



ECDC COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING

**Minutes of Monday, October 24, 2022
6:30 PM**

Committee Members participating were Chair Lynne Bermudez and members Tom Capano, Sarah Guido, Zillie Bhujju, Alex Qirjazi, Rosalee Discipio, Tracey Granlund (joined at 7:15 pm), and Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian. Recreation Director Stephanie Sweeney and BCTV were also in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bermudez called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

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 Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. 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 on the agenda on the website.) 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."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kevin Harutunian made a motion to approve the minutes of the ECDC meeting held Monday, September 19, 2022. Zillie Bhujju seconded the motion and it passed with a roll call vote as follows:

Tom Capano	Aye
Sarah Guido	Aye

Zillie Bhuju Aye
Kevin Harutunian – Aye
Rosalee Discipio Aye
Lynne Bermudez – Aye
Alex Qirjazi Abstain (absent from meeting)

RECREATION UPDATE

Ms. Sweeney provided the committee with an update on recreational programs recently held and those being planned.

- She is working with the Eagle Scouts to improve tennis court benches and install backboards.
- She completed development of policies, procedures and forms required to begin to employ contractors to provide various new recreational programs such as fitness instructors for individuals 16+ years.
- The ice rink will be installed the week of 11/19/22. She is looking for more volunteers, including students needing community service hours, to help maintain the rink.
- There will be a Winter Festival on 1/21/23 with music and food. A skate swap will again be offered.
- A donation was made for an ADA compliant swing which will be installed in the spring.
- She is working with the COA to provide pickleball on the Proctor tennis courts. The Friends of the COA provided funds to purchase tape (to create lines on the courts), nets, paddles and balls. Intro to Pickleball is being held on Fridays from 10-11am during the months of October and November.
- Stephanie is working with Kathleen Barbarisi (COA) and three new tri-chairs to create this year's Holiday on the Green on 12/3/22 from 4-7 pm.
- She is working with TESPTO to create a Trunk or Treat event downtown on 10/29 from 4-6 pm.
- Stephanie has been working with the Library, Cultural Council, COA, TESPTO and the Historical Society to coordinate activities across the town to ensure they are not duplicating efforts.
- Chair Bermudez shared an idea from a resident, Gary Bergmann, to have an event to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Town Hall and provide tours of the clock tower. Stephanie said this would tie in nicely with a Founders Day event she is working on.

DOWNTOWN INITIATIVES UPDATE

Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian provided the committee with an update on revitalization activities. Topics included the following:

- Master Plan Committee –The first meeting of the committee was held two weeks ago and was very successful. Members of the community joined the meeting. The consultant gave an overview of the process to develop the plan. There was a tour of the town with the COA bus. The next meeting will be on 11/16 at 6:30 pm and thereafter the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. The committee will engage with residents at the Holiday on the Green to talk about the Plan and to receive their input. The consultant is working on details as to how to obtain this input in a concise and interesting way in an Open House format.
- RFP for the Old Highway Garage – The RFP was put out on the street (published in the state's Central Registry) two weeks ago. It was also personally sent to 20 individuals who had expressed interest in receiving it. A tour of the Garage was held and three individuals attended. Kevin is reaching out to individuals who would like a tour but were unable to attend the first one.
- Emerson Homes 40B – The application for the 40B development was sent to the Town and the Zoning Board of Appeals. The first meeting of the Public Hearing for the 40B will be held on 10-25-22.
- Wayfinding signage – The responses for the RFP for development of the wayfinding signs were very expensive as they encompassed development of all the signs. The Town resubmitted the RFP breaking it down into phases, with the first phase including 6-8 directional signs and one kiosk. The reformulated RFP was sent out and the town is awaiting responses. Kevin expects the signs to be in the ground by the spring.
- AARPA – The AARPA Committee will be bringing a series of recommendations to the Select Board regarding use of remaining AARPA funds. To date \$800,000 of the \$1.95 million have been spent or allocated to various purchases. The question was asked about how much of the AARPA funds were used to support economic development. The primary economic development project using AARPA funds will be for the parklet at the shopping center.
- Holiday Lights– Discussion is underway on installing soft, white up lighting and permanent lighting in the trees on the common to increase safety while walking and provide elegance for the Holiday on the Green and throughout the year. Written proposals with concepts and costs are being received. The question was asked if the contracts will be multi-year to ensure consistency of lighting. The committee also asked about removing the green lights that are randomly placed on the tree in front of the library. Kevin agreed and is looking at instead putting subtle green lights under two bushes near the veterans' monument.

- Downtown Decorations – The question was raised as to why the bump outs with hay bales and flowers was not installed this year. Kevin responded that it was a year of transition with the Purchasing/Community Development Agent retiring. That position should be filled shortly. Tom Capano volunteered to put together a year-round beautification plan for the downtown. Zillie Bhujju offered to help. They will provide a plan, including projected costs, to Kevin and the town will oversee implementation and ensure it is properly maintained. Tracey Granlund offered to help TCP with fundraising to support implementation of this plan.
- Homegrown Markets– The last of the four Home Grown Markets was held. At the last market TCP obtained a one-day wine/malt beverage license, as a nonprofit, to offer attendees beer and wine and raise funds for TCP. It was very well received by residents. As such, Kevin has been approached by others looking to obtain licenses.

ADJOURN

At 7:41 PM, Zillie Bhujju made a motion to adjourn. Alex Qirjazi seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Tom Capano	Aye
Sarah Guido	Aye
Zillie Bhujju	Aye
Kevin Harutunian	Aye
Rosalee Discipio	Aye
Tracey Granlund	Aye
Lynne Bermudez	Aye

Respectfully submitted,
Lynne Bermudez - Chair

DOCUMENTS

1. Agenda
2. Draft ECDC minutes of 9/19/2022

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.