

Town of East Haven, CT
Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes
June 28, 2021
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MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Shumitz
Vice-Chair Bittner
Commissioner Tarducci
Commissioner Chugani
Commissioner Maiorano

STAFF PRESENT:

None

PUBLIC PRESENT:

EHCC Chairwoman Parlato
Lorena Venegas
Dominic Milano
Niki Whitehead

Chairmen Shumitz called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Members in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION made by Vice-Chair Bittner and seconded by Commissioner Tarducci, to approve the minutes from the May 24th meeting. All were in favor; none were opposed, and none abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Before the commission got into the agenda, Chairman Shumitz wanted to introduce the two new members in attendance tonight, Mohan Chugani and Lorrie Maiorano, and had them tell the commission a little background information on themselves. The new commissioners were welcomed by all.

Commissioner Maiorano spoke about the Chamber of Commerce along with Chamber Chairwoman Parlato regarding the Meet and Greets and the Business After Hours that are held by the Chamber and the many activities they hold, especially Lobsterpalooza which is being held August 18th at Anthony's. The event usually sells out so contact them for tickets.

Chairman Shumitz stated that the meetings will go back to live and in person meetings as of August 12th at 7:00 in the Senior Center. This is the last Zoom meeting.

Discussion & Vote on advertising East Haven commercial, business, industrial and office space (rental & sale) on the Economic Development website (John Tarducci)

Commissioner Tarducci thanked everyone for being here and how he and Ray Baldwin talked about strategies for EDC and brainstorming some ideas on how to brand East Haven. It doesn't have the image that we want, and he wants to put a new face on the Town so to speak. He wants to work on business recruitment and retention and getting more information onto the website that Tina Hedley has been updating. He has looked at many different towns and cities websites to see how they are being run and feels very strongly that we are not promoting our assets. There was discussion amongst the members regarding how to come up with a plan to promote the Town and its establishments and thoughts about placing available properties on the website. Vice-Chair Bittner suggested that we run the ideas by legal first before the commission votes on anything regarding the ideas to make sure it is okay. Commissioner Chugani stated that we should do this in the right manner to get it out to the public. The Town needs a landmark, such as Middletown has a mansion that is used for functions, meetings and even weddings. East Haven needs a landmark, and the Town needs to be promoted.

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Chairman Shumitz thanked all for their input. Chairman Shumitz made a **MOTION** to table this until more information can be obtained through the legal department. Commissioner Maiorano seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed, and none abstained. **MOTION TABLED**

Discussion of the employment & hiring issues being experienced by small & medium sized businesses and how to best assist them (Mohan Chugani)

Commissioner Chugani stated that this is a big problem because of the financial level of the people here in town. He owns a few businesses, and he can't get any entry-level people to work and he's not sure if they've lost motivation or have given up and the extra funds that come with unemployment compensation gives them no desire to work. There doesn't seem to be too many resources or help to give some the ability to look for a job when one doesn't have access to the internet or doesn't know where to start. He suggests a possible mini-job fair in a small place for local businesses to go to and have people in need of a job come and talk to them. Commissioner Maiorano suggested posting job vacancies on a website or job board of any open positions. Vice-Chair Bittner thinks that is a great idea also. Commissioner Tarducci stated that the commission over the next few months put together specific plans to go over at the next in person meeting and have bullet points to present. Commissioner Chugani stated that he will put a plan together and present it to the board at the next meeting.

Discussion of strategic plan for East Haven (Dale Kroop)

Dale was unable to be in attendance for this meeting. Commissioner Tarducci spoke of the Plan of Conservation and Development that was done back in 2019. The members should take a look at that before the next meeting. Commissioner Tarducci made a **MOTION** to table this discussion until Dale can be with us, Commissioner Maiorano seconded. All were in favor; none were opposed, and no one abstained. **MOTION TABLED**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lorena Venegas-73 George Street- Ms. Venegas stated she had sent a lengthy email regarding meeting minutes, the SLOT program that was discussed at the last meeting and received a response from no one, leaving her to FOI the information from the Town Attorney. She spoke of several points with regard to how North Haven has utilized Universal Drive and how you can shop all in one stop there and also spoke about how she thinks that the new marijuana legalization will have a large impact on development in town.

There being no further business to come before the commission, a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 was made by Vice-Chair Bittner and seconded by Commissioner Tarducci. All were in favor; none were opposed, and none abstained. **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda S. LaLuna

Clerk