



**ECDC COMMITTEE  
VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Minutes of Tuesday, April 13, 2021  
6:30 PM**

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

**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.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Zillie Bhujju made a motion to approve the minutes of the ECDC meeting held Tuesday, March 9, 2021. Kim Philpot seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote as follows:

Zillie Bhujju – Aye  
Rosalee Discipio – Aye  
Sarah Guido – Aye  
Kevin Harutunian – Aye  
Janet Kmetz - Aye  
Kim Philpot - Aye  
Alex Qirjazi – Aye  
Lynne Bermudez – Aye

## **CULTURAL ARTS/EVENTS PRESENTATION**

Meredith Shaw, Executive Director of the Tri-Town Council (TTC) gave a presentation providing the committee with an overview of the mission of the TTC as well as past and current TTC activities and events. Activities focus on healthy development, social support and art/cultural/recreational events for youth in the tri-towns. Their activities also include arts/cultural (Photovoice, Youth Artisan Fair, Inclusive Rock bank) and recreational activities (summer programs and camps open gym nights). TTC provides substantial and impressive support to Topsfield's youth.

## **DOWNTOWN INITIATIVES UPDATE**

Town Administrator Kevin Harutunian provided the committee with an update on revitalization activities. Discussion focused on:

- ensuring community awareness of (and attendance at Town Meeting for) the warrant articles concerning rezoning and disposition of the Old Highway Garage (newspaper article, Facebook, Moderator's Forum)
- the Main St. streetscape design and working with TCP to initiate landscape and seating options for Main St
- flowers and bases for the new solar lights (and the need to coordinate the color of hanging flowers, planters and new landscaping)
- the grand opening of the EV charging stations on 4/26 at 4 pm
- the dining parklet being reinstalled outside of Alex's
- possibility of using grant funds to purchase a solar bench

- possible locations for the placement of planters along Main St

Discussion was also held on who would be presenting reports on the rezoning (Planning Board) and disposition of the garage (possibly Josh Rownds).

Action items:

- Kevin will talk with Che Elwell (Fincom) about these reports.
- Kevin and Sarah will meet to discuss the recommendations in the streetscape design to enable the TCP to pursue upgrading the landscaping in front of THOP, Santander and Country Farms.
- Kevin's team will write an article for the Tri-town Chronicle about the warrant articles concerning the Old Highway Garage and the link to this article can be posted on Facebook.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION**

### **Website Development**

Sarah Guido reviewed the work done to date on conceptualizing the content and layout of a new feature on the TCP website to be the location to obtain information about what to see and do in Topsfield.

Sarah Guido held a meeting with Martha Morrison, Kindra Clineff and Lynne Bermudez to discuss the type of content envisioned as well as possible categories on the webpage to access this data. Sarah is developing a spreadsheet which will summarize the data to be collected and the categories under which it might be listed on the webpage. Sarah shared a Gloucester website ([Gloucester-ma.gov](http://Gloucester-ma.gov)), which has a great website and could be a good model to follow. The TCP site will link to the new Town website as soon as the Town website is updated so that data is only stored once, but each site will point to data on the other.

### **Town Common Activities**

Martha Morrison and Kindra Clineff shared proposed ideas for the new Great Tomato Festival, conceived of by Kim Philpot. The event is proposed for 9/12 around 11-3 or 12-3 on the Common. Ideas for the festival include tomato appearance contests, tasting contests, some educational information (10 ways to preserve tomatoes and recipes around the world), sale of locally made/grown foods, local businesses selling lunch, music, tomato art, and kid's games. Lynne will be attending Kevin's Project Team meeting on 4/15 to explain the festival and identify permitting/inspection requirements and any show stoppers. If it appears

feasible then the ECDC will reach out to groups who may want to help/participate in the festival.

### **Wayfinding Signage**

Kevin provided the group with an update on the work being done with Omloop to provide design services to plan and design an exterior signage and identify/branding program for Topsfield. Kevin is forming an advisory group to work with him and Omloop to review ideas and work done throughout the process. The group will be comprised of local businesses, town employees, a historic society member and 2 ECDC members. ECDC members will email Kevin if they are interested in participating.

### **ADJOURN**

At 8:29 PM, Janet Kmetz made a motion to adjourn. Zillie Bhujju seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with a roll call vote as follows:

Zillie Bhujju – Aye  
Rosalee Discipio – Aye  
Sarah Guido – Aye  
Kevin Harutunian – Aye  
Janet Kmetz - Aye  
Kim Philpot - Aye  
Alex Qirjazi – Aye  
Lynne Bermudez – Aye

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynne Bermudez – Chair

### **DOCUMENTS**

1. Agenda
2. Draft ECDC minutes of 3/9/2021

<p>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.</p>
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