

Town of Somers
Economic Development Commission

P. O. Box 308
Somers, Connecticut 06071

Meeting Minutes

Meeting of October 4, 2010
Town Hall – Selectman’s Conference Room

Meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Lou Bachetti, at 7:10 p.m. Members present were the Chairman, David Reed, Maura Gardiner, and Rick Cheney. Absent were Robert Schmidt and Ron Elliott, Secretary. As Mr. Elliot was absent, the Chairman appointed Mr. Reed to record the minutes for this meeting.

Mr. Reed made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected to reflect that bids for the Somersville Streetscape project would be made available in mid-October. Mr. Cheney seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair reported that there was no correspondence.

Mr. Reed presented the Somers employment data for the month of August, 2010. The current unemployment rate in Somers is 9.4 %, representing 448 Somers residents who are out of work. The workforce at the end of august is 4,755, and there are 4,307 Somers residents that are gainfully employed. Unfortunately, the work force in Somers is diminishing, down by 41 during the period July to August, 2010.

The Chair reviewed the status of the 2011 Directory, A motion by Ms. Gardiner to engage Jeanne Reed as Coordinator for the directory was seconded by Mr. Cheney and passed with Mr. Reed abstaining. Mr. Cheney questioned if there would be enough directories published to provide additional copies to the town clerk, library, and other business distribution points such as the town banks. The Chair stated that he felt there would be sufficient copies produced to meet all distribution needs.

The Chair reviewed the recently completed email directory, noting that it had been tested and used for the first “EDC Blast” with success. He noted that it was planned to use a Yahoo Group in the future as the principle distribution method, with each Commissioner having access to the mailing list. In further discussion, it was suggested that the Selectmen and the Chairmen of the Towns’ Boards and Commissions be included on the mailing list. Mr. Cheney stated that he thought the list was a great way to present and support various events in the town, such as the Cider Press, summer concerts, etc.

Mr. Cheney reported that the fall “After Hours” Networking event is tentatively scheduled for November 9, 2010.

The Commission discussed its progress against its state 2010 Goals as follows:

- Publish 2011 business directory: *in process*

- Create an email communication database of all town businesses: *Completed*
- Sponsor up to 2 “After Hours” business networking meetings: *Will do one in November*
- Publish up to 2 informational bulletins: *Completed – 1 mailing, 1 email blast*
- Complete “Way-Finder” Sign project: *Completed*
- Conduct 12 business visitations: *In Process*
- Continue to develop inter-commission relationships and information exchange: *On-going*
- Explore all alternatives to assure Somersville mill development: *On-going*
- Communicate with town and state officials to advance the time-line on the reconfiguration of the Rte. 83/190 intersection: *Letter due*
- Begin discussions with land-use departments to jointly study the adequacy of business/commercial zones: *On-going – to notify Selectmen of EDC support to Study Somers Downtown Streetscape and Development*

Mr. Reed noted the anti-blight ordinance is moving along with the Board of Selectmen. He reviewed the status of the Somersville Streetscape project, with bids being put out later this month. He reviewed the details of the recent tax sale, with emphasis on the Somersville Mill. Under discussion, it was the consensus of the commissioners that an informal meeting with Ralph Giusti, winning bidder for the mill, be scheduled in the near future to offer the Commission’s assistance and support for this important project.

There being no further business brought before the commission, Ms. Gardiner moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Cheney, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
David Reed, Commissioner/Vice Chair
Somers Economic Development Commission