

Economic Development Commission
Special Meeting
June 23, 2009

Present: Steve Santino
Ed Shapiro
Charles Ambulos
Camille Alberti
John Jensen

1. Call to Order. Chairman Santino called the Economic Development Commission Special Meeting of June 23, 2009 to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Main Street Planter Maintenance and Watering. Commission members received copies of letter dated June 12, 2009 from Candice Shapiro, President of the Niantic Main Street Board of Directors requesting financial help in the maintenance of the flower pots that line Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The request was made for \$1250.

Ms. Alberti stated she did not feel this request should be granted. She felt there may be many individuals in Town who might benefit from this type of job. She did not feel it is this Commission's responsibility to spend money on maintenance. This Commission should be involved in project oriented work and work that would stimulate the economy downtown. She would rather return the money left in the budget to the Town.

Mr. Shapiro stated although many individual have been asked, no one comes forward to do this work. This project is to keep Main Street appealing, by enhancing shop owners' properties.

Mr. Ambulos asked if the tenants of the stores take care of the plantings? Mr. Shapiro replied they do not. Mr. Ambulos asked why? He observed that in Old Saybrook Town vehicles and volunteers take care of the plantings in their Town.

Mr. Ambulos asked who purchased the plantings? Mr. Shapiro replied Main Street and East Lyme Beautification. This individual buys plant food and continual care.

Ms. Alberti felt there are many volunteer organizations, e.g. the Leos who are called upon to do volunteer work for the Town. Mr. Shapiro stated they are only asked to work on one project. This is a nine month project.

Ms. Alberti stated it is the responsibility of this Commission to promote our Town as a viable place to have a business. Mr. Shapiro felt the Town should look well to attract people to it. Mr. Ambulos agreed the plantings do add beauty. He also felt the owners should care enough to water the plantings.

Mr. Shapiro stated a volunteer can be asked to work on a project if it has a beginning and end to it, otherwise it should be a paid employee.

Mr. Jensen asked who decided to have the flower pots along Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue? Mr. Shapiro stated Main Street has been unable to raise funds because of the economy. Mr. Jensen stated he would be willing to help one time during these troubled times.

Mr. Santino stated this Commission has supported the Information Center gift baskets to thank volunteers for their services. In the height of the tourism season the flower pots appeal to tourists. He agreed the Commission should fund this one time. In the future the Town and property owners should be requested to maintain the flower pots.

Mr. Jensen felt Flanders is a more vibrant area of Town. Niantic is suffering.

MOTION: Ms. Alberti moved to transfer funds to the East Lyme Beautification Committee to be used at its discretion.
No second. Motion defeated.

Mr. Santino felt many commissions and organizations overlap. There are less individuals giving of their personal time to support them.

Ms. Alberti stated she would be willing to approve a request for supplies from this individual.

Mr. Santino gave a report on the remaining Economic Development Commission budget.

MOTION: Mr. Shapiro moved to expend \$1250 in response to letter dated June 12, 2009 from Candice Shapiro, President of Niantic Main Street Board of Directors, request to fund maintenance for the planted material provided by East Lyme Beautification Committee and Niantic Main Street. No second. Motion defeated.

MOTION: Mr. Jensen moved to expend a one time expenditure of \$1,000 in response to letter dated June 12, 2009 from Candice Shapiro, President of Niantic Main Street Board of Directors, to fund maintenance for the planted material provided by East Lyme Beautification Committee and Niantic Main Street, with a written report to be tendered to the Economic Development Commission by Niantic Main Street at the end of the planting season. Seconded by Mr. Ambulos. In Favor: Santino, Shapiro, Jensen and Ambulos. In Opposition: Alberti. (4-1) Motion

carried.

MOTION: Mr. Shapiro moved to accept the bill from the Recording Secretary for the June 23, 2009 Special Meeting in order to submit it in a timely manner. Seconded by Mr. Jensen. (5-0) Unanimous.

MOTION: Mr. Jensen moved to adjourn the June 23, 2009 Special Meeting at 7:20 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Shapiro. (5-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Ghersi, Recording Secretary