

TOWN OF SALEM, CT.

Economic Development Commission

Regular Meeting, February 22, 2016, 7:30 p.m. Salem Office Building, Room 2

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:37 pm by meeting chair Frank Sroka.

Members present:

Frank Sroka

Ken Bondi

Wendy Mikolinski

Elby Burr (Alternate)

Members not present:

Andy Lightner

Ada Vaill

Paul Robillard

Visitors:

Stu Gadbois (Board of Selectmen Liaison to EDC)

1. Reading of Agenda – chairperson

Frank Sroka presented agenda. No changes to agenda as presented.

Motion: Wendy Mikolinski moved to approve the Minutes for 01/25/2016 meeting. Seconded by Ken Bondi. Unanimously approved.

2. Communications

Frank Sroka discussed a memo from First Selectman Kevin Lyden which outlined the improvements to Salem's business landscape over the last several years. Mr. Lyden also noted his approval of the proposed EDC budget for fiscal year 2016/17. The EDC had requested the same budget terms applied in FY 2015/16 (\$2500.00); any additional funding needs would require pre-approval from the First Selectman, and any unused excesses would be returned to the general fund. Mr. Lyden also noted in his memo that the business portion of the Salem grand list had increased from 4.8% six years ago to 5.2% in the current year, which increase

does not include personal property. He compared these figures to East Lyme's grand list, of which businesses represent 8% in that town. So our trend in Salem is positive, especially given the current anemic economic climate in eastern CT.

Frank Sroka read details from an article in The Day regarding Salem's Tax Base Increased in 2015 to \$366.7 million, which is just over 1% compared to the previous year. Both real estate and motor vehicle assessed values increased, while personal property decreased.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Reports

- a. Selectman / EDC Liaison: None
- b. P&Z Liaison: None

5. Old Business

- a. The EDC is still waiting for the responses to the Our Town Salem Business Owners Survey requests. Frank Sroka will request these from the First Selectman.

6. New Business

- a. Potential uses for town-owned land. EDC chair Frank Sroka stated he will sit with town planner Rich Serra for clarifications on the "available space report" that was produced for the EDC. These clarifications will be discussed in a future EDC meeting.
- b. Frank Sroka asked each EDC member to consider and record ideas on how to market Salem to prospective business developers. Frank Sroka will then ask town planner Rich Serra for a group meeting where these ideas can be presented. The EDC hopes to benefit from Mr. Serra's experience and plans to develop a specific marketing plan to be fully implemented in FY 2016/17.
- c. Elby Burr requested a comprehensive list of all currently available, unoccupied space in Salem. He is requesting the list contain details including location, square footage, and allowable uses. EDC chair Frank Sroka will request this information from the town planner's office and disperse this to all EDC members.
- d. Frank Sroka presented details from a communication with P&Z chair Gloria Fogarty. With the idea of improving Salem's business climate, the EDC will begin the process of reviewing relevant P&Z regulations. Any regulations considered "problematic" for economic expansion (focused on businesses) will be flagged for a discussion with the P&Z committee. Gloria Fogarty gave instructions on how to access the P&Z

regulations, which Frank Sroka provided to all EDC members. Elby Burr and Wendy Mikolinski will begin the process of reviewing these regulations; any findings will be presented in future EDC meetings for discussion and consideration. EDC will also review regulations applicable to age-restricted housing to see what improvements could be made to facilitate establishment of this type housing for Salem's senior residents who may wish to downsize their present home and remain in Salem. Any suggestions will be forwarded to P&Z via Gloria Fogarty for their consideration.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 21, at 7:30 p.m. in Salem Town Hall, Room 2.

Meeting Adjourned 8:50 p.m.