

Economic Improvement Commission Minutes

The Economic Improvement Commission (EIC) held a special meeting on Thursday, June 25, 2015, at the Charlestown Town Hall, 4530 South County Trail, Charlestown, RI.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Frank Glista called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.
2. **ROLL:** Present were Chairman Frank Glista, Don Smith, Ron Russo, Donna Walsh, Craig Marr, Betty Combs and Town Council Liaison, Tom Gentz. EIC member Janice Falcone was unable to attend. Brooke White from the Westerly Sun attended.
3. **APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 30, 2015 AND JUNE 4, 2015 MEETINGS** - Betty Combs motioned to accept the minutes from April 30 and Ron Russo seconded. Craig Marr motioned to accept the minutes from June 4, 2015 and Ron Russo seconded. Both motions passed unanimously.
4. **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**
 - (a) Friends of Ninigret - Ron Russo reported that the Friends are proceeding with their plans for a Fall Festival scheduled for September 20, 2015. The committee plans to showcase the many attributes of Ninigret Park.
5. **OLD/UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
 - (a) Business Leaders Input - Ken Swain, Tax Assessor, advised that two additional surveys were received and updated the data compiled from the "Business Survey". The Chairman asked for a motion to categorize the businesses to quantify the survey results further. Donna Walsh made this motion and Craig Marr seconded it. The motion passed unanimously. Two Commissioners volunteered and will identify the business that received the mailing into appropriate categories. The EIC will be better able to prioritize the survey responses.
 - (b) Town Business Map - Westerly Graphics is working on the first draft of the map and will present when completed.
 - (c) Town Website - The Chairman asked the Commissions to review the website and make recommendation for additional information that the site could provide.
 - (d) Comprehensive Plan – The Chairman reported that Nancy Letendre, Principle Planner at Mason Associates, town consultant for the Comprehensive Plan, was unable to attend this meeting to provide an update and receive input. Donna Walsh referred to the agricultural section in the plan and thought more input was needed from the Agricultural Commission. The Chairman reported that the Quonset Aviation Museum was exploring a move from their current location in Quonset. Betty Combs made the motion that the Chairman present this opportunity to the town at the Comprehensive Plan workshop. Craig Marr seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Chairman will contact Nancy Letendre to determine her availability to attend the next meeting.
6. **SPECIAL PROJECTS/ACTION ITEMS**
 - (a) Fire Station Memorial Park - No decision has been made on the disposition of the property. The Fire District owns the building and there is a process in place to decide the future of the building.
7. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - (a) Charlestown Arts/CHARTS - The Chairman presented a flyer promoting the arts in Charlestown. Donna Walsh made a motion to proceed with this effort and it was seconded by Ron Russo. The motion passed unanimously.
 - (b) Eco Tourism- Ron Russo made a motion to have the Chairman meet with Steve McCandless to evaluate the possibility of creating an Eco Tourism map for the town on the web site. Craig Marr seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Tom Gentz reported that the Frosty Drew Observatory draws in people both in and out of town to view celestial events. Tom offered to contact the astronomer to attend one of our meetings.

8. COMMUNICATIONS - None.

9. OPEN SESSION – Betty Combs inquired whether a replacement has been found for the Parks and Recreation Commission. The search for a replacement is in progress. Betty also noted that the new pavement on Rt 1 was wonderful but felt that the number of drivers speeding had increased. She will ask the police to increase their patrols.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE and AGENDA ITEMS - Set for 9:00 AM Thursday, July 16, 2015 at the Town Hall Planning Dept. Annex Room.

12. ADJOURNMENT: At 10:46 AM on motion by Craig Marr, seconded by Donna Walsh. The motion passed unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,

Secretary, Don Smith