

**DRAFT**  
**Economic Development Committee**  
**Wednesday, May 13, 2020**

**Present:** Kristina Dousharm (Chair), Amanda Bodian, Dan Budd, Chris Klose (Secretary), Marty Reilingh, Jacob Testa (*ex officio*), Vanessa Shafer, members; Robert McKeon (Red Hook Town Supervisor) Ed Blundell (Mayor of Red Hook), Kim McGrath (Executive Director, Red Hook Area Chamber of Commerce)

**Call to Order:** With a quorum present, Chair Dousharm called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

**Minutes:** On a motion by Dr. Reilingh and second by Dan Budd, the Minutes of the Meeting of May 6, 2020 were unanimously approved.

**Old Business:**

- **Coronavirus Update** – Chair Dousharm: Receiving many calls about people moving up to Red Hook on two levels: those who are already up here and those looking to come here from the City and surrounding counties who are working remotely and can continue to do so; quality of life, good schools, etc; Question: how to capitalize on this?

Ed: Already have Traditions and Anderson Commons underway, so there'll be at least 18 months for new residents for them. Current sales would just replace people; Marty: this is a regional phenomenon, so don't know how to specifically emphasize Red Hook (perhaps, Red Hook of the Hudson Valley); interest = high value properties; last year there was a surplus of 500K+ houses; Concerns: no high-speed cable in most of the town, plus the phone lines are old and not been upgraded, so maybe the EDC could lobby Spectrum to extend out from the village/other clusters of people to the more isolated. McKeon: working with Spectrum to build out the rest of the system but they are resistant; the cable companies don't feel the return is worth it to complete what they'd agreed to with NYS; some other communities are looking at municipal broadbands versus monopolies (have to be able to work from home). Discussion in re: Traditions and Anderson Commons; McKeon: anticipated migrations will be offset by the tenuous economic picture; if confidence builds, the real estate market should recover fairly quickly;

Dan: reach out to the Realtors to inform them of the businesses in Red Hook and give them a professional "service" package, including gift cards at a Welcome Wagon; comprehensive list of businesses (up to 240 businesses now); combine them with important phone numbers: community center, town and village contacts, police, fire, etc. Can be distributed by hard copy and electronically (set out by business category);

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want the businesses to have a plan for reopening safely to avoid a second surge of the virus; Dan: restaurants struggling to figure this out – shower curtains around tables, for example; we've been take out servicing for weeks now and are used to it and are worried about safely reopening to keep our staffs safe; each industry is helping, such as food service companies.

George: building a new normal.

Village passed a property tax 50/50 payment plan (July 1 and September 1) but bounded by NYS law which levies penalties on second payments; Village is working more and more remotely; floating idea of protected common outside meeting areas (Baright enthusiastic); good idea but restaurants still in limbo as to Phase 1 reopening because the virus metrics have ticked up; municipality can help but not directly support businesses; challenge is helping restaurants to increase their seats/meals turnover;

Dan: Taste Budd's holding at 40% but very stressful with a short staff to complete multiple orders on time; supply lines extremely limited is a big worry – gloves are in short supply, for example; business side – private people trying to set up a local funding system; RHR documentary out to encourage cooperation; averaging 80-100 meals delivered daily; trying to get RHCS, others for food service during the summer; if RHCS drops out of breakfast and lunch = big trouble; finances = 23K+ and 20K in other donations (got 8K from the County); SparkPlug Foundation giving 10K to RHR; spent 13K on food already; pay what you can feature is helping, too; 1,000 – 1,200 meals in the warehouse, so the goal is to maintain this supply reserve (RHCS opening their freezers); five restaurants preparing \$4/meals (at cost); RHR = \$500/day to keep going, so funding is critical; Ulster County doing better, including Fed and State services; USDA farms-to-family program has gone to big corporations (\$33 B nationwide). In addition to providing meals, RHR looking at how to transition to providing groceries from our local farms in a "local foods marketplace." Also, joining the Hudson Valley Food Bank; trying to build a wider, cooperative system.

Jacob: Bard is hopeful of having students on campus in the fall; McKeon: Trustee and Scholarship students coming back early August, so send projects they can help with (new and current students), such as street cleaning, other tasks; also, keeping an eye on the homeless and immigrant populations vis a vis privacy and meal pickups.

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**Next Meeting:** 8:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 20, 2020 via RingCentral.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Christopher Klose, Secretary