

TOWN OF VOLUNTOWN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
November 19, 2020

The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:02 by Mr. Simmons. In attendance: T. Hanson, M. Simmons, J. Wesa, A. Binder

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 15, 2020 – A MOTION was made (Wesa, Binder) to approve as amended; ALL IN FAVOR.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: None

GUESTS: None

REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE:

- Connecticut Preservation magazine
- notification of grant approved

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Farmers Market – Mr. Wesa gathered attendance in a report. Vendors were also listed. There were between 121 and 181 people weekly with an average of 146. 2019 had an average of 200. There was a 27% decrease in attendance. Vendors reported a decrease of 13% in sales. Mr. Simmons felt there was great support from town residents (regulars) and not as many visitors (passing by). Not having events or musicians may have made a difference as well. Considering the challenges presented by COVID, it was a successful season. A survey is available online that will be kept available until the end of December. There have been seven respondents so far.

Website/Facebook – Things are added as available; most are regarding COVID. A \$5,000 grant for small businesses affected by COVID is available.

Business Development/P&Z — Planning and Zoning has not had a meeting. The Plan of Conservation and Development Committee is getting closer to the end of its task and making good progress. Mr. Wesa wants to see historic cemeteries included.

A grant has been received by the town for repair of a 100-year-old bridge.

A community-wide newsletter was suggested by a Plan of Conservation and Development Committee member. The town newsletter is now monthly instead of weekly, the school has its own newsletter, and the library has not published a newsletter since the beginning of COVID restrictions.

Eastern Connecticut Tourism – Ms. Hanson reported that the grant applied for was approved. Funds will allow Eagle Eye, LLC to do photography seasonally. Discussion followed on the budget for use of the grant.

Trails Map — Mr. Wesa sent out a list of where maps have been distributed by both him and James Dodd.

Historical Update – Wylie School is still being worked on. Painting has stalled because of colder weather and windows are being repaired.

A plan is being developed for the Methodist Church.

BUDGET — No report

OLD BUSINESS — Mr. Wesa said postcards should be sent soon with a link to businesses in the Business Directory. Should first ask for a review of phone numbers and updated info on whether businesses are still operating. February or March could be the target for sending postcards out.

NEW BUSINESS — A request for a schedule of 2021 meetings was received by Mr. Simmons; he will submit it.

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING — December 17, 2020

- Ask the Friends of Pachaug Forest for a report on the grant received

A MOTION was made (Hanson, Wesa) to adjourn the meeting at 8:09; ALL IN FAVOR.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana M. Ingraham, Clerk

Approved for
distribution _____ Date _____