other Commissions.
    - i. PZC
      1. The Town attorney determined that the new Fee Ordinance is best “published” as an amended section in the Land Use Regulations.
      2. Public Hearing before the next PZC meeting on 4/9/18 with a vote on the Land Use Regulation changes during the regular meeting.
      3. A new Zoning Map is still being developed with NECCOG doing the graphics. NECCOG has yet to respond.
      4. Williams obtained a Word version of the POCD from the Building department
    - ii. BOF
      1. Gail Zaicek is putting together a Town Annual Report. Williams prepared the section concerning the EDC and submitted it on 3/22/18.
  - d. ABA News
    - i. The ABA continues to grow. Now at 80+members
    - ii. The Business Expo held on March 24th. EDC had a table and conducted an update to the business wanted survey first done last year. Restaurants continue to be the number one request.

- iii. All vendor tables were filled but attendance was down from last year; 125 people.
- iv. Car shows will continue starting in May
- e. Correspondence and Meetings
  - i. None

## 6. Old Business

- a. EDC Marketing and Communications
  - i. No activity.
- b. Website Modifications (Chatey, Gantick, Williams) -
  - i. Williams contacted MadComm to discuss status – the EDC site is fully functional and operating on the MadComm developmental server. Williams looked at the structure, navigation, and materials populating the site. Everything is fine except the content is 60% from the old 2005 POCD.
  - ii. Williams will take a thumb drive with the 2015 POCD Word content and high-resolution artwork to MadComm next month and have them finish populating the new website.
- c. Our Town-Our Future (Fenn, Gantick).
  - i. Core group continues to meet and narrowed the projects to four.
    1. Communications – no activity
    2. Mt. Hope River Trail –Conservation Commission and Joshua Trust have agreed to support the project. A trail walk is planned for 4/4/18.
    3. Inventory of Historic Buildings and Places - Kick off meeting planned in 4/5/18 in the Senior Center. An announcement was placed on the Facebook page.
    4. EDC Support and West Ashford Development – focus on RSA (see below).
  - ii. Terry Wakeman continues to work on a fifth project (either through OT-OF or the EDC). This project would develop maps and materials on all of the trails with Ashford, with the idea of making the town a hiking destination. No further report at this time.
- d. Retail and Services Enterprise Zone (Ignatowicz, Lawrence, Williams)
  - i. Bob completed a package to solicit interest in building a drug store in West Ashford.
    1. Bob submitted a formal proposal to Walgreens last month. When he did not hear back from them he contacted the District Manager directly. They since have exchanged emails. He is also contacting a developer (SRS) that works with Walgreens.
    2. The Realtor representing the Hoffman property has lost the listing. Gary was to have contacted the owners. No update
    3. Williams spoke with Mike Zambo about clearing the brush on the Moore property when Spring finally comes! He agreed to having the Town Road crew do the work.

- ii. Other business news.
  1. The Mainline Heating business is officially closed with a number of the business assets locked inside the property. The business owner had claimed to be opening sales office in Sturbridge but this never came to pass. The realtor listing has changes. Williams placed a call to them but has not yet spoken with them.
  2. A Pennsylvania company that repairs crumbling foundations is thinking of leasing the GT Lynch building. Gary will get their contact information. No update.
- iii. Sneaker Property
  1. The owners of the property, Mark and Sandy Pensa, were present at the EDC meeting seeking EDC input and assistance.
  2. Restaurants continue to be the number one want by Ashford citizens. The EDC has contacted several restaurant group to gage their interest in locating in Ashford; these include: Table 3 and Sturbridge Seafood in Sturbridge; Green Valley Restaurant Group in Putnam; and others. No firm interest to date, but Mike Gantick has a lead on a brew pub (no update).
  3. Discussed condition of the interior. Owner indicated "it was a mess" but all utilities were functional.
  4. Jointly the EDC and owners came up with an action plan.
  5. The owners thanked the EDC for their help.
- iv. The DOT Road Safety Audit (RSA) of RT 74/RT 44 corridor is scheduled for 4/24/18. Mike Gantick will lead the effort for the EDC. Ray Fenn and John Rettenmeir will also participate. Mike Zambo has indicated that he supports the effort and will provide several town employees for support.
- e. Wagon Shed Property
  - i. There were quite few proposals submitted to perform the Phase 1 study. They presently are being evaluated.
- f. Buy Local Initiative (Chatey/Williams)
  - i. Margaret has 90% of the edits to the trifold brochure completed. She will complete it and send out to the group for comment. After that copies will be made. Thought is to use the plastic stands for distribution as was done in the past.
  - ii. Also discussed doing "interviews" with businesses and posting them on the OT-OF Facebook page.

**7. New Business**

- a. Discussed possibility of grants (up to \$500) from Last Green Valley. Will discuss further at the next meeting.

**8. Input from Public – None**

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

**10. Adjournment - 9:25 PM**