

**Town of Ridgefield
Economic Development Commission
Meeting held January 11, 2010
Town Hall Probate Conference Room**

Approved Minutes

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

In attendance: Bob Knight, Rick O'Brien, Chris Fisher, Magdalena Fincham
Absent: Bill Markus, Paul Levine, Mark Robinson.

Bob Knight called the meeting to order at 7:02PM

Approval of minutes 10/13/09; 11/9/09; 12/4/09; 12/14/09

Discussion was had regarding modifications to the above minutes.

Rick O'Brien made a motion to approve minutes from 10/13/09 with modifications, seconded by Magdalena Fincham. Motion carried, 4 – 0.

Magdalena Fincham made a motion to approve minutes from 11/9/09 with modifications, seconded by Rick O'Brien. Motion carried, 4 – 0.

Chris Fisher made a motion to approve minutes from 12/4/09, seconded by Rick O'Brien. Motion carried, 4 – 0.

Chris Fisher made a motion to approve minutes from 12/14/09 with modifications, seconded by Rick O'Brien. Motion failed due to lack of approval by majority of present voters, 3 – 0 – 1. Rick O'Brien abstained. This action will be presented at the next meeting to be voted on again.

Economic Development Plan Time line and Resourcing

Bob started the discussion with a recap of what was talked about during the last meeting and asked Magdalena to recap the concerns about timeline that were discussed at the last meeting, which Magdalena did. The Board of Selectman (BoS) will be discussing the EDP at their meeting scheduled for 1/27/10. It was suggested that certain steps in each initiative (specifically the ones involving action by the BoS that are scheduled to occur 1stQ 2010 in the current draft of the EDP) be pushed forward to start in 2ndQ 2010, since the BoS would not even be reviewing the EDP until the end of January and it still had to go through the BoF.. A discussion was had on when certain initiative could start and whether approval from the BOS was needed prior to starting any of them. It was suggested that all steps involving BoS be pushed back as a global edit to the Plan.

Magdalena Fincham made a motion to approve amendments to the Economic Development Plan, seconded by Bob Knight. Motion carried, 4 – 0.

Rick O'Brien began a discussion on what resources would be needed to accomplish the initiatives set forth in the EDP. The following items were discussed:

- A roll out of the plan to a number of the Town employees and commission members to help to begin to change culture (economic development is everyone's job / no one on the side line).
- Suggest ½ day meeting w/ 4 or 5 teams with 4-5 members on each team. Each team to include an EDC member as chair and each team to further drill down on the planning of each of the Action Items. Ability/need to rely on town staff (e.g., Rudy's staff) for administrative needs for accomplishing various steps in Initiatives of EDP.
- A modest monthly retainer (\$500 to \$1,000) of Waterhouse in 2010 to leverage his expertise when it makes sense. Unused time would roll to the following month.
- Infrastructure/tool/subscription/Internet/membership/administrative support (PowerPoint) budget.
- Consulting dollars for retail leakage (probably to occur after July so don't need to focus on today).

Discussion followed regarding the above and whether to include resourcing assumptions in Transmittal Letter to accompany EDP when transmitted to BoS or as separate document to accompany EDP.

Chris Fisher made a motion to amend transmittal letter as stated in bullets above to BOS, seconded by Magdalena. Motion carried, 4 – 0.

Task force and initiative reports

Magdalena had contact with Richard Baldelli regarding the signage at Weir Farm. He advised her to contact Jim Lapan of the State Department of Transportation. Mr. Lapan had not returning her call at the time of the meeting. Magdalena has also spoken with Jeff Ryer regarding possible spaces available on Route 7 to suit some of Weir Farm's current and future needs. Magdalena will follow up with him and set up a meeting between Mr. Ryer and Linda Cook.

Rick had a follow up conversation with George Mulvaney about using him as a liaison to the neighbors of Route 7 and 35.

General discussion regarding how the EDC could be of help to town businesses that may be experiencing difficulties and when/how it would be most appropriate for the EDC to be of help. Magdalena will be in contact with Marion Toth from the Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce to seek her advice on this topic.

Web site content

Due to Mark Robinson absence more in depth discussion is needed on this item. Bob reviewed several different EDC sites and received some good ideas for Ridgefield EDC site. He showed the members a print out of some different call outs to be added.

At 8:13 PM Rick O'Brien made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chris Fisher.

Motion carried, 4 – 0.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Buckley