

**Essex Economic Development Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Essex Town Hall
November 9, 2011**

Present: Chairman Lee Thompson
Commissioners David Winstead, Mark Uihlein, Bob Laundry,
John Beveridge and Lon Seidman

First Selectman Phil Miller was unable to attend

Commissioner Bill Foster was excused from today's meeting
Guests: Susan Malan, Ed Cook and Alvin Wolfgram

Call to Order:

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

Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Thompson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2011 meeting. A motion was offered by Commissioner Beveridge and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Report from Town Hall

First Selectman Norman Needleman was not able to attend the meeting.

Communications/Public Comment:

Members of the public introduced themselves.

Susan Malan

Alfred Wolfgram

Ed Cook

Old Business:

Boat Launch Ramp/Novelty Lane Project-Lee Thompson

The original grant requested was \$300,000 and the town was granted \$200,000. The boat ramp project ran \$65,000.00 over but the Novelty Lane improvements were \$80,000.00 under. **Given that the budget is running with a small surplus, some additional work will be completed downtown.**

Tide Flex Valve-Pratt Street Flooding

The application is ready to go in. Chairman Thompson has received every indication that it will be approved. There has been record flooding in the area over the last few weeks.

Tri Town Trolley

The Governor has transferred grant money into a transportation fund. First Selectman Needleman attended a meeting and they discussed the Tri Town Trolley. It might fit into the Governor's overall transportation plan.

New Business:

Retail Store Rentals

There are four retail stores empty now. One is rented already and another is potentially rented.

Public Comment / Discussion:

Ed Cook reported that some of the links on the EDC website were not working and that the list of real estate vacancies was out of date. His company recently purchased the CRT building and are now in the process of renovating the facility. A number of jobs will be brought to the facility once work is complete.

He added that of the towns he looked at more moving the company, Essex was the only one that did not approach him. Other towns made various efforts and actively contacted him about bringing the business town. He also addressed concerned about the conversation at the last meeting about signage. The members and guests discussed the role of the EDC and its prior work on bringing a more consistent signage policy to town.

Commissioner Laundry reported that there are workshops by CREPA on December 1. One is for Economic Development at the Essex Town Hall. He also reported that the Planning Commission held a meeting regarding transportation.

Commissioner Winstead suggested the need to discuss at some point what the town could have done differently in regards to the situation of Ed Cook's business purchase and what we could change to attract other businesses.

The commissioners discussed the move of Middlesex Hospital's medical facility on Route 153.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Commissioner Winstead, it was voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Judge