

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of March 26, 2014

Present: Commissioners: Robert Kapusta, Chairman, John O'Neil, Vice Chair, John DePalma, Victor Ferrante, Greg Harla, and Michael Lynch

Advisor: Julie Nash

Absent: Suzanne Cahill, Kathy Alagno

Guest: Henry Jadach

Public: Alderman Phil Vetro, Alderman Dan German

Press: Brian McCready

- I. CALL TO ORDER - Chair Kapusta called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – A motion was made by John O'Neil and seconded by Michael Lynch to approve the minutes of February 5 as presented.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – As is the routine and the general rule, Chair Kapusta met with the Mayor and they discussed the format that the commission uses for the monthly meetings. The Mayor approved the format of the meetings and he also approved of the speaker program. The Mayor stated that the speakers demonstrate their value to the City and the efficiency of the Mayor's administration. John Ceruzzi is the potential next speaker for the commission.
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None
- V. CORRESPONDENCE – None
- VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AVTIVITY – Julie Nash stated that Adams Hometown Market and the gas station are undergoing some renovations. FCP Euro and Dragonfly Media are new to the Milford business community. Verizon Wireless in Milford is hiring over 100 people across Connecticut. The ShopRite project is moving along and they were recently granted a special variance at ZBA to add a gas station into the original plans. The gas station will be owned by

ShopRite. This project will be another three years before it is finalized. The SBA workshops that were run with the Chamber have been a huge success. They had over 120 participants through these various workshops. Milford Bank called and asked if they could be included as a panelist at one of the workshops. Ms. Nash stated that they are looking into creating some industry roundtables to help business owners run their businesses. She extended an invite to the commission to be a part of this process. The next SBA workshop coming up is on bidding through the Federal and State construction process. The Walnut Beach Enhancement committee is coming to the end of their revitalization funds. Julie explained that they are putting the final touches on this project. She also mentioned that the Milford 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is being planned for June 6 – June 15. June 9 will be celebrated as Business Day for the businesses in Milford at the Westfield Mall. A discussion continued regarding activities going on for the 375<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Kapusta welcomed the President of the Board of Aldermen, Phil Vetro, and was appreciative that he could join the EDC meeting. Phil stated that he sees the invite to the meeting and took advantage of the invite. In the absence of the Mayor, he works hand in hand regarding the subjects being discussed.

- VII. GUEST SPEAKER – HENRY JADACH – CHIEF OF MILFORD TRANSIT
- Chair Kapusta stated that Mr. Jadach is a former Transit District Director of Derby. He was the Assistant Public Works Director of the City of Derby. Mr. Jadach has a Master's Degree in Urban Studies from Southern Connecticut University and also a Master's of Science Degree with a minor in Political Science. Mr. Jadach commented that he has been with the City for 29 years. He stated that the transit district was formed in 1977 by the Board of Aldermen with legislation from the State of CT to form Transit Districts. Milford is a single town district as is Norwalk and Middletown. Milford operates a local fixed route bus service that goes from Milford to Norwalk that has been termed a jobs access service. Mr. Jadach stated that he has 10 coaches and 15 vans on the road and there will be 6 to 7 coaches a day and 11 to 13 vans a day. The bus basically runs along the post road from Milford to Norwalk and is predominantly a ride to work for entry level positions employees. The concept was to give the worker a single ride instead of making several transfers and it is one of the most successful routes in the State. He also has an AVA van service for the people over 60 years of age. It is a door to door service that operates in town and out of town for any purpose. This is a first come first serve basis. They also run a shuttle from North Milford to the train station from the Wheelers Farms Road to the commuter lots. They also operate the paid parking for the Metro North at the train

station and the two stations for going to New York. The Transit District also participates in all of the emergency and disaster planning when they occur. He has about 40 employees that work for him. They have a facility that is 15 years old at the end of Research Drive for maintenance, storage and administrative offices. Mr. Jadach handed out a pamphlet on projects that they are involved in. They just put electronic fare boxes in the buses, equipped the buses with a two-way radio system and a digital system, which also incorporates GPS within the radio system that gives reports with no monthly fees. They are in the midst of construction documents for a bus hub at the Westfield Mall. They are in the process of renovations on the Milford Transit with Federal funds. The City of Milford contributes \$350,000 to Milford Transit and the rest of the funding comes from the State of Connecticut. The total is \$3.5 million of funding. A discussion continued regarding employees and their job responsibilities to the Milford Transit and the many bus routes and hours that make up the schedule of transportation.

#### VIII. STANDING ITEMS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. DOWNTOWN PARKING & LIAISON TO P&Z BOARD – Mr. O’Neil commented that there is nothing new to report. He has communicated with the new Chair of P&Z. They are not addressing this issue as of yet.
- B. CHAMBER – No Report.
- C. 375TH ANNIVERSARY OF MILFORD – Ms. Nash stated that she covered the 375<sup>th</sup> previously in the meeting. Phil Vetro commented that they would like to join in and bring all of the old equipment and engines to be displayed for the community. They will be painting 99 fire hydrants, which represent the old stockade and a Pirate Day will continue during the day.
- D. PERMIT & LAND USE PROCESS REPORT – Mr. Ferrante stated that he spoke to a reasonably active developer in the City. He was of the opinion that not much has changed. His fixation is the personnel in the Department. Mr. Ferrante will be checking in again with Mr. Griffith. Chair Kapusta recommended that the commission invite contractors to the meeting for their opinion about the progress of the Department.
- E. VISITATION REPORT – Mr. DePalma commented that there was a building that was purchased on 50 Cherry Street by a well-known developer in town about five months ago and he did a magnificent remodeling job on the building. There are six apartments upstairs

and three professional offices on the first floor. This developer has doubled the value of the existing property.

IX. OLD BUSINESS – None

X. NEW BUSINESS - None

XI. FOR THE GOOD OF THE CITY – Chair Kapusta stated that he was pleased to welcome to the meeting the President of the Board of Aldermen, Phil Vetro, whose comments and participation contributed to the success of the meeting. Mr. DePalma commented that if this permitting process is cleared up, economically the commission will have the biggest impact on the City for the last ten years.

There being no further new business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m. A motion was made to end the meeting by John DePalma and seconded by Michael Lynch.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donna E. Holden