

East Lyme Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting
November 10, 2009

Members Present: Ed Shapiro, Richard Gada, Chuck Ambulos, Camille Alberti, John Jensen, Steven Santino

Also Present: Christy Hammond, Niantic Main Street, Promotions Committee

A. Preliminary Business

1. Call to Order. Mr. Shapiro called the November 10, 2009 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the October Meeting were distributed for review. Once reviewed, the minutes were discussed, and brought to a motion to approve.

MOTION: Mr. Jensen moved to approve the October 13, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Economic Development Commission, as presented.
Seconded by Mr. Ambulos. (4-0) Unanimous.

3. Delegations. Christy Hammond of Main Street Niantic, Promotions Committee.

Mrs. Hammond was present on behalf of the Main Street Niantic Promotions Committee, regarding the Down Town Niantic Holiday Stroll. Mrs. Hammond presented a letter requesting a donation in the amount of \$1200.00 (dollars) for the display ad in the newspaper and for the continued support of one of the horse and carriage rides. The breakdown of the donation is \$700.00 (dollars) for the horse and carriage and \$500.00 (dollars) for the ad in the newspaper.

The letter was read to the commission by Mrs., Hammond. The original letter is attached to the final copy of the minutes. The letter is signed by Rachel Rinoski. Mr. Jensen asked who Rachel Rinoski was and in what capacity did she sign the letter. Mrs. Hammond explained that she is a member of the promotions committee and also a board member of Niantic. This was confirmed by Mr. Gada. Mrs. Hammond explained that Mrs. Rinoski could not be present herself due to just having a baby. Mrs. Hammond also explained that the amount of the request for funds was due to the fact that last year they were unable to promote the event by placing the ad in the newspaper, and this year the additional donation would allow them to place a nice sized ad in the paper.

Mrs. Alberti requested clarification on the amount of the donation. Mr. Shapiro reiterated that the split was \$500.00 (dollars) for the ad and \$700.00 (dollars) for the horse and carriage. Mrs. Alberti asked if the carriage rides were free. Mrs. Hammond confirmed that they are in fact free and that there are three. Two of the carriages are sponsored by Richard Gada (Guy's Oil) and Jack Catillo (Niantic Plumbing). Mrs. Alberti expressed concern as to the availability of the carriages and will everyone be able to ride them.

Mr. Shapiro added that the carriage rides are in fact the highlight of the event. Mrs. Alberti asked how the "numbers" have increased over the years. Mrs. Hammond replied that she believed last year there was over three thousand people present in town for the event, and also that there has been an increase in traffic for "Black Friday" shopping, due to the event. Mr. Shapiro mentioned that this will be an exceptional year due to the improvements taking place on Main Street (the streetscape). Mr. Jensen expressed concern over the possibility of inclement weather and if there was a "rain date". Mrs. Hammond explained that it is "rain or shine". That Santa is covered by the Gazebo. Mr. Jensen asked if the carriages were covered. The answer is no.

Mr. Jensen again addressed the question of a rain date and what would happen to the money for the donation if there was a situation with bad weather. Mr. Jensen asked that they look at the budget to make a decision for the donation. Mr. Shapiro stated that the matter would not be voted on until Mr. Santino arrived with the budget information. Mrs. Alberti asked if there could be a report regarding attendance after the event.

Mr. Ambulos asked what Flanders felt about the event. Mrs. Hammond stated she felt there was participation from both ends of town. She believed that Niantic sponsors Santa and that Flanders sponsors fire trucks for the snow ball drop.

Mrs. Hammond stated that some of the merchants in Flanders do participate in the sponsorship and advertisement for the event. She will provide a list of participating merchants from both Flanders and Niantic and try to determine if their sales increased due to the event. There was discussion amongst Mr. Shapiro, Mr. Jensen and Mrs. Alberti as to the route of the carriages and how far they traveled. Mrs. Hammond thanked the commission and left the meeting.

Discussion continued regarding the donation for the Main Street Stroll and the status of the budget.

MOTION: Mr. Gada moved to approve that the commission donate \$1200.00 (dollars) to the Niantic Main Street Stroll for a carriage and newspaper ad. Seconded by Mr. Shapiro. Mr. Santino asked for discussion. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

4. Public Comments. There were no public comments.

B. Reports

1. Ex-officio Report. There was no Ex-officio Report.
2. Chairman's Report. Nothing to add.
3. Presentation of Bills. There were no bills to present.

C. Old Business

1. Roles and Responsibilities. Roles and responsibilities for Economic Development Commission members were reviewed. Mr. Jensen suggested that the roles and responsibilities be regarded as some of the more important roles and responsibilities and not the only roles and responsibilities. Mr. Shapiro suggested that there should be a number 9 added to the list. Mr. Jensen suggested that it be a summary or a disclaimer of sorts. Mrs. Alberti suggested that it should read as "the following roles and responsibilities are guidelines for EDC members." She asked if everyone agreed to the wording and all were in agreement. Mr. Jensen read a statement regarding attendance requirements. There was discussion of changes to wording of roles and responsibilities.

MOTION: Mr. Shapiro moved to accept the wording of the attendance requirements
Seconded by Mrs. Alberti. Discussion followed.
The motion carried unanimously.

2. Plan of Conservation and Development.

There was no discussion on this topic.

3. Update of Seminars Attended

Mr. Shapiro asked Mr. Ambulos about a seminar he had attended. Mr. Ambulos stated that the seminar was about how planning and zoning melds with the EDC. The seminar was presented by a gentleman named Mr. Waterhouse. The basis was as previously stated, maintaining a working relationship between the EDC and planning and zoning. There was discussion of how the different towns in the area operate in regards to the EDC and planning and zoning. Mr. Jensen stated that there was a significant difference between North Stonington and any other town regarding the status of the EDC. He feels that the EDC has more recognition in the town of north Stonington. Mr. Ambulos feels that the EDC should be the driving force behind planning and zoning in any town. Mr. Jensen pointed out that in the town of north Stonington they have members of the EDC available during working hours, where as in other town there are not enough full time people available. There was discussion about zoning and affordable housing.

D. New Business

1. Celebrate East Lyme.

There was open discussion regarding Celebrate East Lyme. Mr. Jensen expressed concern regarding the EDC's effort being required. He did not like the fact that the EDC budget would be increased 9 to 10 fold and then be used by others while EDC was responsible for the funds. Mr. Santino decided he needed to look into this further.

2. 2010 Meeting Calendar

There was discussion regarding the calendar for 2010. Meetings will continue to be at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month.

MOTION: Mr. Shapiro moved to accept the Meeting Calendar for the Economic Development Commission for the year of 2010, as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Alberti. (4-0) Unanimous.

MOTION: Mr. Gada moved to adjourn the economic Development Commission Regular Meeting of November 10, 2009 at 8:25 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Ambulos. (4-0) Unanimous.