

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT
131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT
CONFERENCE ROOM L-101 LOWER LEVEL, TOWN HALL
THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 2020

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IN NEWINGTON, CT

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Town Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Chairman Theresa Avey
Commissioner Maria Pane
Commissioner Dana Havens
Commissioner Sharon Dunning
Commissioner Robert Rioux
Commissioner Mark Siems
Commissioner Jay Slater
Town Liaison Gail Budrejko

Economic Development Director Andrew Brecher

ABSENT:

Commissioner David Marsden
Commissioner Clifford Stamm
Commissioner Fernando Rosa (excused)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. December 4, 2019

Commissioner Avey made a motion approving the minutes pending corrections.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

VI. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT

Executive Director of the Chamber Peter Forcellina verbally reviewed recent Chamber successes and upcoming events

VII. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS REPORT

Director Brecher announced that at the intersection of Cedar and Fenn Road, there will be the announcement of a new hotel.

At the Local Market property a new Sports Fitness center will open soon for business.

Edact has been sold to a Korean company, a Wall Street firm "Anwha" is on the side of the building.

Vision Point at Rockwell Road, off of Pane Road has taken over West side, operating business streaming..

At #505 Willard Avenue a 3 building complex owned by Hartford Hospital has been sold for 8.8 million dollars.

#2600 Berlin Turnpike Just Guitars has opened and brought in cozy winds.

#2631 Berlin Turnpike there is a letter of intent for a European retailer for the whole building.

#3333 Berlin Turnpike shows restarting with Groceman Development concept and Eversource is interested.

Reconstruct is closing its store and moving to Burrit Street in New Britain.

Gregoria's Pizza has closed for business.

The estimated number of store closings is estimated at 9300, because of online retailing.

Director Brecher noted that nationwide spending is rising, but retailing is flat.

The unemployment rate in Newington went down showing 17,182 employed in December.

Also, the Defense spending bill was passed, a 1.4 trillion dollar bill for Connecticut, and aircraft manufacturing will be made in Europe.

The minimum wage is \$11.00 in Connecticut.

Several Connecticut sources report Connecticut's population continues to decline.

At the state level, DOT is transitioning to a greater Hartford mobility study.

The Connecticut Economic Resource Center, CERC, has taken over and soon there will be a new name change.

Another point of interest there will be a loan guarantee program administered by private banks with CHFA mortgages. The four pillars include transportation improvements, talent, fiscal stability and investment in cities. Also, there are four pillars including transportation improvements, talent, fiscal stability and investment in cities.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. District Assignment

A discussion was held to send 'notes of welcome' to new businesses in town. In Newington; there exists a list of available space that can be found at COSTAR on-line.

Also, Director Brecher distributed a draft copy and went through each member's assignment.

B. District Reports

None.

C. Discussion of "Newington Means Business" brochure.

Commissioner Rioux said he will get a brochure draft ready next week. Director Brecher said it was best to first do an inventory of your business assignments and then sort by the physical addresses.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. GRAND LIST GROWTH STRATEGY

Director Brecher provided handouts and then discussed in detail its content, stressing to bring reality to the discussion we need grand list growth and this is achievable. Newington wants new tenants who can pay taxes, patronize business and have job skills for now and in the future. Newington also needs more restaurants and retail establishments.

Director Brecher announced a STEEP grant application for Newington which includes 15 million dollars statewide. Director Brecher in his indepth, detailed presentation by reminding EDC members that we need a small town economic development program and if anyone has any ideas to send him an e-mail.

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Scott Wiczkowski suggested putting more signage around town, similar to a multiple message sign and try to get more grants.

XI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Gail Budrejko Town Council member encourages everyone to make contact with struggling businesses and also in the districts prioritize who you will contact, trying to create a relationship with new business and encouraging good neighbors.

Commissioner Dunning also said, 'go to new businesses and say 'hi'!
Commissioner Havens reminded everyone that the TPZ has a listing of new businesses and that
EDC Director has that information.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Rioux made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Havens seconded the
motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectively submitted


Sophie Glenn
Recording Secretary