

WATERFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

July 14, 2022
Appleby Room
5:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Edward Lusher, Jill Szymanski, Lesley Sollima (left at 6:20)
MEMBERS ABSENT: Dan Radin, Eric Palmer
ALTERNATES PRESENT: Greg Attanasio (5:15,) Julie Greco (6:00)
STAFF PRESENT: Abby Piersall, AICP, Director of Planning
ALSO PRESENT: First Selectman Rob Brule, Consultant Brianna Regine

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1. **CALL TO ORDER/APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES**
A quorum was established. The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - June 9 & June 14, 2022 Meeting**

MOTION: Motion made by J. Szymanski, seconded by E. Lusher, to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2022 meeting as written and the minutes of the June 14, 2022 meeting with the following correction: Item #2, paragraph 5, change "First Selectman bring a charge..." to "First Selectman bring a change...".

VOTE: Unanimous

3. **COMMISSION PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES:**

- Small Business Grants

A. Piersall introduced Brianna Regine, and provided an overview of the purpose, history of the concept and current program requirements for grant compliance under ARPA.

First Selectman Brule spoke about commitment to small business funding. The Commission discussed the history of the initiative.

B. Regine led discussion on program status and feedback from the Commission on program creation. Focus on the need to hear directly from small business owners on their needs and priorities so the program is designed to meet their needs. Discussion points included:

- Project timeline (multiple rounds, with a goal of first funding awards to be decided by EDC at October meeting)
- Survey and roundtable: EDC suggested a teaser to introduce the survey to get the word out and boost participation.
- EDC discussed the need to use many platforms, including direct outreach to make sure owners not typically at the table will participate (including younger business owners)
- B. Regine asked EDC for feedback on their definition of a small business. Discussion on how long a business has existed, annual revenues, number of employees, and what stage of growth the business is at.
- EDC noted the need to reach out to small businesses in industries particularly hard-hit by COVID-19 Pandemic

- Discussion on grant award cap for round 1. Decision will be made after getting feedback from business owners on what their needs/project types are. Support for more than one round of funding to be able to refine and improve a program that can hopefully be extended in the future.
- Discussion on compliance monitoring and ways to demonstrate program effectiveness/success.
- Decision to enable B. Regine to finalize and launch the survey and facilitate the roundtable to get owners' input into the creation on the grant program

- Economic Development Strategy

This item was tabled to the August 11, 2022 meeting.

4. TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AND PERMITTING STATUS

This item was tabled to the August 11, 2022 meeting.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

None

6. PAYMENT OF BILLS

MOTION: Motion made by J. Szymanski, seconded by G. Attanasio, to approve payment of the invoice for the Chamber of Commerce.

VOTE: Unanimous

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:34.

VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,


for Abby Piersall
Planning Director