

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES of the Meeting of January 25, 2012

Present: Commissioners: Cyrus Settineri, Victor Ferrante, Robert Kapusta, John O'Neil, Robert Stanton, and Susan Patrick
Absent: Commissioner John DePalma
Advisor: Robert Gregory
Guest: Mayor Ben Blake
Press: Brian McCready, NH Register
Others: Steve Fournier and Jocelyn Mathiasen

I. Mr. Gregory called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.
Mr. Ferrante was introduced to the board as a new member.

II. Election of Chair

Mr. Gregory called for nominations. A motion was made by Mr. Kapusta and seconded by Mr. O'Neil for Mr. Settineri to serve as Chair. There being no other nominations Mr. Gregory proclaimed Mr. Settineri Chair by acclamation. Mr. Settineri assumed Chair of the meeting.

III. Election of Vice Chair

Mr. Settineri called for nominations for Vice Chair. A motion was made by Mr. Settineri and seconded by Mr. Stanton to have Mr. Kapusta serve as Vice Chair. There being no other nominations Mr. Settineri proclaimed Mr. Kapusta as Vice Chair.

IV. Approval of the Minutes of December 14, 2011.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of December 14, 2011.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

V. Public Comments – None

VI. Economic Development Activity

Mr. Gregory reported on the activity contained as an attachment to these minutes.

VII. Guest: Mayor Ben Blake

Mr. Settineri introduced the Mayor. The Mayor talked about his budget, contract negotiations and energy savings. He has met with the state delegation regarding the parking garage and legislation that would protect manufacturing jobs. The Mayor talked about economic development efforts. An alliance with Avalance with a hydrogen unit at the wastewater plant is possible.

Mayor Blake said he was interested in streamlining government. He discussed the time card system that was not being utilized. He also discussed energy savings with a fuel cell and solar energy.

Ms. Patrick asked about the EDC's role in economic development. The Mayor said the mission of the EDC should be the cheerleaders for a boost in the local economy. He asked the commission to identify tasks and he promised to work with them.

Mr. Settineri asked the Mayor for a "to do list" for the EDC. The Mayor turned the question around and asked the EDC for a list of things that they wanted to accomplish.

The question of Harrison's was raised. The Mayor said that the owners were negotiating with a couple of restaurants. He reiterated his interest in the City getting involved if nothing happened with its development.

Revaluation was a topic of discussion. Mr. Settineri asked about reval where commercial properties assessments went up and residential went down. Mayor Blake said he had not received any complaints. He said the recent reval had leveled the field from the last one where residential values escalated and commercial values remained steady.

Ms. Patrick brought up the recommendations from the EDC to the Plan of Conservation and Development. The Mayor said he would be happy to review them.

Mr. Kapusta noted the task force had recommended that control of Platt Tech remain as it is. The Mayor supported Platt Tech remaining under state control.

The Mayor welcomed any suggestions or comments on improving the economy from the commission and he looks forward to working with them.

VIII. Other Business

A. Broker's Showcase

The last week in April was discussed as a possible date. One New Haven Avenue was discussed as a possible location with Bob Smith as speaker and Jocelyn Mathiasen with an update of the land use process.

B. Plan of Conservation of Development (POCD)

Ms. Patrick presented a list of recommendations for the POCD for the commission to review. Mr. Settineri suggested she come to the MPI meeting with the list for discussion. The focus would be on tourism and anti-blight. Ms. Patrick said that the Eisenhower Park development should be reopened and the Audubon connection stressed. The recommendations will be on the next agenda.

C. Spotlight on Business

The idea of featuring a business that had done something to foster economic development was discussed. A short time could be dedicated to each meeting to promote the business. Mr. Stanton brought up his idea of 180-degree award for a business that had turned a business around. A joint meeting with the Milford Bar Association was discussed. Coordination with commercial brokers was discussed.

D. Thank You Meeting

Mr. Gregory suggested a thank you breakfast for Milford businesses.

E. Meeting Time of Day

The February meeting will be at noon on the 22nd. A decision will be made at what time of day the rest of the meetings in the year will be held.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Robert B. Gregory