

ECONOMIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE

C.J. Hurgin Municipal Center
1 School Street Bethel, CT 06801
(203) 794-8501 Fax (203) 778-7520

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2010
7:00 p.m.
CJH Municipal Center -Meeting Room "A"

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TOWN OF BETHEL
TOWN CLERK

Present: Temporary Chairman, Mike Boyle, Sandi Forman, Pat Smithwick, Roy Steiner, Paul Rinaldi, Anthony Rubino, and future member Bonnie Brown. Absent with prior notice, member Robert Stosser.

Temporary Chairman Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Minutes: Pat Smithwick made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting dated July 22, 2010. Motion seconded by Anthony Rubino. Vote taken, motion approved. Paul Rinaldi and Sandi Forman abstained.

Elections of Officers: Temporary Chairman Boyle opened the floor for nominations, Pat Smithwick made a motion to appoint Mike Boyle as Permanent Chairman, motion seconded by Anthony Rubino. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Sandi Forman volunteered and made a motion to appoint herself Vice Chairperson, motion was seconded by Roy Steiner. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Chairman Boyle made a motion to appoint Lisa Bergh, as Secretary. Motion was seconded by Pat Smithwick. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Establish 2010 Meeting Schedule: Sandi Forman made a motion to approve the following dates as the Meeting Schedule for the remainder of 2010 and January 2011. 9/28/2010, 10/26/2010, 11/23/2010, 12/28/2010, and

01/25/2011. The preceding dates being the fourth Tuesday of every month. Meetings to be held at 7:00 p.m. in Meeting Room "A" CJ Hurgin Municipal Center.

Motion was seconded by Paul Rinaldi. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Discussion of Priorities:

The committee as a whole discussed the reasons behind the creation of this committee and what the long term goals would be; the members were in agreement that more information is needed, in terms of what businesses already exist in Bethel. Something should be put together in terms of a brochure or pamphlet promoting businesses locating to Bethel. A commercial real estate broker may be a good resource for information and ways to market the town. Working with the Chamber as a whole was also thought of as a good idea. Chad McCollam, Chairman of Bethel's Economic Development Committee would also be a good resource. Francis J. Clarke Industrial Park is his main focus.

Roy Steiner brought the fact that Bethel is marketed as being part of the "Greater Danbury Area" to the committee. Anthony Rubino noted that communication is needed between the Chamber and this committee. Mike Boyle spoke with Gary Chesley, Superintendent of Schools regarding the possibility of using business students as a resource for developing a plan for promoting Bethel, according to Mike, Dr. Chesley was very receptive to this idea.

Chairman Boyle also felt it would be a good idea to assign members of the committee to certain duties that would help the committee gain more information; in addition 2 Sub-committees would be formed.

Chairman Boyle asked each member present to give the committee some background on themselves:

Pat Smithwick-She has been a resident for 12.5 years on Main Street. Owned a business on Greenwood Avenue, she spent 10 years as Chamber of Commerce President, has been past President of the VNA, and is currently employed part-time at the VNA 2 days a week. She sits on the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board.

Roy Steiner- His Corporation has built homes in the Stony Hill area since 1960, they expanded into commercial and industrial properties, having built the Berkshire Industrial Park, where they currently own and lease property. Bethel Health Care is located within the park as was Duracell, then Procter

and Gamble. They are the owners of developed and undeveloped land on Route 6. They develop properties all over Fairfield County.

Sandi Forman- Comes to this committee with marketing expertise, which she has been doing for 20 years. She is very excited to help Bethel.

Paul Rinaldi- He has been a Bethel resident for 20 years. And has worked in Supermarkets for 30 years. He currently runs the "Big Y" on Route 6 as Store Manager. Before that he worked for Stop & Shop. He has 4 kids and enjoys coaching baseball and basketball. He is also excited to be a part of this committee.

Bonnie Brown- Moved to Bethel from Cary, North Carolina. She served on the Economic Development Committee for the city of Raleigh, N.C. Bonnie owns a small consulting firm focused on Human Resources and Management. She lives in Timber Oak, prior to her move here which she made to be closer to her grandchild; Bonnie researched the area, wanting new construction that was affordable. In her quest for information she found Steve Palmer, Town Planner most helpful.

Anthony Rubino- He has been a resident for 53 years. His family business "The Stony Hill Inn" has been in existence for 63 years. He has seen a lot of changes over the years. He served with the Stony Hill Fire Department with 6 years of that being the Chief. He feels there is a definite difference between downtown Bethel and Stony Hill and they really need to come together for the betterment of the town. He is happy to provide input on this committee.

Mike Boyle- Has lived in Bethel for 25 years having raised 2 girls here. He is the owner of "Base Technologies" which supplies copiers, printers, faxes, and software. He comes from a corporate background in sales and marketing, he previously served on the High School Building Committee and is a member of the committee in order to make Bethel a better place to live and a happier place.

Pat Smithwick remarked on the fact that she liked the idea of having a Commercial Broker provide information. Chairman Boyle expressed the desire to have one sit on the Committee if we can find someone in that field that is a Bethel resident.

Sandi Forman suggested searching out other towns to see what type of promotion they offer prospective business owners.

Bonnie Brown suggested a possible Economic Development Summit hosted by the Committee to get all resources in one area to gain information.

Anthony Rubino suggested having Steve Palmer present at one of our meetings.

Pat Smithwick suggested a possible questionnaire for the public as to what they would like to see in town.

Roy Steiner remarked that the first thing prospective businesses inquire about is tax breaks or credits.

Chairman Boyle acting on the committee members individual strengths assigned duties to the following:

Bob Stosser and Pat Smithwick to gather information on local and state level resources available to new businesses.

Roy Steiner to contact Chad McCollam to gain information regarding Clarke Park.

Sandi Forman and Mike Boyle to form a sub-committee to gather marketing material and to better understand what is available, whether it is the school, a website, hardcopy brochure, or a DVD promotion.

Paul Rinaldi and Anthony Rubino to meet with the co-presidents of the Chamber of Commerce, and report back.

Bonnie Brown to get the list of businesses and their information from the Town.

Sandi Forman made a motion to establish an "Inter-Town and Statewide Economic Cooperation Sub-Committee" the motion was seconded by Paul Rinaldi. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Pat Smithwick made a motion to establish a "Marketing Sub-Committee" for the promotion of Bethel. Motion was seconded by Anthony Rubino. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

As there was no further business on tonight's agenda, Sandi Forman made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Anthony Rubino. Vote, all in favor, motion unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Bergh,
Recording Secretary

