

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
RESCHEDULED REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2016
6:30 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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.

Note: Due to availability this meeting was held in the Town Council Chambers.

REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hughes called the Rescheduled Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and attendance was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris O'Brien, Dave Grant, Richard Mansfield, Sean Hughes

MEMBERS ABSENT: Terry Mulhall, Mary Kelly

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon **MOTION** by Chris O'Brien, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to **APPROVE** the minutes of the Regular Meeting on 8/01/2016.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

There was a correspondence from Chesprocott regarding CASA (Citizens Against Substance Abuse). (A discussion with CASA members is shown below under New Business).

IV. PUBLIC REQUESTS

There were no Public Requests at this time.

V. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

There was no Sub-Committee Reports at this time.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Upon **MOTION** by Richard Mansfield, seconded by Dave Grant, it was unanimously voted to **MOVE** New Business in front of Old Business for tonight's meeting. (See Old Business discussion listed below).

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VII. NEW BUSINESS

Upon **MOTION** by Chris O'Brien, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to **ADD** Discussion with CASA to the agenda under New Business.

At this time Chris Wihbey (CASA Secretary) and Katie Ciarlo, (CASA President), came forward to discuss how CASA was started over 20 years ago and it re-emerged in 2010. Katie Ciarlo said since 2010 they have continue to build up coalition to include Law Enforcement Support. She said they work with the Wolcott Public Schools, small businesses, community organizations in town, etc. She said they started off meeting with school officials and law enforcement representatives to talk about substance abuse and use issues in town. She said since then they were able to secure a Federal grant from the Office of National Drug Control Policy and it was for \$125,000.00 for up to 10 years, with renewal after 5 years. She said they are working on promoting healthy behavior, healthy communications among families, healthy decision making, etc. She said they were able to partner with Police Dept. to put together penalties cards, which is used to get information out to the parents and the community regarding penalties for marijuana and alcohol statutes for minors. She said they did an attitude and behavior survey for students, 6th grade thru 12th grade, and then they have an evaluator narrow down the results and it allows them to get a grip on what the trends on use are in town, whether it is alcohol or prescription abuse, etc. The results of the survey also allows them to hone in on the strengths of the kids. She also said they encourage youth membership, they are always looking for new members.

Chris Wihbey said one of the first things he did, along with Chief Stephens, was to institute a program for the drug enforcement agency's take back initiative, which allows people to get rid of prescription pills or any unwanted medications. He said they have done studies that show the medicines in the cabinets are usually the first place the kids get their first dose of illicit drugs. He said with the grant money they have been able to get involved with party control, DUI active patrols, drug take back, testing kits, etc. He also said they have a project director, Kate Glendon, and her salary comes out of that (money) as well. He said hopefully the grant continues and their big push now is to get the community involved and get their message out, which is why they are here tonight. He said everyone knows that it is the same people that show up to volunteer and they want to broaden their horizons. He said they are trying to figure out where the community needs their help in prevention and good choices, and want to direct their resources that way. He said they have been making their rounds to let people know they meet the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Wolcott P.D., if anyone is interested in volunteering. Chairman Hughes thanked them for coming and wanted to give them the opportunity to speak to the Commission. Chris O'Brien asked what their relation with Crossroads was and Ms. Ciarlo said they do work with them even though

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they are not the same coalition but they support each other with their events. Chris Wihbey handed out pamphlets to the Commission that CASA has produced that explain what CASA is about, showing their involvement in the community, and also a listing of agencies and contact numbers of mental health and substance abuse services available to the community.

Upon **MOTION** by Chris O'Brien, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to **ADD** discussion with the Chamber of Commerce to the agenda under New Business.

At this time Roger Picard, President of the Chamber of Commerce, came forward and said he spoke earlier in the week with Dave Grant, and he is here tonight to see if there is anything the Chamber of Commerce can do as a partnership to help the economic growth in the community. He said they have a new board in place on the Chamber and since then they have added 6 to 7 businesses to the roster and the intention is to continue that growth. He said the Chamber does have a function coming up on December 14th that will be a Christmas social and also will be in conjunction with Toy's for Tots and Teens. He said there are quite a few people in town that are in need of assistance right now. He said they want to make the Chamber community minded and not just looking out for businesses but looking out for each other as a community. He said he knows what his goals are but is not sure as to what this commission's goals are but he would gladly meet with them individually or as a sub-committee. Sean Hughes said what the Commission wants to do is prosper and to help the businesses in town. Roger Picard said he has had conversations with several business owners in town and those trying to start a business and he heard there are some stumbling blocks when trying to accomplish these goals. Roger Picard said whether it be Planning & Zoning or the Building Inspector's office, he hears conflicting information that is not warm and fuzzy so to speak. He said he believes everyone in the offices are following what their guidelines are but it makes it difficult sometime. He suggested that maybe we can look into this issue with the proper people to see if there is any legitimacy to it or is that the way things run. Chris O'Brien says he has heard things in the past and was curious as to what (Roger) recollects from the instances he's heard, are they often along the lines of clear expectations in time lines and what to expect when they come in (to apply). Roger Picard said it varies from signage problems, hours of operations, and the health dept. He said he understands there are rules to follow but sometimes working with the potential business owner and the branches of the town government it does not seem to go very smoothly. He also said he doesn't know if there is a personality issue or they are legitimate concerns and problems that have to be addressed. Richard Mansfield said he understands what Roger is saying and he has also talked to the same people but there are rules and regulations to follow. Richard Mansfield said individuals who come to the town sometimes feel they should be given this, this and this, and do not try to understand

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what we are up against. Richard Mansfield said that the problem is everyone gets half a truth and Roger Picard agreed saying by no means is he indicating there is a problem in the Planning and Zoning office he is just stating what is being told to him. Sean Hughes says is there something that the town has stating the expectations, time lines, etc. for new businesses coming in. It was stated there is a process and that businesses need to come in first to get the steps before opening, which then can become an issue. It was stated some require public hearings, and approval from the Health Dept., Fire Marshal and Inland Wetlands, etc. Richard Mansfield said that maybe it would be a good idea for the Chamber and this commission to have an informative meeting as to what these people have to go up against each day so we have an idea of what goes on when people start complaining. He said we need to have a better understanding of what is required and Roger Picard said the public has to be educated too, as to what has to be followed. Sean Hughes said he would like to have a better relationship with the Chamber and communicating with the businesses to let them know we are available. Roger Picard said he would keep in touch with the commission members through emails to let them know about their meetings or the business after hours meetings so they could attend and introduce themselves to the Chamber. Roger Picard said he would talk to the Chamber of Commerce board and see about getting a list of the businesses that belong and if okay he would forward that information to Dave Grant for him to list on the business directory.

Upon **MOTION** by Chris O'Brien, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to **RE-OPEN** Public Requests.

PUBLIC REQUEST

At this time Chris Wihbey came forward to state he echoes the same thought that Roger Picard said regarding new businesses in town. He said he has opened two businesses in town and still has a couple establishments that he is still trying to rent and just wants to give us his personal experience on this. He said he wants to get involved with the Chamber or P&Z to redirect and try to make some changes (to the system). He said he talks to a lot of people and said their experiences have not been great. He said they say it is expensive, and there is no draw to town. He said he is not literally pointing a finger at anyone but his mission moving forward is that Wolcott needs a draw, such as an area district with a restaurant, a Wendy's, a shopping center, etc. He said he came to Town Hall and asked about grants and the paperwork he was given the language was long (it was not easy to read/understand). He said we need to court like a Starbucks, Wendy's, Whole Foods, etc. to get the draw to Wolcott. He also said he has put in complaints about a gas station (North End of town) where there is fuel in underground tanks and is afraid of a leak. He also said the countertop place on Rte. 69 looks terrible and these are some things we should be looking at, those places considered blight. He said we do

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need to address the way things look. He said he would like to be a part of the process moving forward and maybe we can all put our heads together to do like a welcome package for new businesses. Sean Hughes said he appreciates him coming before the board and voicing his concerns so we can take the next step.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion on action items (from 6/27/16 workshop)

At this time Dave Grant said it looks like we are on the right track regarding the survey to find out the pulse of the community, which we just found some things out (in discussions tonight). He handed out a printout of questions, (regarding the experiences of new and existing businesses in town). He said the goal is to get these questions out there and get some feedback to see if there is anything we can address. Chris O'Brien said, (in addition to current list), to maybe just reference the actual offices involved, did you understand the permit process, etc. Dave Grant said as far as distributing the survey it was discussed to put it on the Town of Wolcott website, maybe involve the Chamber of Commerce at one of the business after hours events, and put some in the Town Hall.

Upon **MOTION** by Chris O'Brien, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to have Dave Grant **FINALIZE** the survey questionnaire and distribute throughout the community and report back on the progress at the next meeting.

At this time Sean Hughes discussed the invoice from CT Web Factory that needed to be approved and forwarded to the Finance Dept. for payment.

Upon **MOTION** by Chris O'Brien, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to **ADD** as New Business an invoice for CT Web Factory and **APPROVED** payment of said invoice.

VIII. UPDATE ON WOLCOTT BUSINESSES AND POTENTIAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

There was no discussion on Update on Wolcott Businesses at this time.

VIII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Sean Hughes said to keep the discussion on action items (survey questionnaire) and also continued discussion regarding the Chamber of Commerce.

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IX. ADJOURNMENT

Upon **MOTION** by Dave Grant, seconded by Richard Mansfield, it was unanimously voted to **ADJOURN** the Regular Meeting at 7:33 p.m.

APPROVED:

Sean Hughes, Chairman
Economic Development Commission

Edna Henderson, Recording Secretary
Economic Development Commission