

**TOWN OF SALEM
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023, 7:00 P.M.
SALEM TOWN HALL, CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

**The minutes submitted below have been filed in accordance with
Section 1-225 of the CT General Statutes. They are subject to final approval with or
without amendments by a vote of the Economic Development Commission.
Approval and any such amendments will be detailed in subsequent minutes.**

PRESENT

Steven Shelley, Chairman
Melissa Beers
Carl Fontneau
John Houchin

ABSENT

Victoria Knopf
John Gilbert, Alternate
Alexandra Marsh, Alternate

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Shelley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

The following item was added to the Agenda, under New Business:
11(b) FY2023/24 Proposed Budget

3. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES:

a. Thursday, November 17, 2022 Special Meeting

**M/S/C: Fontneau/Beers, to approve the November 17, 2022 Economic
Development Commission Regular Meeting Minutes. Discussion: None.
Voice vote, 3-0-1. Voting in Favor: Commissioners Beers, Fontneau, and
Shelley. Voting in Opposition: None. Voting in Abstention: Commissioner
Houchin.**

b. Tuesday, December 20, 2022 Regular Meeting – *no quorum; no minutes*

4. CORRESPONDENCE – *none*

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – *none*

6. SALEM BUSINESS

a. Update from Senator Paul Formica and Martha Marx – *no update*

- b. Update from State Representatives Holly Cheeseman and Irene Haynes – *no update*
- c. Update from Salem First Selectman Ed Chmielewski

First Selectman Chmielewski wished everyone a Happy New Year and introduced Emergency Management Director/Emergency Services Coordinator/Deputy Fire Marshal Mike Bednarz. He stated that the Fire Marshal's office, which inspects local businesses, is currently reviewing its records and has created a Record Update Request form that will be distributed to the town's storefront businesses annually. The purpose of the form is to obtain emergency contact information. The First Selectman's Executive Assistant will work together with the Commission and Fire Marshal's office to regularly update the information.

7. ZONING MAP MODIFICATIONS

Chairman Shelley provided a brief overview of their discussions regarding the proposed Zoning Map Modifications. The Commission's goal is to draft a letter to the Planning & Zoning Commission regarding the possible re-zoning of specific parcels to make the town more business-friendly. Commissioner Fontneau added that the Commission also plans to review the topography of the properties, citing that many of the parcels may be difficult to develop due to their terrain. He also noted that approximately 4% of the land in Salem is zoned Highway Commercial, Industrial, and Business whereas 6% of the town's land is part of the Eightmile River Watershed Corridor. Commissioner Houchin stated the importance of finding a balance and proposing changes that would allow the town to maintain its rural character. The property owners will be contacted for their input before the letter is sent to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

8. PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD)

Commissioner Fontneau reported that the POCD was approved by the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC). The Public Hearing incited two public comments: a letter from Resident Sue Spang and Eightmile River Wild & Scenic Watershed Coordinating Committee (ERWSCC) Program Director Patricia Young. The PZC agreed to make minor corrections to the document based on the comments. In the Economic Development Chapter, reference to the Salem Valley Veterinary Clinic as a new business was removed. Copies of the document will be distributed to the Commissioners and a quarterly review of their assigned goals and objectives status will be conducted.

The item will be removed from the agenda.

9. SALEM BUSINESS SURVEY

The Commissioners discussed the distribution of the survey questions. The survey will be available online and promoted through *Our Town Salem*, the town website, and social

media. The goal is to receive responses from a minimum of 20% or 10 to 15 responses of the town's businesses.

10. SALEM BUSINESS OUTREACH AND SUPPORT

a. In-Person Outreach

A brief discussion ensued regarding the difficulties in reaching out to the town's home occupation businesses.

b. Welcome Packet

M/S/C: Fontneau/Houchin, to authorize Chairman Shelley to review and approve the Welcome Packet for the Economic Development Commission's webpage. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Election of Officers – *tabled*

The continued interest of those members who have been/are inactive will be investigated. Chairman Shelley announced that, due to his wife's recent promotion, they are in the process of moving to Western Connecticut.

b. FY2022/23 Proposed Budget

M/S/C: Fontneau/Houchin, to approve the FY2022/23 Proposed Budget for the Economic Development Commission, with a total of \$1,500.00.

Discussion: The proposed budget remains the same. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

12. OLD BUSINESS

a. ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funding / Salem Small Business Assistance –
First Selectman Chmielewski reported that the publisher for *Our Town Salem* recently informed the town that, due to a reduction in advertisers, the number of issues is in danger of being reduced. The newsletter is funded entirely by the support of its advertisers. A brief discussion ensued regarding the possibility of utilizing part of the Commission's ARPA (American Rescue Act) Funds to purchase advertising pages.

M/S/C: Fontneau/Beers, to allocate up to \$2,000.00 of the Economic Development Commission's remaining FY2022/23 Budget and allotment of ARPA (American Rescue Act) Funds to purchase advertising in the Spring 2023 issue of *Our Town Salem*. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

M/S/C: Houchin/Beers, to authorize Chairman Shelley to review and approve the Economic Development Commission's submission for the *Our Town Salem* Spring 2023 issue. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

13. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: Houchin/Beers, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by: Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem