

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 7, 2012
7:00 P.M., UPSTAIRS FOYER**

MINUTES

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Note: These are summary minutes. A tape recording of this meeting is on file in the Commission Secretary's Office in the Wolcott Town Hall.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

Chairman Chris O'Brien called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and attendance was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Adam Hadir, Steve Bosco, Edwin Rodriguez, Chris O'Brien, Robyn Mazas arrived at 7:09 p.m.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Terry Mulhall, William Evans

ALSO PRESENT : Mary Morrone, Dave Wilson, IT Consultant

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon **MOTION** by Edwin Rodriguez, seconded by Adam Hadir, it was unanimously voted to **APPROVE** the minutes of the April 2, 2012 Regular Meeting.

Chris O'Brien and Steve Bosco abstained due to absence.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

Chris O'Brien said he received a correspondence from Domain Registry of America that has our website "whywolcott.org" which we will address later on the agenda.

IV. PUBLIC REQUESTS

There were no Public Requests at this time.

V. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no Sub-Committee reports at this time.

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VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. WhyWolcott.org Website

Chris O'Brien said that through emails he has been receiving that the "whywolcott.com" name is going up for auction. Chris O'Brien said we let the .com website go dormant. Edwin Rodriguez said he met with Dave Wilson, IT Consultant for the Town, and Mary (Morrone) to see how we could move forward with the "whywolcott.org" website. He wanted to find out what is the easiest way to get the website moving with the limited budget we have.

At this time Robyn Mazas arrived at 7:09 a.m.

Chris O'Brien said our concerns were the budget, the appearance, marketability and how to keep the website up to date once it is up and running. Mary Morrone said that the town has a website that is up and flourishing and this commission can just set up a link from "whywolcott.org" that will open up the town's and our information can be posted there. Mary Morrone said when you have the business directory together then you can have Dave get that posted to the Economic Development website. Dave Wilson said previous discussion with Edwin Rodriguez was to have the "whywolcott.org and/or whywolcott.com" point to a particular location on the "whywolcottct.org" site and whatever information you have posted to the Economic Development link will be available for whoever is looking for information pertaining to this Commission and the Town. Dave Wilson said he would start with enhancing our section within the town's site and work from there. He suggested the members look at the Senior Center and Farmingbury's site to see how theirs work. Steve Bosco said our goal is to retain business and encourage business to come into town. He said if he was a business looking to come to town he would search through the Town of Wolcott site but to retain business you should have the business listing on the site but the most important thing is to have links from there to their own websites. Dave Wilson said we (the commission) have the framework sitting there we just have to get the information posted. Mary Morrone said you can do a feature of the month and show a picture of a business with information or links to them directly and change from month to month. There was a brief discussion as to how to go about this by promoting new businesses, or promoting different sections of town at a time, specialty businesses, etc. Edwin Rodriguez said a concern would be who would be updating this information to keep it up to date and Steve Bosco said there is an easy way to do that through the personal property tax information but that is

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only done once a year. Mary Morrone said you can utilize the website, the community newspaper, etc. to find out who is interested in being on the business directory. Dave Wilson said there is a general contact form on the website that goes to him or Mary on a daily basis with different requests but they can make a separate form that is just in the Economic Development section of the website. Dave Wilson said he agrees with what Edwin said earlier that if you do not keep your information current you might as well not even do it. There was a brief discussion regarding whether to try and keep both domain names “whywolcott.org and whywolcott.com” and the outcome is listed below.

A motion was offered by Steve Bosco, seconded by Edwin Rodriguez, to not renew the “whywolcott.org” website. A brief discussion followed and Steve Bosco withdrew his motion and Edwin Rodriguez withdrew his second.

Upon **MOTION** by, Steve Bosco, seconded by Edwin Rodriguez, it was unanimously voted to keep and renew the “whywolcott.org” through Domain Registry of America with a pointer to the Town of Wolcott website.

Steve Bosco asked if we were paying someone to maintain the website and Chris O’Brien said no we have no contract with anyone and he has all the passwords, etc. Dave Wilson asked where it was being hosted and Chris O’Brien said it is through Host Monster.com. and he believes it is around \$50.00 to \$60.00. It was stated this is not needed anymore and you need to let them know that so it will be cancelled. Dave Wilson said that the commission might want to consider keeping “whywolcott.com” seeing as you would be saving from cancelling Host Monster.com and Chris O’Brien said he would look into that.

Again Chris O’Brien asked if everyone was in favor of renewing the domain name for “whywolcott.org” and forwarding it to the town’s website and it passed unanimously.

Steve Bosco asked Chris to find out how much it would cost to keep “whywolcott.com” and then we can take it from there. Dave Wilson said to go back to the place where you originally got “whywolcott.com” to see if it is in a pending deletion file as it is worth the call if it is only \$35.00 or so.

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Upon **MOTION** by Steve Bosco, seconded by Edwin Rodriguez, it was unanimously voted to try to renew the domain name for “whywolcott.com” as long as it is not more than \$50.00.

Chris O’Brien said we have improved what we are going to do with the website we just have to work on it. Edwin Rodriguez said the suggestion is to get an excel spreadsheet from the Assessor’ Office and Steve Bosco said someone should sit with the Assessor to discuss the spreadsheet to determine the correct codes, etc. Chris O’Brien said we had a list from 2 years ago and postcards were sent to around 800 businesses in trying to get information about businesses in town. After a brief discussion it was stated that Steve Bosco will talk to Pam (Assessor) to get the business information spreadsheet and go from there. After more discussion it was suggested to get a list from the Chamber of Commerce then put an ad in the Community News notifying businesses about the directory and how to go about getting their business name on said directory. Chris O’Brien said we currently have a few generic files such as a town ordinance that states taxes have to be paid to pull a permit and the Tax Abatement information that he would like put on the town website. It was suggested to talk to Pam (Assessor) first regarding the Tax Abatement and the legalities, etc. to see if she has a simplified form that can be put on the website.

Edwin Rodriguez asked at what point the “whywolcott.org” will be linked to the town website. Dave Wilson said as soon as he has the log in information to the Domain Registry of America he can go from there and Chris O’Brien said he will get that to him within a couple days. Mary Morrone said not to just focus on the business directory, you need to sell the town and why business should come to town, etc. Steve Bosco talked a little about the EDD1 and EDD2 zone that was put in as an overlay zone that allows for more Industrial and Commercial retail development. Chris O’Brien said he and Adam Hadir will work on writing the text for the website and Steve Bosco will be working on the business directory with Pam for the next meeting. Dave Wilson said there is an area on the website now, “All about Wolcott” that is underused and you might want to build the Economic Development section under that. There was more discussion as to how to bring business to town by promoting the town’s education system, golf course, ball fields, etc. Edwin Rodriguez then said he had concern with the Rte. 69 Corridor being kept up as it is a focal point in town and there are some businesses that need to be cleaned up. He said if you want to retain businesses then we (as a commission) should maybe be looking into filing a blight complaint. He said we need to look into the blight

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ordinance to see what is and isn't allowed and then address it with the blight commission if need be.

Chris O'Brien said he has been trying to reach Ron Pugliese in Waterbury but has not received a call back yet. He is trying to see what incentives they have verses what we have. Steve Bosco said they have a special state legislative zone for areas in Waterbury. He also said that there are only two ways for tax abatement. He said one is the General Statutes that applies to every town and the other is a special legislation act from Hartford that applies to certain towns. A brief discussion followed as to how Waterbury has someone specifically available to walk a potential client through the permit process step by step and how can we go about having someone here to help new applicants, etc. and it was suggested to first get the website completed before trying to start another project.

2. Discussion on ways to retain and promote business

This was discussed under the "whywolcott.org" website above.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business at this time.

VIII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

It was stated to keep the "whywolcott.org" website on the agenda and to take off discussion on ways to retain and promote business.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Upon **MOTION** by Steve Bosco, seconded by Edwin Rodriguez, it was unanimously voted to **ADJOURN** the Regular Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

APPROVED:

Chris O'Brien, Chairman
Economic Development Commission

Edna Henderson, Recording Secretary
Economic Development Commission