



## **ECDC COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Minutes of Tuesday, December 8, 2020  
6:30 PM**

Committee Members participating were Chair Lynne Bermudez, and members Zillie Bhujju, Sarah Guido, Janet Kmetz, Rosie Discipio, Kim Philpot, Alex Qirjazi, and Kevin Harutunian (Town Administrator). Also present was Select Board member Dick Gandt, Planning Board Chair Martha Morrison, and Cultural Council Chair Kathleen Hunt.

### **GOVERNOR'S ORDER**

Chair Bermudez announced that, due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency announced by Governor Baker, this meeting would be conducted as a Virtual Meeting via ZOOM and as such, participation was remote. She then read the following:

"Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Topsfield Select Board will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Topsfield website at [www.topsfield-ma.gov](http://www.topsfield-ma.gov) For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch or listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: Video conference (see log-in information below.) No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Topsfield website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting."

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bermudez called the meeting to order at 6:31PM and stated that the meeting was being recorded by Boxford Cable for future viewing from the Town website.

Dick Gandt asked to video record the meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Zillie Bhujju made a motion to approve the minutes of the ECDC meeting held Tuesday, November 10, 2020 as presented. Sarah Guido seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote as follows:

Lynne Bermudez – Aye

Zillie Bhujju – Aye

Rosalee Discipio – Aye

Sarah Guido – Aye

Kevin Harutunian – Aye

Janet Kmetz - Aye

Kim Philpot – Aye

Alex Qirjazi - Aye

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Membership Update**

Chair Bermudez informed the committee that she received word from ECDC member Kim Daly that due to personal reasons she had to step down from the ECDC. She was very disappointed as she was looking forward to working with the committee. It was agreed that Kim's position will not be immediately filled.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Member Updates – Prior meeting action items**

Sarah Guido and Zillie Bhujju gave a summary of the raffle and video activities spearheaded by the ECDC for this year's virtual Holiday on the Green to support local businesses and provide residents with a sense of fun and community during Covid. The events were extremely well received. A video of the full Holiday on the Green event will be posted on the Town website. The local business video and the dance montage video can be seen on the Holiday on the Green website and on Facebook.

Kim Philpot reviewed the analysis and recommendation she gave to Kevin Harutunian for a vendor (Nunan) to provide spring flowers and water maintenance for the solar streetlights. Discussion was held on the wire baskets (\$22.50/basket) that will hold the flowers. Kim discussed a self-watering basket

that she would recommend on a go-forward basis (\$119/basket). While the water maintenance is the same for both baskets (water 3-4x/week), the self-watering basket is deeper to allow for root growth. Kim also provided her recommendation on 21 planters to purchase to replace the current planters placed along Main St. The planters must be purchased by the end of the year to obtain discounted pricing and to utilize funds available from the Shared Street grant. Kevin Harutunian and his team will handle contacting Nunan and making all purchases and will inform Sarah Guido, TCP President, of the due date and deposit amount required by Nunan for the flower/maintenance contract.

Zillie Bhujji reviewed the Public Art/Cultural Events inventory that she compiled. The inventory was very comprehensive and listed all Town organizations involved in art/cultural activities along with each their events and the time of year of each event. Discussion was held and additional information was included in the inventory. ECDC members will review the inventory and provide input to Zillie prior to the next meeting. Zillie suggested that the ECDC invite organizations listed on the inventory to our meetings to provide an overview of their activities and plans and discuss how they and the ECDC might partner going forward to expand upon current offerings. Lynne Bermudez will contact the Library as the first organization.

Janet Kmetz gave an update on her investigation into possibly moving the telephone poles on Main Street. Janet recommended that this effort not be one of the priorities for the ECDC. The committee agreed with Janet's recommendation.

### **Town Administrator Updates – Downtown Revitalization**

TA Harutunian provided an update on activities underway with Downtown Revitalization including solar streetlights, streetscape designs for Main Street, Electric Vehicle chargers, possible grants for more permanent streetscape improvements, and discussions underway to investigate opportunities for the Old Highway Garage on School Ave.

Discussion was held on these activities as well as how to help promote local businesses. Promotion recommendations included creating a Town Facebook page on which local businesses could share information/promotions/new products and involving businesses in the Greater Beverly Chamber of Commerce. TCP is working on including all that Topsfield has to offer (activities/businesses/recreation/parks, etc.) on the TCP website

## **ECDC Priorities – Downtown Revitalization**

Following up on previous discussions, Chair Bermudez provided the committee with the categories which multiple ECDC members identified as one of their top priorities for the Town:

- Signage
- Main St. enhancements
- Parklets/Pocket Parks
- Old Highway Garage Renovation/Productive Us
- Increased Community Events

## **ADJOURN**

At 8:20 PM, Janet Kmetz made a motion to adjourn. Sarah Guido seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Lynne Bermudez – Aye

Zillie Bhujju – Aye

Rosalee Discipio – Aye

Sarah Guido – Aye

Kevin Harutunian – Aye

Janet Kmetz - Aye

Kim Philpot – Aye

Alex Qirjazi – Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne Bermudez – ECDC Chair

## **DOCUMENTS**

1. Agenda
2. Draft ECDC minutes of 11/10/2020
3. 2021 Spring Flower Watering Quotes
4. 2021 Spring Flower Estimate – Nunan Florist & Greenhouses
5. 2021 Spring Flower Estimate – Chad Pimentel
6. Art/Cultural Events Update for Topsfield ECDC

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18-25, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.