



# TOWN of THOMPSON

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*Linda Paradise*  
TOWN CLERK, ASST

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

### Economic Development Commission

Wednesday, January 16, 2019

SENEY MEETING ROOM Town Hall 6:30 P.M.

### Minutes

I. The call to order was by Chair Brian Yacino at 6:30

Present: Chairman Brian Yacino

Absent: Robert Larkin

JoAnn Hall

Brian Santos

H. Charles Obert

Tyra Penn-Gesek

John Sharpe

First Selectman Ken Beausoleil, ex officio

Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary

Chair B. Yacino reported that Jo Ann Hall, whose term of office expired on December 31, was re-instated on the Economic Development Commission, but has not yet been sworn in. She may participate in the meeting but is ineligible to vote. There is a quorum present nevertheless.

**II. Motion to approve the Minutes of December 19, 2018 by C. Obert seconded by T. Penn-Gesek carried unanimously.** Note: p 2, # 6 ~~buyer's market~~ should have been *employee's market*

### III. Reports

1. Chairman: The Selectman's office will re-examine the terms of office for EDC members.

– The Chair attended the ribbon-cutting for the re-opening of the Watson Boutique B&B, on the Common on RT 193, which appears to be very gracious

– The Faraway Café is open Wednesdays-Sundays; they will host a Wind-Down Wednesday event for the TBA.

– Thompson business news can be incorporated into a larger Norwich Bulletin article, addressing a regional trend or issue. An example was a contact about Branding from a regional perspective.

– The Commission contact list was distributed, seeking corrections. Two needed spelling changes were called out.

2. Treasurer: balance on hand on December 27 was \$27,198.28, with the only deductions to date for the Recording Secretary. Nothing is known to be outstanding.

3. Other reports: none

IV. Update on Businesses in Town

**\*\*** The Cumbie's has been sold to Gulf and the transition is underway. **\*\*** Note was previously made that Quaddick Country Store/Coach's Corner has changed operating hours. **\*\*** There is new management at Our Father's Table and a bakery area seems to be operating. **\*\*** It seems odd that no new business openings/new trade name requests/new sign requests have come in since October.

**Action Item:** Who handles these matters now that the Planner's office is vacant?

V. Citizen's Comments Pertaining to Agenda Items - none

VI. Old Business

- a. February 6: Branding Implementation Plan/Strategy "unveiling" event
  - The question arose: was John Filchak/NECCOG informed of the meeting? Should he be?
  - T. Penn-Gesek will serve as Facilitator of the evening as well as taking a section of the presentation. Others who will also participate are C. Obert, B. Loffredo, B. Yacino, B. Santos, R. Waldron, C. Langlois and K. Beausoleil.
  - **Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Santos to provide funding for snacks for the Feb 6 and March 6 Branding community meetings, not to exceed \$200 in total, carried unanimously.** Chair B. Yacino will work out the details. Our Father's Table has offered to provide coffee and other beverages. The Branding Subcommittee Chair, R. Waldron, is preparing the program including a visual presentation for attendees. A preliminary walk-through session is planned for the Jan 30.

b. WELCOME letter to Businesses/Professionals

\* T. Penn-Gesek revised the letter further, stating that it is shorter and more direct. Copies will be emailed out to the Commission members.

\* Once the letter is finalized, B. Santos advocates for sending it to every Thompson business, as the information should be widely seen.

**\*\*** Discussion- should only the EDC's logo/seal appear on it or should the Town logo appear as well? **Action Item:** research for next month.

**\*\* Motion C. Obert seconded by B. Santos that the word "Office" will be dropped from the EDC letterhead and "Commission" inserted, carried unanimously.** This is consistent with the other Boards/Commissions, All official documents used by the Commission are to be reviewed/modified accordingly.

c. New Website: Feedback. Question to K. Beausoleil: will further training be offered?

K. Beausoleil - Yes. **\*\*** B. Yacino has asked that the EDC and the EDC Branding agendas/minutes be separated in the list on the website, to clarify the two groups for the public. **\*\*** B. Santos - would like permission to be designated as the Member authorized to modify content on the EDC page; it was the consensus that he should proceed accordingly.

d. Status: Zoning Regulations revision- underway. The town hall meeting room is reserved for several sessions by the P & Z Regulations Review Subcommittee during the next 2 months..

e. Status: Town Planner position- a new posting went out and applications are coming in; many towns are simultaneously looking

f.Status: 929 Riverside Drive – on going. The BAR Grant, to work on the RT 12/131 Corridor from RT 200 to the RT12/131 split will improve the appearance of the area. Steps are underway as well as address environmental concerns.

X.New Business: Budget planning - K. Beausoleil asked if the EDC members anticipate any additional expenses beyond what the current budget provides. The BOS will begin budget planning in February. C. Obert – implementation of an action item, such as hiring a person for Marketing/Social Media development may be dependent upon researching the going rate for that position. J. Sharpe – the \$25,000 for staff should be earmarked as a pending expense, so the BOF understands and does not remove the line. Appearance of the town hall and the space directly across the road were discussed in terms of whether a budget line item is appropriate. There was discussion of the possibility of an informative, changeable sign in front of the town hall; costs are unknown, and zoning compliance is also unknown.

**Action item:** The EDC will need to create a 2019-2020 budget request for the BOF.

XI.Correspondence; The CERC economic and demographic data for Thompson was distributed, having been received by First Selectman K. Beausoleil.

B. Santos departed at 7:35. He coaches a team at 8 PM.

XII.Comments by Commission Members: C. Obert- the 12-Town Trails Task Force, on which he will serve, will meet to address creating a unified appearance from end to end. The EDC will want to determine how best to tie into this gateway opportunity. Something “trending” is for individuals to ride every bicycle trail in the state, so maybe setting up something rather like a “passport stamp” or letterbox system would be welcome. Connections to bicycle-friendly trains, a possible link to Thompson’s own Railroad History and other ideas should be examined. K. Beausoleil- the Trails system IS part of the EDC’s scope. Determining what the draws into Thompson are is the concept.

XV.Next Meeting: February 20, 2019, 6:30 pm, Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall

XVI.Adjournment was at 8:00 PM by Chair B. Yacino.

Respectfully Submitted; Dorothy Durst, Recording Secretary *Dorothy Durst*

*These minutes have not yet been approved by the Economic Development Commission. Please refer to next month’s meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.*