

**Economic Development Commission Branding Implementation Committee
Special Meeting**

Wednesday, 26 June 2019 – 6:30 PM
Merrill Seney Community Room
Thompson Town Hall

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TOWN OF THOMPSON, CT.

2019 JUN 28 P 12:36

Chris Waldron
TOWN CLERK

Minutes

Attending: R. Waldron (Chair), C. Langlois, B. Loffredo, C. Obert, T. Penn-Gesek (Dir. Planning & Development). Additional attendees: N. Loughlin (Hartford Marathon Foundation); L. Pasqualetti (resident – potential new member)

1. **Call To Order:** Chair Waldron calls the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Obert moves and Loffredo seconds an amendment to the agenda, moving up discussion of the August racing event, as an accommodation for guest N. Loughlin of the Hartford Marathon Foundation. The motion passes unanimously.
3. **August Racing Event**
 - Obert provides background information on the interest from Branding and EDC in developing support for trail racing events.
 - Loughlin requests volunteers to assist on race day. Primarily looking for 6 people to work at a watering station at the exchange point of the relay. It would also be helpful to have some number of cyclists riding the Thompson section of the trail. The approximate timeframe for runners passing through Thompson is 8:15 AM – 1:00 PM. Loughlin also confirms that Hartford Marathon Foundation has notified East Thompson volunteer fire of the event, for emergency preparedness purposes. HMF will also arrange for state police detail at two points on their course.
 - Obert suggests that it can be arranged to have the access gates opened for the day of the event. Loughlin doesn't feel it will be necessary.
 - Waldron requests promotional materials from HMF for use on town social media and in promotional packets for distribution to local businesses.
 - Obert suggests hiring port-a-johns from local company Earthworks. HMF will arrange for those
 - When asked what would improve the experience for that participants, Loughlin confirms that the "off" members of the team will have time to spare before meeting at the next leg of the race. A guide to local amenities (food, gas) and scenic drives is suggested.
 - Branding members are left with "homework" to complete ahead of the August meeting: **Langlois** is to present the event information to TBA for their participation in a guide to Thompson for the visitors, and to have them give thought to how to specifically welcome the race team members on that day; **Loffredo and Obert** are to scout the best parking locations; **Penn and Waldron** are to work on the supporting materials (a banner at the exchange or parking location, encouraging visitors to come into town; promotional packets for distribution to TBA; addition of relevant information to town website & social media).
 - Further discussion and progress reports from all will be on the agenda for the next regular meeting on 7 August.
4. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from the last meeting were not available. Approval is tabled until August meeting.
5. **Reports:**

- i. Update regarding P&Z rewrite of regulations:
Penn confirms that a new draft was received from NECCOG, dated 3 June. No additional meeting has been scheduled for review, in part because Filchak of NECCOG has not responded with any possible dates. The latest draft has been reviewed and commented on by J&D Engineering and CME, and Penn has been reviewing the NECCOG draft with those additional suggestions in hand. Penn feels that it would be possible to schedule a meeting of the commission to review the new draft without Filchak if necessary, under the guidance of the Planner and the ZEO. The suggestion will be made to the commission as soon as possible, if NECCOG remains unresponsive.
- ii. Update of Rivermill Development Project:
Penn confirms that the website page created by K. Morander of CME is "live" on the town webpage. Waldron has also added a link to that page from the home page

6. Old Business:

- i. EDC FY19/FY20 Budgets:
All of the items approved out of EDC for FY 19 have either been spent or encumbered (\$5k for outline of wayfinding program encumbered to CME via PO on 27 June). CME has not yet provided their preliminary outline for the phases and requirements of the proposed wayfinding program. Penn will follow up again before the end of this week. There is discussion of the continuation of the intern for social media. The first term is nearly complete. It is decided that, in absence of an adopted budget, that the intern should have a few weeks of hiatus, and then EDC will be asked to vote again to approve funding for the next term. It is generally believed that EDC will continue to support the internship, based on prior discussion. A bid was accepted from Graphics Unlimited for the Town Hall sign, and the approved \$10k encumbered to them. Langlois will contact the vendor to update him on the status. Once the new budget is set, recommendations will be made to EDC to fund an additional portion of the sign project, and Langlois will spearhead the effort for additional fundraising for the balance.
- ii. Farm Passport Program:
Not much to update on the program. It continues on its own, with the next large-scale event planned at Fort Hill Farm in July. Poor weather was detrimental to the rollout in May.
- iii. CT Trails Day recap:
Response was largely positive. Between the two events there were more than 60 participants, with roughly 50 visitors to the Train Wreck walk and talk, and 15 for the Tri-State-Marker hike.
- iv. Social Media Intern Status:
This item was mostly covered under the discussion of the EDC budget. The intern has done work to create a regular calendar of what to post, when and where. He is currently doing some analytics to measure the effectiveness of the new program, thus far.
- v. Town-wide branding event/5 June recap
Discussion was kept brief in the interest of time. The results and report from T. Penn were sent to all participants shortly after the event, and the scores of the various concepts were posted to the town website and Facebook pages. The planner has been using the results of the event to inform other plans & projects.
- vi. Town-wide Tag sale recap:
No discussion was possible within the time constraints for the evening.
- vii. Wayfinding Program (signage):

Briefly discussed under the EDC budget. The planner will follow up with CME for another update. Given the stated priorities of the town from the planning game, emphasis on historic landmarks and outdoor amenities for the first round of signs is likely.

7. Branding Strategy Implementation Next Steps

- i. Community Day, 5 October 2019:
A brief update is provided about some new initiatives Thompson Together is exploring to improve and expand the event, including: doubling the number of classic cars to 10-12 (assigned to B. Yacino); adding one or two food trucks for variety (assigned to Recreation Dept); adding a community "trash art" exhibit (assigned to Penn); and possibly inviting Audrey Lin from Matting Change to host a workshop on making sleeping mats for the homeless from single-use plastic bags (assigned to Penn). Next meeting to plan Community Day is Tuesday 2 July at noon. L. Pasqualetti was invited to join.
- ii. Community Garden Project:
A brief synopsis of a planned project to reuse the old TEEG building site at 65 Main was given. Penn and A. Miller of TEEG are also meeting on 2 July to craft a grant proposal for funding to help realize a larger project incorporating a rain garden, community food garden, and adaptive reuse of the building for educational/entrepreneurial purposes. The first meeting of the handful of residents who have expressed interest in Wed 3 July at 4 p.m.

8. New Business:

The planner invites members of the Branding, and will extend the invitation to EDC chair Yacino, to join her on a scheduled downtown/mill tour in Windsor Locks on 10 July. The planner also briefly mentions that she has joined as an interim board member of the newly formed Eastern CT Brownfield Land Bank. Roles are not yet defined for the members, but it is likely that Penn will be working with W. Bugden of CME and M. Chrysochoou of UConn's Brownfields Initiative on EPA Workforce development grants for the region.

9. Correspondence: none

10. Member Comments: none additional

11. Adjournment: 8:00 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,
Tyra Penn-Gesek, Director of Planning & Development