

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014
6:30 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

Chairperson Mary Kelly called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and attendance was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Mulhall, Dave Grant, Sean Hughes, Mary Kelly

MEMBERS ABSENT: Robyn Mazas, Richard Mansfield, Greg Dandio

ALSO PRESENT: Senator Markley and State Rep. Rob Sampson

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon **MOTION** by Sean Hughes, seconded by Terry Mulhall, it was unanimously voted to **APPROVE** the minutes of the Regular Meeting on 3/3/2014.

Mary Kelly abstained due to absence.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no Correspondences at this time.

IV. PUBLIC REQUESTS

There were no Public Requests at this time.

V. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. On-Line Business Directory and Print Version

Dave Grant said he has been working with Chris O'Brien and that Chris had talked to the Wolcott Community News about putting in an ad and they said they would do

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it for free we just have to submit the content for them to post. Dave Grant said the ad will make a reference to the website, which needs to be active in order for it to work, and 4Biz is the company hosting this. He said he will try and push 4Biz to get this up and running. Mark Kelly said she would like the ad to be in before July.

2. Discussion on Property next to Golf Course

Mary Kelly said all members received a letter from Robert Larson regarding said property and there is a map here for all of us to look at to see if something can be done with the property. Mary Kelly said her concerns were how much ledge was on the property, how usable is this land and is this something this Commission should have evaluated. There was a question as to what kind of use would this property be used for and Mary Kelly said she wasn't sure because of the fact that we don't know how much land is buildable and drainage issues, etc. She said if this land was flat then maybe a recreational building or practice range could be constructed to compliment the golf course. She said the Mayor thought maybe a recreational type building for community use. State Rep. Sampson said he understands that the town owns the land and they would have to figure out what the best use of the property would be. He said the key is to look at the report supposedly from about 10 years ago to see what that says. Sean Hughes said we should get permission from Farmingbury Golf Course to go look at the property as a Commission and get the report and go from there. He also said an indoor sports related building for year round use would be something to look at too. Mary Kelly said we should look at the past report and see the feasibility on what we can or cannot get without creating any kind of expense then look further into another evaluation if need be.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business at this time.

**VIII. UPDATE ON WOLCOTT BUSINESSES AND POTENTIAL
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Mary Kelly said she wanted to run a couple of ideas by the Commission that she had discussed with Sean Hughes. She said they were looking at the idea of putting in some kind of pet store in town as Petco moved from its Wolcott Road location to the Waterbury Mall area. She said she investigated and the larger pet store chains said our zip code does not justify a chain store type business. She said we have to look

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into the smaller type pet stores. She also suggested that we could use a floral shop in town. She feels the town businesses and residents would use a local floral shop. Sean Hughes said maybe a book store/coffee shop might be another store that could be supported by the town. Robert Sampson said not to give up on the pet store as Rte. 69 is still attractive to larger stores as we are minutes from Waterbury, we have lower taxes and a lot of other reasons for businesses to be here in town.

State Rep. Sampson said for a grant you would have to have an idea, a dollar amount and a purpose in order to file a grant application. He said if you are talking about grants that are available for economic development there are a lot of those for businesses that already exists, such as manufacturing, which is where most of the grant money being set aside over the last several years has been devoted to. Senator Markley said that he is usually approached by a business that says here I am, what can you do for me. As far as this Commission's point of view, from the development side he has not worked with that but he does have someone that is very knowledgeable on this and he will ask her to put something together that might be available for us. Mary Kelly said for the town property if we had a grant to develop something on it, that is better than nothing but as far as the private end we cannot really offer anything from the town. State Rep. Sampson said there are towns that have offered people to locate their business in town but that is usually through tax rebates. He said if the town said they wanted to build something on this property (Farmingbury Golf Course) then it would be up to the grant writer in your town to put a proposal together and submit it to the State.

Mary Kelly said where do we want to go with this commission. She said do we want to bring it forward and become known that the Economic Development Commission is here (for businesses). She said she would like to put an article in the paper inviting business people to our meetings and also a picture of all the members. She said she also spoke about having a meet and greet and some of the people said they are not sure this is something that would be good because people are too busy. She said maybe instead of reaching out for business people to come to us she heard there was a small business in town that was going to have a sort of meet and greet in May and she will let the Commission know when it is so we can all attend. State Rep. Rob Sampson said as far as the newspaper coverage that was discussed we should talk to Bob & Julie Moore from the Wolcott Community News because they may even have column space that can be used to put in an update periodically. He also said that the environment in State Government for grant money is not ideal because there are huge budget deficits year after year but the fact is that nobody is getting grant money. Senator Markley asked what this Commission's relationship with the

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Chamber of Commerce is because maybe they just need to know that we are energized on (new businesses) as that is their mission as far as promoting businesses. Mary Kelly said right now we are just doing the ground work so we are standing alone as a good commission and she wants the publicity so people know who we are and what we want to accomplish. She said once we have a good feeling about where we want to go with all this then we can reach out to the Chamber of Commerce and the Exchange Club, etc. so that they get face recognition and they get to know who we are. State Rep. Sampson said the number one job that this Commission has is to make it public that the Town of Wolcott is looking for businesses to come to our community and couple that with the reasons for coming here, such as low taxes, the fact that they would have this Commission's help to get through zoning, etc.

Mary Kelly said that as far as Sub-Committees, Dave Grant is on the one for (on-line business directory) and she asked Sean Hughes if he would be interested, or anyone else, in helping her in the small business development. State Rep. Sampson said that he and Senator Markley have an extensive email list of constituents and if the Commission is going to do an event or wanted to make someone aware of a new policy to let them know and they would be happy to write something in their columns. Mary Kelly said that she is hoping that by the May meeting they would have the article ready for the Wolcott Community News and a photo. She also said she asked Mayor Dunn for a letter stating our tax base, our population, our growth, etc. as this would help for when people come to us we would have this information about our town available to give to them.

IX. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

It was stated that everything that is currently on this agenda will remain and to add under update of businesses the discussion on potential pet store/florist/bookstore and under Subcommittees add Small Business Development.

At this time Mary Kelly said if we take our next meeting and just look at advertising ourselves and letting businesses know who we are along with the letter from the Mayor, that it would be a good start. State Rep. Sampson said a discussion with the Planning and Zoning Commission would be a good idea as they might know what is open and available in town. Mary Kelly said for the next meeting to concentrate on getting the photo op and having the letter ready to submit to the newspaper as it would be a step forward that hasn't been taken in a while.

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IX. ADJOURNMENT

Upon **MOTION** by Sean Hughes, seconded by Terry Mulhall, it was unanimously voted to **ADJOURN** the Regular Meeting at 7:20 p.m.

APPROVED:

Mary M. Kelly, Chairperson
Economic Development Commission

Edna Henderson, Recording Secretary
Economic Development Commission