

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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Regular Meeting

December 1, 2021


Town Clerk

Chairman Theresa Avey called the regular Zoom meeting of the Newington Development Commission to order to 7:12 p.m.

I. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present

Commissioner Ancona
Chairman Avey
Commissioner Havens
Commissioner Nagel
Commissioner Pane

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Marsden
Commissioner Rioux
Commissioner Rose – excused
Commissioner Stamm

III. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Commissioner Ancona nominated Theresa Avey to serve as Chairman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nagel. The vote was unanimously in favor, with five voting YEA.

Chairman Avey nominated Commissioner Pane to serve as Vice-Chairman. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Havens. The vote was unanimously in favor with five voting YEA.

Chairman Avey nominated Commissioner Havens as Secretary. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pane. The motion passed unanimously with five voting YEA.

IV. **SET MEETING DATES**

The meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month; January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1, August 3, September 7, October 5, November 2, December 7 of 2022. There is no meeting in July.

Commissioner Havens moved to approve the meeting dates, seconded by Commissioner Ancona. The motion passed unanimously.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 3, 2021 meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Nagel and seconded by Commissioner Ancona. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with five voting YEA.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

VII. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT

There was no representation from the Chamber presently. If they joined later, they would be allowed to speak.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Beautification Committee

Chairman Avey had not been able to contact Bill DeMaio about the cost of the benches and who he uses, and that is something that can hopefully be done before the next meeting.

Commissioner Pane suggested that the committee start early regarding the planters around town, if any additional would be needed or where they should be located. It was also suggested that the Commission get a spring flag and add them to other parts of town other than the center area. There is the New Britain Avenue district, and other shopping areas around town.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

None

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

XI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The Commission welcomed Kim Radda, a new town council member, to the meeting. Town Councilor Gail Budrejko indicated that she was disappointed that since this is Newington's 150th anniversary and there is no indication anywhere in town, or anyone driving through or living in

town that this year is significant. Possibly a sign in the center of town or the flags in the spring could celebrate the 150th year.

The problem with using the flags is that they should be lasting for more than one year, and not just specific to the anniversary. The Commission questioned if the 150th Anniversary Committee was doing any kind of program.

Commissioner Nagel informed the Commission that she was serving on the anniversary committee and no one has mentioned anything about doing any kind of publicity.

Commissioner Havens suggested that there be signs in the center, the Parks and Rec signs possibly so that the whole year doesn't go by without any kind of publicity of the anniversary. The 150th Anniversary Committee was having difficulty coming up with ideas to implement since many of the ideas were influenced by Covid.

Commissioner Havens cautioned that the Parks and Rec Department might have difficulty putting up anniversary flags since it is costly in man hours, especially for a one time use. There might be space on the sign in the front of CVS to advertise.

This should be something promoting the businesses, indicating that Newington is a stable community and this could be something that the Economic Development Commission and the Anniversary Committee could work on together. Chairman Avey will invite the Chairman of the Anniversary Committee, Eileen Francolino to the next meeting to see if the two commissions can work together to promote the anniversary. Commissioner Nagel informed the Commission that the anniversary committee had about \$11,000 after receiving a treasurers report. Some of the money is designated for the Mayor's ball which will now be held in April of 2022.

Councilor Radda questioned if there was any way that the Chamber could collaborate with the two Commissions. Chairman Avey said that she would bring it up at the next board meeting.

Councilor Radda indicated that she was president of the Friends of the Library and suggested that there might be something that they could also collaborate on.

Many of the events planned for the anniversary were pushed off because of the Covid restrictions.

Commissioner Havens questioned the status of the EDC reports that were received by the Commission, with the businesses coming into town and leaving and she requested that the Commission start receiving them again.

Chairman Avey indicated that a lot of the events going on regarding the businesses coming in to town are not open for discussion because many of the businesses are located in another town and until plans are finalized, there should not be a discussion about the situation.

Commissioner Havens indicated that a couple of businesses opened this past month and that information is still in the town offices and if someone could send it to Commissioner Havens she would take the responsibility of reporting on it each meeting, instead of having the Town Manager do it.

Chairman Avey indicated that the Town manager has met with developers and a business did come in to meet with the Economic Development Team and will meet two landlords and beyond that all the information is confidential.

Commissioner Nagel questioned the status of a flyer that was started by the previous economic development representative that could be distributed to new businesses. Covid put a halt to distribution, and the flyer was never completed. Chairman Avey stated that the Town Manager

has established an economic development team at town hall from various departments to facilitate information on what is expected and what is needed by the new applicant.

Renata Bertotti, Town Planner indicated that at the next TPZ meeting she will be updating the Commission on all of the recent approvals and the various stages of the projects and this would be for example, the hotel at a certain address, did they pull the building permit, did they start construction, and tell what is coming down the pike as far as construction goes. Information can also be collected on any building permits that were recently issued for the businesses if someone leaves, and someone new moved in. This information can be prepared fairly easily for the next meeting. Renata indicated that there is some sort of brochure which was modified last winter so it would be more applicable to the Covid condition, but essentially it provides contact information for various town departments. In January and February restaurants in the town, along with some businesses were contacted and were offered assistance to the town, such as the building department, health department, and other officials that might be of assistance to a business.

Commissioner Nagel was concerned about the people coming to solicit residents for home improvement, etc., going house and house. They are supposed to have permits from the Police Department, and if they do not they are not properly vetted by the police department.

Gail Budrejko informed the Commission that about two years ago the solicitation ordinance, and registration must be done, which must be paid for. It was recently, two or three years ago, so should be up to date.

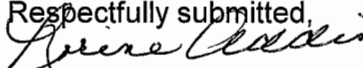
Two businesses in Newington won in the category in the Best of Hartford competition. The first one is DelSoul Spa, they were the first runner up in the day spa category, and the second runner up for massage. The second winner was K and A transportation in the limousine category, they were voted number one. Both of these companies are based in Newington and have been placed in the top three for the last three years.

Councilor Budrejko spoke about the new pizza restaurant next to Starbucks and extended the hope that it would be successful. Chairman Avey said that she had stopped in and extended any help that they might need that the EDC could give them, or putting them in touch with someone on the town side for any questions that they might have.

Commissioner Havens asked if future meetings would be in person or continue as Zoom sessions. Chairman Avey stated that as of right now, the meetings will still be Zoom.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Havens moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nagel. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norme Addis, Recording Secretary