

NEWINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

June 2, 2021

Chairman Theresa Avey called the regular zoom meeting of the Newington Economic Development Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present:

Commissioner Jennifer Ancona
Chairman Theresa Avey
Commissioner Dana Havens
Commissioner Maria Pane
Commissioner Robert Rioux
Commissioner Jay Slater
Commissioner Chip Stamm

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner David Marsden
Commissioner Jerilyn Nagel
Commissioner Fernando Rosa

III. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Havens moved to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slater. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion with seven voting YEA.

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

V. **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT**

Chairman Avey reported that the Chamber had held their annual awards program, giving awards to deserving businesses and individuals who had been deserving of the awards over the past year.

The Chamber has a few new board members, with the president staying the same.

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VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Beautification Committee

Chairman Avey reported that she had spoken at the June 11th meeting of the Town Council and informed them that this Commission was going to go with the theme of "Fall in Love with Newington." By having flags with that theme, and also some planters in key locations hopefully this would go a long way towards the beautification of the town.

Commissioner Havens suggested that the planters be located in the center of town, noting that there were presently planters in front of the Church of Christ and also the building that houses T.J's restaurant. She suggested that one could be located at the beginning of Market Square.

Chairman Avey questioned if the Commission wanted to go with the center of town with planters, and maybe get more planters and do the planters on Willard and Veterans Way, on the corner. Any planters that might be located on state property would need permission from the State of Connecticut prior to installation, and getting that permission could take more time than the Commission would like, since these should be ready to go for this year.

Commissioner Pane questioned if the Commission was going to offer the pots to the business so that hopefully there would be quite a few pots around town. The pots are \$300.00 and the committee could pay for half, or the whole thing, fill them with flowers, deliver it to a business and it would be the responsibility of the business to maintain it. The Commission does have to reserve the right to take back the pot if the business fails to maintain it, and then offer it to someone else.

Commissioner Slater noted that the corner of Garfield Street and Willard Avenue might be a good location for two pots since it was the beginning of the way to the town hall complex. The pots would have to be located about ten or twelve feet back from the road since that area is state property. He also suggested that the Senior Center might be an area to be explored for the pots since there is nothing in that area.

Bil DeMaio indicated that a new landscaping program was being designed for the Center. The parking lot was redone, the windows of the center were redone, and the sidewalks were updated and now the plantings will be put in within a few months.

Chairman Avey suggested that the Commission talk about the "Fall in Love with Newington" flags. The flags would be located on Main Street, Market Square, Constance Leigh Drive, Constitution Square, Garfield Street as the Welcome to Newington and American Flags are located now. It was suggested that flags might be attached to the Welcome to Newington signs such as the one located at the Eversource property. The Commission was reminded that anything that would be erected on state property would have to be put up by the state.

Bill DeMaio reminded the Commission that the blue flags, the Welcome to Newington flags were going to be used in the spring, and then the summer would be the American flags because of Memorial Day and Fourth of July, and then there were Christmas decorations, so the Fall in Love with Newington would be the fall flag.

The poles holding the flags only last for one season, they break and have to be replaced almost daily.

Commissioner Stamm was in favor of not micro-managing the installation of the flags, simply to allow Mr. DeMaio to do the job, to manage the flags, and then if there were other areas to be discussed regarding the beautification, then the Commission could discuss those. He felt that the Commission needs to give Mr. DeMaio the amount of money to purchase the flags in the amount that will get the job done.

Bill DeMaio indicated that he had no vote on what the Commission was going to do, they could do nothing, or they could purchase the number of flags needed. The Parks and Recreation Department will end up storing them, putting them up, two weeks of overtime for two guys, and then when they break they fix them, and the feedback from the town in general was that they liked the flags, the American and the Welcome to Newington together.

Chairman Avey explained that it was explained to her that Parks and Recreation and Bill DeMaio would help the EDC with whatever it was they would like to do. If there is a vendor that he knows that can get us something, it would come out of the EDC Beautification budget, and he would facilitate getting it through the P.O. and all of that for us, but we would have to say what we wanted, where we wanted it, how we wanted it.

Commissioner Pane suggested that in regards to the location of the pots, the intersection of Maple Hill Avenue and New Britain Avenue might be a location that could be dressed up by locating two pots in that area. The pots in that location could be located on private property. The original pots should be located in obvious centrally located areas that would be highly trafficked.

The Commission will be doing a press release regarding the pots and the availability of the pots to any merchant who would be interested in purchasing one for their business, at \$150.00. Two pots are going to Garfield Street and Willard Avenue, and Bill DeMaio recommended that the Commission order 12 pots to get interest from the business community. The businesses would have to water and maintain the flowers, furnished by the town in year one, they would have to replant the following year and if the pot was not maintained the Commission has the right to take it back.

Chairman Avey stated that the twelve pots had to be gotten out to the community and a press release must be done, with a date for replying for any business interested in purchasing a pot. If additional pots will be required due to interest from the community, Bill DeMaio will check with the company to see how long and what the cost would be.

Commissioner Slater questioned if there was some sort of identification on the pots given to the different businesses, because EDC does still own them, perhaps a decal or plaque.

Commissioner Pane stated that tonight the Commission should decide how many pots they wished to purchase, the design of the flag, and a press release.

Bill DeMaio suggested that the Commission design the flags and give someone the authority to enter into an agreement with the company, or order the flags because they are not going to help you design with the sign. There is a sign company that the town works with and someone from the Commission can contact them and give the preliminary design of the flag to them, and the colors that are wanted, and they will refine it in a professional manner. They will give you a proof that can be approved by the committee.

Commissioner Pane made a motion that the Commission work on a press release to offer the businesses the pots, and work on the flag. We have already decided on two locations, Veterans Way and Garfield Street.

Bill DeMaio suggested that there be a cutoff date for the business to request a pot, all the names will be put into a hat, and they will be drawn out

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Havens. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with seven voting YEA.

Bill DeMaio reiterated that the Commission was purchasing 12 pots, and \$150.00 would be the cost to the businesses and the design of the flag would be submitted.

Commissioner Slater suggested that the Commission make use of the Chamber of Commerce to help with the announcement of the pots.

VII. **NEW BUSINESS**

None

VIII. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

IX. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Stamm indicated that this was a very productive meeting, many ideas melded into one final one.

Commissioner Pane stated that since the Commission doesn't have a meeting in July, and all of this needs to be attended to, and asked if response to e-mails would be considered a meeting. James Krupienski stated that would be considered a meeting.

Commissioner Stamm suggested that a meeting be held the week before the fourth of July date, and the 23rd of June was suggested for a quick meeting to verify the plans put forth tonight.

Commissioner Avey indicated that a special meeting would be held on June 23rd, and it would be to have the beautification for the flags, and that would be the only thing that could be discussed.

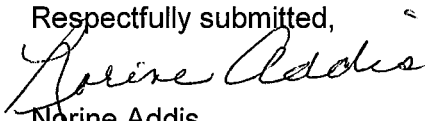
Commissioner Pane suggested that the meeting include an update on the planters if the distribution date is before that, so the Commission will know who is getting the planters.

Chairman Avey suggested that the Commission meet on the 23rd at 6:30 p.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Slater moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Norine Addis,
Recording Secretary

XI. NEW BUSINESS

None

XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

XIII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

XIV. ADJOURNMENT