

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of May 27, 2015

Present: Commissioners: John O'Neil, Chairman, Greg Harla, Vice Chair, Suzanne Cahill, John DePalma, and Victor Ferrante

Advisors: Julie Nash

Absent: Kathy Alagno, Robert Kapusta, and Michael Lynch

Public: Arts Council – Paige Miglio; Joe Griffith – Permitting and Land Use

I. CALL TO ORDER - Chair O'Neil called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – A motion was made by Victor Ferrante and seconded by Greg Harla to approve the minutes of April 22, 2015.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Chair O'Neil stated that his goal is to work with all of the various City groups in a coordinated effort to accomplish certain objectives for the community. He has been talking with the Chamber of Commerce, DMBA and the Milford Arts Council. He is hoping to have Milford Progress join the next meeting. Chair O'Neil would like to acquire a list of items to be completed through the commission. He mentioned that he received a project list from the Mayor.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

V. CORRESPONDENCE – None

VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY – Report Attached. Ms. Nash stated that the City received a grant for two electrical vehicle charging stations and one will be installed at the library and this needs to be installed by August. Also one business that is recommended to visit is SurgiQuest.

VII. GUEST SPEAKER – WILL NICHOLAS – TESLA MOTORS – Will Nicholas and Nicole Griffin, representatives from Tesla Motors, commented that they were present at the EDC meeting to discuss who Tesla is and what products they are producing and how they would like to invest in Connecticut, specifically in Milford. They are in the

process of trying to pass legislation to be able to do business in Milford. Will has been with Tesla Motors for approximately 5 years and he and Nicole are part of the Government Relations Team for Tesla Motors. Tesla was founded twelve years ago, started in a garage with five men who were interested in producing electric vehicles that consumers would take interest in. The mission was to accelerate and transition the world to sustainable transportation that is fueled by hydra solar power not carbon burning fuel. The founder and CEO of Tesla Motors, Elon Musk, released a blog nine years ago stating how Tesla would launch their plan. They would launch a low volume, high priced sports car and now they are making efforts to produce the current car, which is the Model S, four-door, five passenger sedan. They built 33,000 last year and are looking to produce 50,000 for this year for global distribution. Tesla has over 80 stores in North America, stores all over Europe and in Asia and now in Australia. Tesla builds their cars domestically and then exports to the global markets.

Mr. Nicholas continued a discussion on how Tesla began the business. They acquired a factory facility in California, which was previously owned by Toyota and GM and they retrofitted to build the vehicle. Tesla developed welcoming educational stores for the consumer to educate them on the vehicle and test drive the vehicle. All of the Tesla vehicles are custom built. A discussion continued regarding the durability and efficiency of these vehicles. Tesla is operating in over 30 states and they are trying to pass the bill to operate as a dealership and they are working on growing their base. Tesla has been meeting with the dealerships in Milford and they are trying to gain support from Senators to be able to operate in Milford. Ms. Nash asked if the commission could provide assistance to Tesla in any other area besides a letter to Senator Slossberg to promote this idea for operation within the City of Milford. A motion was carried to send a letter to Senator Slossberg on behalf of Tesla Motors.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY WITH 1
ABSTENTION

VIII. STANDING ITEMS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. DOWNTOWN PARKING – No Report.

B. CHAMBER – No Report.

C. PERMIT & LAND USE - FERRANTE/GRIFFITH – Mr. Griffith stated that he has been with the City for two years and they have established changes within the departments. There has been positive feedback. He also mentioned that they lost the Assistant City Planner and they had to transfer work assignments and

responsibilities to other departments. This change assisted the office in looking at the workflow and how to make the work more efficient. Also another building official transferred to another position within the City in November. They have hired Louis Reszoly and this has been a positive change. Another major change that Mr. Griffith has implemented is to have the front desk staffed from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. This individual is there to help assist in directing each person in the right direction through the Planning & Zoning process. A discussion continued regarding speeding up the process within the City for the Planning & Zoning departments.

D. VISITATION REPORT – No Report.

E. TOURISM – No Report.

F. OTHER AREAS/PROJECTS TO BE ADDED

IX. EDC MISSION AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT/PROJECTS – Chair O’Neil suggested inviting key individuals from other commissions.

X. OLD BUSINESS – None.

XI. NEW BUSINESS – None.

XII. FOR THE GOOD OF THE CITY – None.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m. A motion was unanimously carried to finalize the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna E. Holden