

TOWN OF SALEM
Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 7, 2021, 4:00 p.m.
Salem Town Hall, Conference Room 1

PRESENT

Edward Chmielewski, Jr., Chairman
Carl Fontneau
Steven Shelley

ABSENT

none

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Chmielewski called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

M/S/C: Fontneau/Shelley, to approve the Economic Development Regular Meeting Minutes for October 5, 2021. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

3. CORRESPONDENCE – *none*

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS – *none*

5. SALEM BUSINESS AND COVID 19 IMPACT

a. Update from Senator Paul Formica

b. Update from State Representative Holly Cheeseman

Both Senator Formica and State Representative Cheeseman are eager to continue working with and supporting the Commission and the town.

c. Update from Salem First Selectman Ed Chmielewski

First Selectman Chmielewski expressed his honor to have been elected as the town's new First Selectman. He looks forward to continuing working with the Commission and their efforts to benefit the town and its businesses and residents.

He reported that approximately \$600,000.00 in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds has been allocated to the town and an additional \$600,000.00 will be allocated in July 2023. The Board of Selectmen plans to form an ARPA Committee, comprised of the Chairpersons of the town's boards and commissions and a member-at-large, to discuss the allocation of these funds.

6. CT OFFICE OF TOURISM

a. EASTERN REGION TOURISM DISTRICT UPDATE

Commissioner Shelley reported that the Tourism District will be hosting a virtual Zoom meeting this Thursday, December 9, to discuss the possibility of changing their name to one which more adequately reflects the entire region and the possible allocation of ARPA funds aimed at improving tourism.

The Commissioners reviewed a copy of an article published in *The Day* newspaper regarding the availability of up to \$10,000.00 by the Eastern Region Tourism District for marketing to promote tourism. The deadline to submit a Request for Proposal (RFP) is January 15. Commissioner Fontneau encouraged the Commission to consider discussing any ideas and proposals they might have.

7. EDC BUSINESS & SERVICE DIRECTORY 2021/22 UPDATE

Commissioner Shelley reported that he will be meeting with Bruce Flax, who is involved with the publication of Mystic's *Business and Services Directory* to improve their future Directories. He is also in the process of reaching out to home businesses that were omitted from the Directory and is working with *The Chronicle* to revise and create a digital version of the Directory that can be posted on the town website. The businesses have been verified and are registered with Town Clerk's office. He also proposed the possibility of publishing an addendum to the originally published Directory. Funding for the addendum was briefly discussed.

Commissioner Fontneau added that the additional information could also be used as part of their analysis of the town's cottage industries.

8. SENIOR FRIENDLY / AGE RESTRICTED HOUSING DISCUSSION

Chairman Chmielewski reported that an article was published in *The Day* newspaper regarding the age-restricted housing development located on Route 82 and recently toured the facility with the former First Selectman. The complex is comprised of 48 one-bedroom units with one garage and a community center. Much interest has been received regarding the units and the pricing is to be determined. The facility will be the second age-restricted housing development in the town; the first development being located on Centre Street.

9. PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD)

Commissioner Fontneau reported that a draft of the revised chapter has been submitted to the Planning & Zoning Commission for review. Changes in the town's demographics, per the recent Census data, over the last ten years will be included in the document.

10. SALEM BUSINESS OUTREACH AND SUPPORT

a. In-Person Outreach

Chairman Chmielewski stressed the importance of their role as the ambassadors of the town to its businesses and the continuation of their outreach efforts. He also encouraged the Commission to share their efforts with other groups, e.g., gathering, updating, and sharing the contact information of the local businesses with Emergency Management for a point of contact in case of an emergency.

Commissioner Shelley enquired as to the possibility of creating a business card for the Commissioners to distribute to the businesses. The details of the card will be discussed at a future meeting.

b. Welcome Packet

Commissioner Fontneau recommended including a note in the Welcome Packet stating that all signs require a permit and some signs are free of charge.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Election of Officers

M/S/C: Fontneau/Chmielewski, to nominate and elect Commissioner Steven Shelley as the Chairman of the Economic Development Commission. There be no additional nominations, the nominations were closed. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

M/S/C: Shelley/Chmielewski, to nominate and elect Commissioner Carl Fontneau as the Vice-Chairman of the Economic Development Commission. There be no additional nominations, the nominations were closed. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

Commissioner Chmielewski congratulated the Commissioners.

b. Endorsement of New Commissioners

Commissioner Chmielewski stated that the following members of the community have expressed their interest and willingness to serve on the Commission:

John Houchin, Full Member, President of the Salem Lions Club

Melissa Beers, Full Member, co-owner of a local grout & tile business

Vickie Knopf, Full Member, equestrian retirement/rehabilitation farm employee

Alexandra Marsh, Alternate Member, State Judicial Branch employee

John F. Gilbert, Alternate Member, longtime Salem resident and salesperson

M/S/C: Fontneau/Shelley, to endorse John Houchin, Melissa Beers, and Vickie Knopf as Full Members and Alexandra Marsh and John F. Gilbert as Alternate Members of the Economic Development

Commission. Discussion: Commissioner Fontneau looks forward to welcoming the new members. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor.

12. OLD BUSINESS – *none*

Newly-elected Chairman Shelley thanked former Chairman and First Selectman Chmielewski for his tutelage, guidance, and service on the Commission. First Selectman Chmielewski thanked him for his kind words.

13. ADJOURNMENT

M/S/C: Fontneau/Chmielewski, to adjourn the meeting at 4:44 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 3-0, all in favor. Meeting adjourned.

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