

Town of Montville
Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes for May 2, 2016
7:00 p.m. – Montville Town Hall - Room 102

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Protz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Karl Butzgy, Walter Hewitt, Christopher Napierski, John Protz, Jim Toner, and Dianne Williams. Absent was Commissioner Marge Gatheral. Also present was Town Council Liaison Joseph Rogulski.

Councilor Rogulski will investigate the possibility of presenting an acknowledgement of service by the Town to retiring/resigning Board/Commission Members who have actively served on a Board or Commission.

4. Remarks from the Public regarding items on the Agenda (3 Minute limit)

Councilor Rogulski requested items the Commission would like him to include in his monthly report to the Town Council. Vice-Chair Protz reported that he sent an e-mail to the Mayor regarding his dismay with himself and the Town Council for their lack of response and feedback to the Commission's Tax Incentive Plan and requested he inform the Town Council of the same.

5. Highlights of:

a. seCTer SWOT Event – Development of the 2016 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The seCTer SWOT Event is conducted every five years by CEDS in each of the various counties in Southeastern CT. The brainstorming event is attended by a diverse group of approximately 50 to 60 business individuals, members of local forums, former and present Government leaders, community colleges, Coast Guard Academy, etc. The individuals are divided into groups to create a SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats) for the economic development of various areas. The information is, then, gathered and the overarching strategies are published and presented to the public. It was evident that, due, in part, to the State's current financial situation, the Government is increasingly relying on the Towns and local communities to improve economic development.

The Commission agreed to take part in an online 70-question self-assessment survey.

b. CERC Regional Forum

Commissioner Williams reported that the Forum's basic premise was to introduce and explain the availability of resources and programs offered by CERC and the Department of Labor (DOL) for businesses. The statistics, which she found most striking, is that 66% of the Canadian economy is located within 200 miles of Southeastern CT and, within 500 miles of Southeastern CT, is one-third of the U.S. economy. CERC also conducts Town profiles, which is currently available on the Town website.

Vice-Chair Protz requested that the resources and programs offered by seCTer, CEDS, DECD, and CERC be included on their website along with a small description and a link to the program/resource.

6. Review and Discussion of Business Incentive Plan

Vice-Chair Protz reported that an e-mail was received and information regarding the State Statute and any notes taken regarding the Plan was provided to the Town Attorney, as requested.

The Plan will be re-submitted with the following modifications:

- The Tax Incentive Plan will be renamed The Business Incentive/Assistance Plan
- Change Section C. The Application and Approval Process, eliminating references to property taxes

Business, Liaison, Assistance:

- Montville vs. other towns
- Business Finance – these resources should also be included on their website
- Town (Permits, Licenses, Inspections)
- CT Agencies (CERC, seCTer, DECD)

The goal of the Plan is to open the doors for a discussion with prospective and existing businesses and create a more business friendly Town. It was felt that utilizing the website to open a dialogue would be a good start.

The idea of obtaining funding through the State of CT to form a non-profit organization providing available resources for prospective and existing business owners, as do the towns of Norwich and New London, was introduced.

Councilor Rogulski reported on the economic impact of the proposed casinos in the Massachusetts area. The local casinos receive approximately 40% of their business from the Massachusetts area and are one of the largest employers in the area. Determining those industries that serve other local, successful businesses, e.g. Electric Boat, the Subase, etc., and utilizing them as a bridge so that they can begin working together was discussed.

The Commissioners plan to continue their dialogue with the Mayor and begin a dialogue with each of the Town Councilors in an effort to receive feedback on the Plan.

7. Remarks from the Public (3 Minute limit) – *none*
8. Remarks from the Commissioners
Commissioner Hewitt recommended the Commission devise a long-term or 10-year plan.
Commissioner Toner presented the Zoning/Wetlands Official's April report of the permits, licenses, certificates, and enforcements, including blight enforcements that were issued. In addition, a copy of an email regarding any new business(es) was also presented.
Commissioner Williams confirmed that all comments regarding the website are to be directed to Commissioner Napierski.
9. Adjournment
Motion made by Commissioner Toner, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Montville