



TOWN of THOMPSON

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Economic Development Commission Minutes

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Upstairs Meeting Room, Town Hall 6:30 P.M.

I. Call to Order- Call to order was by Chair Brian Yacino at 6:37pm

Present: Chairman Brian Yacino, Brian Santos, Brian Loffredo, Jo Ann Hall, H. Charles Obert, Planner Tyra Penn-Gesek; ex officio, Ashley Pomes, recording secretary

Absent: John Sharpe

Others Present: Susan Esons

II. Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2019- **Motion by J. Hall seconded by B. Loffredo to approve the minutes of December 18, 2019 carried unanimously.**

III. Reports

1. Chairman- B. Yacino will be working on an annual report for the last fiscal year.
2. Treasurer- No official report available, B. Yacino will see if he can obtain one and email it out to all the members.

IV. Update on Businesses in Town- There were no documents for any new or closed businesses. B. Loffredo questioned the process of registering a new business in town. B. Santos states in the new regulations that will be coming out, there is a page dedicated to this and it will be easily available for anyone interested to view. C. Obert says when this is available, we should put a link to it on the EDC website.

V. Citizen's Comments Pertaining to Agenda Items- Susan Esons is attending the meeting to hear what is going on in town, she is also interested in seeing revenue enhanced. B. Loffredo suggests she also attend a branding committee meeting as a focus of that committee is enhancing revenue.

VI. Old Business

1. Progress for EDC alternate- B. Santos is going to reach out to a friend that may be interested in joining. There was also a discussion questioning if a town Selectman was able to join a commission as a member or if they were only able to attend as an ex officio.
2. Proposals regarding the 2020 EDC budget- There were many items discussed that may need funding from the EDC budget. T. Penn-Gesek says they would like to keep an intern in the office, the current one will be graduating at the end of this school year. She also spoke of an idea of a program to get litter off the streets, specifically miniature alcohol bottles (nips), with collected bottles being turned in for gift card rewards. She will look into possibly finding a corporate sponsor to donate the gift cards. There are two kinds of community engagement software being looked at that may need EDC funding as well. This is also the centennial year for the ratification of the 19th amendment and there will be events starting at Memorial Day at the parade going all the way through community day with at least one event per month. The Historical Society will be giving some funds towards the cost of those events. T. Penn-Gesek will also be helping with

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doing another IOBY with the Historical Society for this. In total the cost of all events will probably be near \$5,000-6,000 with the possibility of approximately \$1,000 coming from EDC.

VII. New Business- none

VIII. Progress Reports:

1. Zoning Regulations revision- T. Penn-Gesek finished the rewrite on 1/3/2020, it is a complete internal draft and is ready to go to the town council for review, they will flag any issues that need to be addressed and then it will go on to one public workshop for people to come in and ask questions. C. Obert gives credit to Wetlands Agent Marla Butts for the excellent work she did on this as well.
2. Electronic sign for Town Hall- \$10,000 was put aside last year for this as well as funds that have come in from grants and IOBY. T. Penn-Gesek to look into how those funds can be spent as far as the design process versus the actual sign.
3. Train Wreck Site improvements (and grant for info kiosk)- Two people from the National Parks Service in Boston came down to meet with a group from Trails as well as the Historical Society, a representative from Douglas Massachusetts and Tom Chase, a retired curator from the Smithsonian. A presentation was given and then they went to walk the site. There is a follow up meeting an hour prior to the Trails meeting on February 3rd and they will present a rough draft of what they saw and thought.
4. CME Wayfinding Plan and Signage Design (IOBY) – grant progress- 100% funded, T. Penn-Gesek has signed the agreement, IOBY just needs to review it and then they will send the funds. The agreement with CME was signed and sent back to them this past Monday. They will attend the branding meeting and talk about the next steps there. The specifics of the timeline for the project is still up online on IOBY website.
5. Pop-up village- A PowerPoint document from the UCONN students was printed and given out to all commission members for their review. Included in this document was placement for the chalets, ideas for parking, suggested ways of improving pedestrian traffic, ideas and examples of an entry way to the site, cost estimates and their preliminary scheduled timeline for the semester to get work completed.
- 6 Creation of an EDC sub-committee for projects related to 65 Main.- **Motion by C. Obert to establish a subcommittee for projects related to 65 Main street, seconded by B. Santos carried unanimously.** T. Penn-Gesek will work out details to begin forming the subcommittee.

IX. Comments by Commission Members- C. Obert says the coordinator of the cyclocross event on March 29th has mentioned about scheduling a pancake breakfast with a not for profit, to be served the morning of the event. 500 people are registered for the bicycle event and he thinks he could get around 250 people to attend the breakfast. Also C. Obert spoke about the additional benefit of this event is after mapping the trails that were used for the event, it could bring in a lot more riders to the town throughout the year to ride on those mapped out trails. T. Penn-Gesek also started a conversation with commission members about starting a new passport program like the farm one done last year but using a different destination this year with suggestions such as the Northeast Corner passport or Thompson passport. For the program to be more successful than last year, the brochure should be made more inviting for people to want to pick up and read.

X. Next Meeting: February 19, 2020: 6:30 pm, Merrill Seney Room, Town Hall

XI. Adjourn- The meeting was adjourned by Chair B. Yacino at 8:02pm.

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