

**Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2016
"Subject to Approval"**

1. Call to Order

Mark Deming, Chairman, called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 7:33 a.m. on Thursday, June 9, 2016 in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices located at 933 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. The following members were also present: David Balboni, Kris Barnett, Carolyn Bligh, James Devivo and Allan Raphael. Also in attendance were Thomas Cooke, Director of Administrative Services and other interested parties.

2. Review of the minutes – May 12, 2016

Commissioner Bligh made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2016. Commissioner Barnett seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. Town Updates: Tom Cooke

Mr. Cooke noted that the First Selectman's office, Sarah Nielson, SMSP and Town staff worked on a Grant application for a Main Street Investment Fund Grant. He stated that the Grant is for approximately \$460,000, which is designed to help cover the cost of streetscape improvements in the center of Town. Mr. Cooke discussed the Grant with commission members.

- Budget Update

Mr. Cooke stated that the new mill rate has been passed for the upcoming year and it is flat. He noted that it has been three years that the mill rate has been flat or lower taxes in Simsbury. He noted that it took a lot of cooperation with the Board of Education and the First Selectman's office to achieve this.

- Update on Current Projects

Mr. Cooke informed commission members of the \$10,000 Grant received from the State to install a new electric car charging station in the Town Hall parking lot.

Mr. Cooke noted an on-going issue with the lease with Eversource. He stated that they are trying to consolidate their calling centers and want to leave their location in Simsbury. Mr. Cooke explained the Town's concern with response time from Eversource in an emergency situation.

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Mr. Cooke updated the commission members on the progress of the Big Y property and stated that they are going to be starting to take down the buildings on the property.

Mr. Cooke informed members that the Town is participating in a CT Captive, which is a regional initiative, to provide stop loss insurance. He noted that this will provide savings to the Town with a large risk pool and could save the Town up to \$30,000 in the first year.

Mr. Cooke noted that the CIP budget for next year will have some infrastructure fund money available. He noted that Main Street and Tourism were approved by the Board of Selectmen; however, the EDC request for website funds was not approved.

Mr. Cooke stated that the Hartford property should start to be developed by early October starting with the northern piece of the property.

Mr. Cooke also mentioned completing the photo contest.

- Charter Revision Updates

Mr. Cooke noted that the Charter Revision meeting will be held on Monday, June 13th and the Charter will be presented at that time. He stated that the Board of Selectmen will take public comment and then have their own discussion. Mr. Cooke discussed several options that could happen after the Board of Selectmen discussion.

4. Reports: FVVA; SMSP

Ms. Nancy Anstey, FVVA, discussed the following items:

- Try-Anthlon
- Simsbury Historical Society Meeting
- Saturday, June 11th is Open House Day at Historical Society
- Tours Conference in Mystic, which will include tours to Hillstead
- Livingston Taylor concert on Friday, June 10th in Simsbury
- Talcott Mountain Music Festival
- Welcome Centers in Connecticut

Mr. Rich Correia spoke in absence of Ms. Sarah Nielson, SMSP. He discussed the following events:

- The \$460,000 Streetscape Grant application
- Visits with local businesses
- Green Tea restaurant renovation
- Amica Half Marathon parking issues
 - Members discussed several options to resolve the parking issues

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5. Old/New Business

Commissioner Deming shared his experience with some river towns he recently traveled to in Kentucky and Tennessee. He discussed how Simsbury could also benefit with the river in our Town.

Commissioner Deming noted that this will be his last meeting as Chairman of the Economic Development Committee and noted items that the EDC has accomplished over the years. He noted that he is now President of the Friends of Simsbury Farms, a 501(c) organization, and discussed how residents can contribute to this organization to help the Farms. Commissioner Deming noted that they are having their first Friends of the Farm kick off weekend on July 15th and 16th.

Commissioner Barnett voiced her concern on the removal of the “name fence” surrounding the playground at Simsbury Farms that was installed by the Simsbury Junior Women’s Club. This fence included all the donors names engraved on the posts and was replaced by a chain link fence.

Mr. Ferg Jansen discussed new signage on the trail by the Farmington River.

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Raphael made a motion for approval for adjournment at 8:35a.m. Commissioner Devivo seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Brigham
Commission Clerk