

TOWN OF MONTVILLE
Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes – April 15, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
Montville Town Hall – Room 203

1. Call to Order
Chairman Hewitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
All stood and pledged the flag.
3. Roll Call
Commissioners present were Mickey Gillette, Sheelagh Lapinski, Christopher Napierski, Jim Toner, and Chairman Walter Hewitt. Also present was Town Councilor Rogers. A quorum was present.
4. Alterations to the Agenda
Motion by Commissioner Toner; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to add the following items to New Business: a) seCTer’s Email; b) Business Outreach Program; c) Windham Marketing Survey, and d) Groton EDC Interest in Business Awards. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
5. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3-minute limit)
Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.
6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve:
 - a. The Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 18, 2019.
Motion by Commissioner Gillette; seconded by Commissioner Toner to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2019, as amended. Discussion: Chairman Hewitt said that Item 7.a.iv should be updated to show the blog is now located at Montville-edc.org. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.
7. Unfinished Business
 - a. EDC Website
 - i. Town of Montville
Commissioner Napierski reported he reviewed the Groton website that has outsourced maintenance and he said the Commission could meet with and get pricing from the company to determine whether to go forward. Town Councilor Rogers reported the Town IT Director Bill O’Neil was looking into updating the entire Town website based upon the contractor used by the Town of Meriden whose site is user friendly. He and Commissioner Toner spoke about some of the inadequacies of the Town website, the difficulty of finding monthly meeting recordings and the lack of a search engine, respectively. Chairman Hewitt and Commissioner Napierski asked whether the EDC would have a voice or involvement in content management. Town Council Chairman McNally said the Finance Committee would meet here Wednesday April 17 at 4:30 p.m. and invited the Commission to attend the meeting where the IT budget would be considered. He said \$20,000 is the investment for the website upgrade which Chairman Hewitt said “will not get what we want with that price.” Town Councilor Rogers said the website upgrade would encompass

all Town departments and discussion followed by the Commission on the “wants” for the website upgrade.

ii. Facebook – *No report*

iii. seCTer – *No report*

iv. Blog for EDC (Currently at <http://whewitt.com>)

Chairman Hewitt said he would post to the blog as he gets time stating most of the information is from seCTer.

b. New Business Report.

Chairman Hewitt reported he sent out one (1) letter after the last meeting.

c. Potential formation of a Montville Community Development Corporation – 501(c)(3)

Chairman Hewitt stated this project was on hold until more interest is generated. Commissioner Toner stated the aim to generate funds and people who are willing to work that he said would cost money and time. Commissioner Gillette said the proposal had the ability for potential.

d. 2019 Small Business Forum Event Planning.

Commissioner Toner stated he thought Town Councilor Rogers was going to send an email concerning the status of using the MHS cafeteria as the venue for the forum. Town Councilor Rogers reported on an email from Jennifer LeMay that said the event is scheduled but requires authorized approval by signature. He acted and sent a follow up email to her. Commissioner Toner listed the forum speakers in order as follows: 1) Mayor McDaniel, 2) Chairman Hewitt, 3) Tony Sheridan of the Eastern CT Chamber of Commerce, 4) Lisa Powell of the SBA, 5) SDCD (under the auspices of SBA), 6) Beth Wallace of CERC, 7) seCTer, 8) SCORE, 9) Foundry 66, and 10) a real estate agent (with an aim towards Signature). Commissioner Toner said he would introduce the speakers and spoke about marketing the event through the Chamber via Constant Contact. Chairman Hewitt will act as host if Commissioner Toner is not available for the forum to be held on Tuesday, September 24, 2019 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the Montville High School cafeteria.

e. Businesses leaving Mohegan Sun – Opportunity to them to Rte. 32?

Chairman Hewitt referenced discussion and commentary by Micheal Whitehouse, a liaison to the Town of Groton RTM, about interacting with Town businesses through direct contact and obtaining feedback from the businesses that Mr. Whitehouse said are usually interested in providing. He asked if that should be goal of the Commission. Commissioner Toner suggested partnering with someone who knows about the businesses at the Casino. Chairman Hewitt said he is looking for a bottom-up approach by directly going to the businesses. Commissioner Toner suggested a time frame and date for interacting with the Casino businesses but it was concluded by Town Councilor Rogers that the idea would not be a receptive one. Commissioner Napierski said the goal should be strengthening business

in Montville with the use of a questionnaire as a proving ground, “touchpoint to engage businesses” so they feel connected. Commissioner Toner asked whether the approach should proceed with businesses of less than 5 year or more than 20 years of operation. An action item for the next Commission meeting is whether each commissioner and the liaison can commit to 2-3 hours a month to visit businesses. Town Councilor Rogers then read to the Commission a confirming email from J. LeMay on the forum date and time.

8. New Business

a. seCTer Email.

Chairman Hewitt spoke of the volume of emails from seCTer that he has forwarded to the Commission. He mentioned information received from Mayor McDaniel about an upcoming event in Colchester. Commissioner Toner mentioned the seCTer executive summary available on their website. The Commission then discussed the potential for an EDC consultant and the cost involved. Commissioner Lapinski spoke of someone she knew in the consulting field and agreed to contact the person and provide feedback to the Commission.

b. Business Outreach Program.

This item was discussed earlier under Agenda, Item 7.e.

c. Windham Marketing Survey

Chairman Hewitt spoke of the survey stating it was a good concept and an option. He suggested having the Chamber do so with Constant Contact for feedback from the forum. Commissioner Napierski suggested using the survey for something the Commission wants to market.

d. Groton EDC Interest in Business Awards.

Chairman Hewitt Groton EDC interest in the Montville EDC Recognition Award stating he would wait for feedback from them on it and refer them to Town Councilor Rogers.

9. Townspeople and Business Feedback

a. Proposed Recipients for Business Recognition Award

As suggested by Town Councilor Rogers at last month’s meeting, the Commission discussed and proposed recipients of the award from July through December 2019.

Motion by Commissioner Toner; seconded by Commissioner Gillette confirming the recipients for the Montville EDC Business Recognition Award for the period July thru December 2019 and said recipients shall remain anonymous until presentation of the award. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Motion carried.

10. Report from Town Council Liaison

Town Councilor Rogers asked if a commissioner was available to meet him on Thursday, April 18 at the East Celebrity Elite Cheer & Dance to present the Business Recognition Award to it. They were the March 2019 recipient of the award. It was suggested that

pictures be taken for the website. He then spoke of a round-table discussion on a manufacturing pipeline to be held at the Job Center on April 16, an invitation only event to include Senators Murphy and Blumenthal, and Governor Lamont. Town Councilor Rogers also mentioned a stockpiling of gas line piping on a farm on Rte. 163 and asked what it mean for the Town. He also asked to be added to the next agenda a list of businesses the Town could use that surrounding towns do not have and to put a project together for the same. Finally, he reported on a new Italian bakery opening in Town on May 1st.

11. Remarks from the Public (3-minute limit)
Chairman Hewitt asked three (3) times for remarks. There were none.
12. Remarks from the Commissioners and Town Council Liaison -- None
13. Adjournment
Motion by Commissioner Toner; seconded by Commissioner Gillette to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Discussion: none. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers
Recording Secretary, Town of Montville