



# TOWN of THOMPSON

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*Jinda Paradise*  
TOWN CLERK, ASST

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

### Economic Development Commission Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall 6:30 P.M.

- I. Call to Order was at 6:31pm by Chair Brian Yacino.  
**Present:** Chair Brian Yacino, Jo Ann Hall, Charles Obert, Brian Loffredo, Planner Tyra Penn-Gesek; ex officio, First selectman Amy St. Onge; ex officio, Selectman Ken Beausoleil; ex officio, Ashley Pomes, Recording Secretary  
**Absent:** Brian Santos, John Sharpe
- II. Approval of Minutes: January 15, 2020 – **Motion by J. Hall seconded by C. Obert to approve the minutes of January 15, 2020 carried unanimously.**
- III. Reports
  1. Chairman – Grant for Garden by the River for \$5,000 was awarded for park/playground amenities at 65 Main Street. CEDAS has invited members of the EDC to join their association, they do things such as seminars and workshops to help with economic growth in the state. B. Yacino is going to check with all members of the commission to see if everyone is interested in joining.  
**Motion by C. Obert seconded by J. Hall to agree to the entire commission joining if all members are in favor carried unanimously.** Reminder that Wednesday March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm is the Ask Me Anything event at the Town Library.
  2. Treasurer – J. Hall reported current balance of \$23,344.76 left to spend between now and the end of the fiscal year.
- IV. Update on Businesses in Town – Patterson Insurance Service, home office space, Ecklund Construction, offsite small excavation business, Grass Pro LLC, offsite lawn maintenance, Jessy's Pups LLC, dog grooming business, Jennifer Productions, organize events and projects.
- V. Citizen's Comments Pertaining to Agenda Items - none
- VI. Old Business
  1. Progress for EDC alternate – B. Santos had someone possibly in mind, but he is not present tonight to discuss further. An offer of joining was extended to Selectman Ken Beausoleil. T. Penn-Gesek says a goal of Ask Me Anything is to see if any members of the public are interested in joining any Commission/Committees.
  2. FY 2019-20 Budget – Discuss priorities before June 30 – The \$23,000 in the treasurer's report is currently unassigned to any projects. A list was provided of all different projects the commission is working on so that it could be voted on where and how much funds to allocate for each project. They are as follows:  
"Nips for Christmas Cheer", **Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Loffredo to allocate \$1,000 for this program carried unanimously.**

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**“Six Months of Suffrage”, Motion B. Loffredo seconded by J. Hall to allocate \$500 to enter into crowdfunding for match funds carried unanimously.**

**“UCONN project, class of ‘20”, Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Loffredo for \$1,000 for this project carried unanimously.**

**“Train Wreck Park and Recreation Activities” Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Loffredo to allocate \$2,500 for projects associated with this carried unanimously.**

It was also decided to spend the remaining money on two additional items. \$4,500 will go towards a Tourism/Events Brochure and \$5,000 will be set aside for the Garden grant as that is a reimbursement grant and the commission will need to spend their own \$5,000 up front and then will receive that money back.

3. Proposals regarding the FY 21 EDC budget – **“Pop-up Village” Motion C. Obert seconded by J. Hall to put \$10,000 towards this carried unanimously.**

**“Annual UConn project fee” Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Loffredo to allocate \$1,000 towards this carried unanimously.**

**“Annual Brochure Production” Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Loffredo to allocate \$5,000 towards continuing the production and distribution of the Tourism Brochure carried unanimously.**

It was also decided to put \$5,000 towards the Wayfinding, \$5,000 towards the Train Wreck Park, \$10,000 towards projects at 65 Main Street and \$5,400 towards the continuing of the intern.

4. Wayfinding sign locations – B. Yacino passed out papers that are also available electronically for members of commissions/committees to come up with ideas of where they think signs should be placed.

## VII. New Business

1. Discuss trademarks for Thompson slogans – B. Loffredo discussed looking into a trademark for the slogan “More than just a train wreck”, the commission agreed that they like this idea and B. Loffredo will do more research on this.
2. Discuss use of the old TMHS auditorium for events – C. Obert discussed the use of this auditorium when there are no other events going on at the school, there is a \$100-200 janitorial fee. There is a number of programs that should be allowed entrance free of charge at this location so the money will need to come from somewhere to pay the janitorial fee. He would like to look into setting aside some funds for this. This will be continued next month.
3. Flexible incentives (based on perceived benefits) to help businesses with startup costs, permits, etc. – This needs to be looked into further, continue next month.

## VIII. Progress Reports:

1. Zoning Regulations revision – The regulations were sent to council and T. Penn-Gesek expects they will receive them back with comments by the end of this month.
2. Electronic sign for Town Hall – Continue next month
3. Train Wreck Site improvements (and grant for info kiosk) - \$2,500 was set aside for this, C. Obert is looking into the possibility of hiring a drone company to come video the area during the upcoming Cyclocross event in March, he knows of a company that has already been used during the community day event last year. J. Hall also knows someone who has a drone business

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and she will pass along their contact information to C. Obert, he will begin to get estimates for this.

4. CME Wayfinding Plan and Signage Design (IOBY) – Commission/committee members are composing a list of places they believe signs should be placed, continue next month.

5. Pop-up village – There was multiple layout ideas presented to the commission, it was decided that the 10 in a row layout idea would work the best. There will be facades to represent the ten villages in town for these pop-ups. Two facades have been determined already with the other eight to be voted on.

IX. Comments by Commission Members – B. Loffredo mentioned Putnam is actively looking for someone for a hotel site available off the highway. He states he is in favor of a hotel in Thompson, T. Penn-Gesek says she believes smaller scale lodging is a good option in Thompson such as the Mason House.

X. Next Meeting: March 18, 2020: 6:30 pm, Thompson Public Library Meeting Room

XI. Adjourn – Chair B. Yacino adjourned the meeting at 8:24pm.

Respectfully Submitted; Ashley Pomes, Recording Secretary