

EDC Minutes: 11/10/2020

Present: Brian Connor, Kevin Spendley, Donnell Murphy, Kevin Fettig, Margaret Kundert, John Shalbey

Also Present: Ashley Clark (Community & Economic Dev. Director)

Murphy opened the meeting at 5:00 PM

Business:

• Director Update to the EDC:

- **Small Business Saturday**: update by Clark was given, which included the following information;

- approval for the closing of Elm St. was given
- ideas of activities to host that don't involve groups of people are welcome
- astro-turf has been purchased for outdoor areas

- **Local Grant Initiative for Outdoor Dining/ Supporting Businesses through the Fall**: Clark explained that the creation of local grants for restaurants (ex. winterize outdoor dining) would be ideal for EDC to look into. Clark mentioned that maintaining outdoor dining is difficult for local businesses as is due to the associated costs of heating (propane for heat lamps). By doing "our" own Walpole Grant it would enable the EDC to create their own guidelines for qualifying businesses. Clark stated that local businesses could donate to the grant program, the select board would vote to accept the money as a gift, and the funds would then go into a separate account. A local grant program as described would enable the funds to be quickly distributed to businesses. Murphy expressed his concern with the difficulty that may be encountered regarding the ability to solicit funds and the amount of funds that will be donated. Clark explained that the restaurants have directly communicated that they need funds to purchase propane, and will reach out to local restaurants in Walpole to find out where they are purchasing their propane.

Possible ideas included;

- specific companies in Walpole could sponsor a specific restaurants propane for a week and gain publicity/ recognition from that sponsorship
- Gofundme page
- QR codes for easy donations

Micro Business Grant: Fettig asked for an update on the Micro Business Grant is going, Clark stated that more people are needed to apply. Shalbey mentioned the difficulty of qualifying for the grant.

• Discussion of Tax Classification:

- Clark stated that this item is before the Select Board tonight at 7:05 P.M.
- Murphy explained that the EDC should encourage the tax rate to remain the same for commercial businesses in order to promote businesses within the town of Walpole.
- Clark drafted a letter to the Select Board on behalf of the EDC.
- Spendley made a motion that the commercial tax rate remain the same as it has been over the past 7 yrs., seconded by Kundert, roll call vote: Murphy-aye; Connor-aye; Spendley-aye; Fettig-aye; Kundert-aye; Shalbey-aye. The motion carried 6-0-0

•Minutes:

7/14/20; 9/8/20; 10/13/20; Spendley made a motion to accept all three sets of minutes, seconded by Shalbey, roll call vote: Murphy-aye; Connor-aye; Spendley-aye; Fettig-aye; Kundert-aye; Shalbey-aye. The motion carried 6-0-0.

Shalbey motioned to adjourn, seconded by Kundert, roll call vote: Murphy-aye; Connor-aye; Spendley-aye; Fettig-aye; Kundert-aye; Shalbey-aye. The motion carried 6-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Accepted 1/12/21