



**Ridgefield
Economic &
Community
Development
Commission**

400 Main Street • Ridgefield, CT 06877•203.546.2547

Glori Norwitt - Chair
Geoffrey Morris – Secretary
Sean Dowd
Kay Gelfman
Jennifer Gioffre
Brittney Howell
Bob Knight
Mark Riser
Jonathan Winn

Rudy Marconi, First Selectman
ridgefieldct.com

**Approved Minutes
January 8, 2024 at 6:30pm
in-person in Town Hall Lower Level Conference Room**

In attendance Chair Glori Norwitt, Secretary Geoffrey Morris, Commissioners Sean Dowd, Kay Gelfman, Jennifer Gioffre, Brittney Howell (arrived 6:55pm), Mark Riser, and Jonathan Winn.

The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm.

Next meeting is February 5, 2024.

(Note that the Meeting Agenda stated that the next meeting is February 6, 2024, but that was incorrect.)

Winn motioned to approve December 2023 Minutes without changes; Riser seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Recap of Recent Events (Norwitt)

On December 6, 2023, the ECDC submitted its FY2025 Budget Request with four documents: (1) letter (2) pdf spreadsheet (3) CT Main Street Center's Management Assessment of Ridgefield (4) ECDC Annual Report previously submitted in September 2023. The ECDC will present its Budget Request to the BOS on Wednesday January 17 at 6:30pm. All Commissioners are asked to attend if possible.

Make Music Day is scheduled this year for Friday June 21. RIFF will be May 16-19.

Discussion of lack of transportation between downtown and the Branchville and Katonah train stations. Commissioner Gelfman will contact some livery companies for information.



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Ridgefield Pride is considering “safe space” stickers that say “All are Welcome” for local businesses. Discussion of training and/or statement for businesses.

Cultural District Award (Morris, Gelfman)

The ECDC received numerous nominations for the Cultural District Award, and thanks the Town residents for their participation. The Award is given to a person who has made an extraordinary contribution to the economic development of the Town by further some aspect of Ridgefield’s cultural district. The CD Award will be presented at the Ridgefield Art Council’s “Behind the Scenes” Awards on Thursday May 9.

The nominees, who each received more than one nomination, were: Daniela Sikora (the Artistic Director & Conductor of the Ridgefield Chorale), Barbara Manners (Selectperson, and Producer of CHIRP), and Gary & Susie Singer (involved in and supporting many local nonprofits, and also patrons). The Commissioners discussed the outstanding nominees. Winn moves that we vote on all three nominees, and choose the nominee who receives the most votes. Riser seconds. Six Commissioner majority chooses Barbara Manners as the Award recipient. Morris will inform her. Gelfman will prepare a Press Release.

Cultural District Sculpture (Morris, Gelfman)

Commissioners Gelfman and Norwitt will finalize the contract to be executed with artist Chris Curnan for the sculpture and get approval from the town attorney. Morris has submitted a sketch of the sculpture to a property owner on Main Street where we hope to place the sculpture.



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RHS Business Symposium (Dowd)

RHS Business teachers held their first planning meeting in December over zoom. Dowd will pitch for some students to create a Community Marketing plan.

Business Connections (Gioffre)

The Secretary of State's office recently shared info on how to access information on businesses in Ridgefield. An online search of their records show 2,861 active businesses in town. The listings include business name, principal, agent, address, date formed, business type (eg LLC), place of business formation, and date that their annual report is due. It does not include an email address, number of employees, category/type of business, and/or owner demographics. Riser, Gioffre and Winn to discuss further.

Gioffre and Riser to meet with a community that used the services of BluDot, and will share at the next meeting.

Business Programs (Riser)

Discussion of preparing a Press Release to let people know about the "Guide to Opening a Business in Ridgefield" on the ECDC website. Press Release could discuss broadly the recently updated ECDC website. Discussion of creating an ECDC LinkedIn profile which could be used to communicate with local businesses.

Update on Planning & Zoning (Gelfman)

Discussion of current topics including Terra Sole restaurant.



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Marketing (Gioffre, Morris, Howell)

Howell and Gioffre to connect with Western Ct Tourism group in order to promote The Taste of Ridgefield which is on February 4, and promote Ridgefield Restaurant Week which is February 5-11.

Working with Morris, Winn created eight designs for a “Big City Arts...Small Town Soul” marketing campaign for the town. The designs will be made into banners which can go on the lightposts in the downtown area and also Copps Hill area. Discussion of possible marketing campaign on MTA to support the Town and the Cultural District.

Commission Administration

Per the guidelines and regulations established in the Town’s Information and Guidelines for Boards, Committees, and Commissions, the Commissioners discussed the ECDC mission and goals, FOI requirements, Code of Ethics, the Town Charter, and public participation. 2024 meeting dates were voted on at December 2023 ECDC meeting. Norwitt will email links to the necessary information to the Commissioners.

Election of Officers

Discussion of Officer positions. Dowd moves that Norwitt continues as Chair of ECDC. Gioffre seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Norwitt moves that Morris continues as Secretary of ECDC. Gelfman seconds. Motion passes unanimously.



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Gioffre motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:13pm; Howell seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Norwitt.