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BRANFORD TOWN CLERK

Economic Development Commission

Branford, Connecticut

Meeting MINUTES

March 1, 2023 8:00am

Joe Trapasso Community House - 46 Church St – Branford

Meeting was called to order at 8:04am. Present were: Rich Sgueglia (Chair), Frank Hird, Al Canosa, John Leonard, Jared Schulefand, Alisa Waterman, Perry Maresca (Staff).

Approval of Minutes: February Minutes: Motion to Accept by Al Canosa. Seconded by John Leonard. Passed Unanimously. February Special Meeting Minutes: Motion to Accept by Al Canosa. Seconded by Frank Hird. Passed Unanimously.

Reports:

Staff Report: TCMA updates; most notable: Saturday 5/5/23 will be "Branford Book Festival". **Major announcement coming once coordinate w/Governor's office to attend. **Received inquiry for space to house a cannabis packaging and distribution facility. Warehouse business to business NOT open to consumer. **Blasius Buick GMC has purchased Tremonte Auto Group. Looking to update/upgrade and dramatically improve the buildings and property (Nick D'Angelo General Manager). **Ribbon Cutting for Darbar Restaurant scheduled for Friday 3/3 at noon. **Ribbon Cutting at Fired Up is scheduled for Next Thursday at 11am. **35 Year Milestone Celebration scheduled for David Minicozzi Friday 3/17 at 11:30a **New restaurant, Los Charros, plans to open in April at the old Dragon East.

Planning & Zoning Report: Public Hearing continues for an 11 lot subdivision at 175 Cherry Hill Rd. BC Investment Property LLC c/o Bruno Ciccone- Applicant & Owner. Other items were small residential additions. **2/16 P&Z meeting was record short, adjourned at 7:35.

**Upcoming: McDonalds 424-436 West Main: Seeking to rework the Drive-Thru (two order kiosks). ** Ceres Farm Brewery adding additional sidewalk. **Bfd Bldg seeks to convert lower level of 211 Montowese St into Residential Use (PH to be set). **Ford of Branford planning on constructing a separate building for their Electric Vehicles.

Chamber Report: Dee Jacob, President of the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce reported that Jim Fernell is heading the Chamber's Board of Directors. Jim is a resident of Branford and has submitted his name to the Board of Selectmen for consideration to be on the EDC. Governor Lamont was the Speaker at February's Annual Awards Meeting. Well attended. Excellent event. The Chamber will be assisting BACA in the Artisan Market held on Saturday at the Branford Festival. "Bagels & BioTech" events will resume. Dee reports that the Chamber has positive, promising plans that will help to increase membership.

Selectman's Report: None

Old Business: Budget update: Perry met with Finance Department and First Selectman for the purpose of discussing budget and EDC's reasoning behind the changes. Adjusted the "Other Purchased Services" back to the \$6550 to be the same from last year. New TOTAL is \$23,550 which is up \$4,400 from 2023 Budget. More focus will be on increasing our electronic presence through our website and other means.

EDC Sub-Committees: As part of Attraction, as well as Retention & Expansion, discussion concerning Search Engine Optimization was discussed. Al and Rich, with their extensive knowledge in the field, suggested that we invest more into this means of promoting our town. Frank Hird made a Motion to allow spending up to \$200/month through the end of this fiscal year on SEO. John Leonard Seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Workforce Development committee suggests we advise businesses to consider Branford High School students as interns to join their team. Programs are available where much of the wages are covered for the first 8 weeks. Next High School Career Path is slated for the spring of 2024.

New Business: New/other business: Requests for ads in the Playbill for Legacy Theatre and the GNHCC booklet was discussed and determined to not participate. Businesses have been approached about excessive light, and not being in conformance with the Zoning Regulations. Applies to those that have recently changed, or planning to change/add to what they have. Does not force one to change what has been installed decades ago.

Correspondence: Demolition Applications: Fischer Excavating: House at 230 Pleasant Point Rd (No objections); Fischer Excavating: Structure at 1 Big Curtis (Bear) Island (No objections); Waterside Building: Structure at 65 Goodsell Point Rd (No objections). Letters: None as of 2/28. Public Comment: None

Announcements: Update on EDC membership: Have 2 spots open. In accordance with Charter, one should be Chamber Board member that lives in Branford. Jim Fennell newly elected President of the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce lives in Branford and has expressed an interest. Next Regular Meeting: April 5th, 2023

Adjourn: 9:16a Motion made by Al Canosa. Seconded by Alisa Waterman. Vote Unanimous.

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Perry Maresca · Economic and Business Development Manager

Richard Sgueglia (Chair) edc@branford-ct.gov
Elena Cahill · Al Canosa · Frank Hird · John Leonard · Jared Schulefand · Alisa Waterman
First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove [ex officio]

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