

**Town of Salem**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**Minutes from regular meeting Jan 29, 2018**

**1. Meeting called to order 7:35PM**

**Members present:**

Frank Sroka (Chair)	Andy Lightner
Elbert Burr	Adam Scott (alt)
Paul Robillard	James Bee (alt)

**Members Absent:**

Selectman representative: Stu Gadbois

**Guests:**

Mrs. Cindy Lightner, Facebook Aficionado  
Lynnea Mahlke, East Lyme ELBO (East Lyme Business Owners) Chairperson  
Amanda Lawrence, Public  
Jason and Jessica Hartke, Public

**2. Communications:** None.

**3. Changes to the agenda:** None

**4. Approval of December minutes:** Motion to approve Elby, seconded Paul, carried unanimously.

**5. Public Comment:** Members of the public commented on their attendance at this meeting initiated by seeing the agenda on Facebook. They also commented on use of Facebook and possibly providing volunteer help to EDC in this regard.

**6. Opening Comments:** Public Guest were introduced and Frank opened the meeting with a general overview of Salem's EDCs projects past and present.

**7. New Business:** The initial presentation was made by guest speaker Lynnea Mahlke, representing the ELBO businesses from East Lyme and Niantic Village. She indicated a group of about 25-30 businesses of the hundred or so businesses in the area shared information, publications, maps, monthly meeting, speakers and educational information pertinent to the area. Lynnea left us a brochure that they circulate, which outlines their businesses by category with a map of store locations.

**8. Old Business:** Continued discussion on EDC's five year plan.

Andy Lightner and wife Cindy presented a test they developed using Facebook as a media for Salem store front businesses. They worked with one of EDC's direct mail test companies Fox Farm Brewery and a new company they picked up from the newspaper, Red House Cultural Arts Center which recently opened in town, to see if boosting complementary advertising could help these business develop increased awareness to their products. Andy indicated the Facebook hits on the businesses posted were many and resulted in increased "likes" on the EDC page. Andy was also interested in creating a boost to generate interest in our January EDC meeting which resulted in public attendance as noted above.

There was continued discussion as to how we support Salem brick and mortar store front businesses and at what level we approach them in a supporting way. There was some general consensus that we focus on supporting special town-wide events to the entire business community being careful not to focus on any one business in particular. The general sence of the group seemed to agree our role should be to support awareness for all businesses in general. The line between advertising and awareness is narrow.

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Further discussion was held related to getting the support for our businesses into print as well as the electronic media on a regular basis. While East Lyme is a good example of a shore line community with multiple businesses and a much larger population to draw on supported by an influx of summer residents, Salem's population is very small, tucked into a quiet, laid back country environment. There is little or no competition between Salem's store front businesses.

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**9. New Business**

None discussed. There was a suggestion made to consider developing and providing a "welcome kit" for new residents and businesses locating in Salem.

**10. Next Meeting Date**

Monday, February 26, 2018 at 7:30 in Room 2, Salem Town Hall

**11. Adjournment**