

TOWN OF SIMSBURY - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

“SUBJECT TO APPROVAL”

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - OCTOBER 12, 2017

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CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order at 7:35 A.M. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices, 933 Hopmeadow Street. Present were: Chair Kristen Barnett, Vice Chair David Moore and Commissioners David Balboni, Maura Fitzgerald, Thomas Frank and Evelyn Golden. Absent were Commissioners Mark Brady and Jay Devivo. Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services, was also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Fitzgerald moved to approve the Minutes from the September 14, 2017 meeting. Ms. Golden seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING RIBBON CUTTINGS FOR NEW BUSINESSES

Chairwoman Barnett welcomed new businesses to Town and noted there have been several ribbon cuttings recently, including Leaping Into Art, Storyteller's Cottage and the South Oxford Management Apartments.

UPDATE FROM THE FIRST SELECTWOMAN'S OFFICE - TOM COOKE

Town staff has been very deeply involved in the Deepwater Wind proceedings. Deepwater Wind has finished putting its evidence in. The Town's witnesses have not yet testified. The next hearing is November 2nd at 11:00 A.M. at the CT Siting Council Offices in New Britain. The Town feels there are a number of issues that remain to be addressed, most importantly, environmental issues. Mr. Cooke noted soil and water testing being some of them. He added that the Town is stressing the historic importance of this property as well. In addition, he noted there has been some movement on the part of the Council regarding where the panels would be placed. One Town witness, Chad Frost, has testified thus far. He is a landscape professional. Other witnesses have yet to be put on the stand. Discussion ensued as to the number and type of witnesses to appear before the Siting Council. Vice Chair Moore remarked that overstating the case with too many witnesses is a consideration.

When asked about the Town Manager search process, Mr. Cooke noted the search committee is revising the job description and stated there will be four candidates interviewed on October 19th. He added that after the November election, new Board of Selectmen members will become part of the selection process. General discussion followed which included commissioners' concern that economic development be included as part of the position. Mr. Cooke noted the candidate attributes will include economic development and smart-growth principles. There was discussion surrounding the timing of the hiring and the fact there will be a new Board of Selectmen in November. Vice Chair Moore noted the EDC helped establish guidelines from an economic development standpoint.

DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE LETTER FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC) TO BOARD OF SELECTMEN (BOS)

Chairwoman Barnett received written comments from Commissioner Frank. She brought up the point of when to approach the Board of Selectmen with the EDC's letter. Mr. Cooke recommended the Commission send its letter to Chris Kelly of the Personnel Sub-Committee and that it request the letter be shared with the new Board of Selectmen. Mr. Frank remarked he feels strongly the letter should be

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shared at the first Board of Selectmen meeting after the election, which makes it public information. Chairwoman Barnett noted a letter could be sent to Mr. Kelly recommending economic development be taken into consideration in the Town Manager hiring process. It could also inform him that the EDC will be speaking at the new Board of Selectmen meeting regarding the importance of economic development in the strategic plan.

Mr. Frank made a motion to have the EDC Chairwoman send a communication to Chris Kelly, member of the Board of Selectmen, outlining the importance of the focus of economic development in the search for the new Town Manager. In addition, the same should be presented to the new Board of Selectmen. Discussion ensued over the importance of this letter.

The motion was amended to note the Chairwoman will address the BOS at its next meeting about the EDC's strong feelings that the next Town Manager should have demonstrated expertise in economic development. Vice Chair Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A draft of the EDC letter prepared by Commissioner Frank was distributed. A recommendation was made to shorten it. The commissioners decided to review the draft letter and respond to it by October 19th by sending comments to Mr. Cooke.

Vice Chair Moore made a motion to cancel the November EDC meeting. Mr. Frank seconded the motion. Discussion followed, including thanks and appreciation amongst the commissioners and Mr. Cooke for their hard work and leadership. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Moore to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fitzgerald. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Haberlin
Commission Clerk