

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of July 21, 2011

Present: Commissioners: Cyrus Settineri, John DePalma, John O'Neil, Robert Kapusta, Robert Stanton, and Susan Patrick

Absent: Commissioner Genevieve Salvatore

Advisors: Kathleen Alagno and Robert Gregory

Audience: Bob Joy and Vincent Averaimo

Press: Mark McCurley, New Haven Register and Brian Pounds, CT Post Photographer

I. Chairman Settineri called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

II. Public Comments – Vincent Averaimo stated that he was present to support Gene LaPorta. Mr. Averaimo thanked Mr. LaPorta for everything he has done and ended with the thought that the State and Platt, in particular, are losing out very largely by his retiring.

Mr. Settineri pointed out that this is formally the first time that anyone from the public has spoken in an EDC meeting.

III. Approval of the minutes of June 22, 2011. A motion was made by Robert Stanton and seconded by Robert Kapusta to approve the minutes as presented.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

IV. Communications – Kathy Alagno pointed out that there was a letter sent to Governor Malloy from Robert Kapusta regarding a motion unanimously adopted by MPI on June 28, 2011 opposing Governor Malloy's budget proposal to transfer control of Platt Tech from the State of Connecticut to the City of Milford. Chair Settineri asked everyone to take a look at the letter and it was so noted by the Commission.

V. Chair Settineri welcomed Gene LaPorta as the guest speaker complimenting him for bringing an environment to a technical school that is unheard of and unduplicated. He will be sadly

missed and will be speaking on the impending situation of the proposed change in financing of the technical schools.

Mr. LaPorta started handing out information regarding the School Performance Analysis for 2010-2011 to point out how successful Platt Tech has become. Mr. LaPorta calculates the performance of his students every marking period so he can keep track of exactly what is happening in the school. There is a school goal that every student is capable of making honors in several ways and, therefore, should be able to do that one or more marking periods every single year. They have been chasing that goal for the last five years and Platt Tech has finally broken the glass ceiling this year. The bottom line is that 73.2% of the students at Platt Tech made honors in one or more marking periods this year. Mr. LaPorta stated that he would put that statistic up against any high school anywhere. A discussion continued regarding the progress of students and efficiency of the faculty at Platt Tech.

In late January there was a discussion as to changing the nature of governments behind technical high schools. The Governor submitted a proposal of an education bill 6385 to ask that the entire technical high school system be dissolved and decentralized. At this point, Mr. LaPorta met with Mayor Richetelli and was told that the City does not have the funds to afford to run the school. In early March, 17 Towns and Cities testified before the education committee. On March 23rd, they had their trade and technical advisory committees, which are industry people who support the school, meet and spoke directly on the situation. Not long after that the issue was tabled. A Task Force would be assembled some time in May – they had a 60-day window to get their membership together and were required to report by January 5, 2012. A Task Force has not been formed and there have been no meetings.

Mr. LaPorta continued with a discussion on how this bill has affected the school system and how he has already received a schedule of staff reductions. Mr. LaPorta then handed out the exact specific instructions from the Superintendent. He was instructed to close sports, shut down all athletics and all camps. Mr. LaPorta summarized his visit by saying that this bill is very negative and not business friendly, not logical and not economically advisable. Platt Tech has placed so many students within the manufacturing community in Milford. The Committee stated that Mr. LaPorta is a tremendous loss to the Milford community.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Brokers Showcase

Ms. Alagno reported that the Governor would not book anything more than 30 days in advance. The suggestion was to go ahead and book the date and find a speaker and if the Governor can attend then there will be two speakers.

Mr. Settineri and the EDC Commission set the date for the Showcase on October 11 at 8 a.m. at the Milford Yacht Club. John O'Neil will send out the sponsor's letters. A discussion took place regarding having the two Mayoral candidates come and speak at the October meeting with Mr. Kapusta as moderator.

B. Building and Land Use – No Report

C. Business Visitation - Mr. DePalma stated that in August or September there would be a business visitation.

D. Business Survey – No Report

E. Plan of Conservation and Development – Susan Patrick spoke with Susan Shaw about the time schedule and she would need a report by the end of September or mid-October. One of her suggestions to have Alan Platus come to the EDC meeting and narrow down the focus of the EDC which should expand outside of the downtown business area because MPI is handling that. One of the focus areas should be tourism. Ms. Alagno said that Ginny Koslowski is a wealth of knowledge on tourism.

F. Economic Development Plan – No Report

G. Anti-Blight Program – Ms. Patrick received a report from Dr. McBride and she believes they can combine tourism and the anti-blight program to be a part of the EDC proposal. Dr. McBride's biggest issue is repeat offenders and he has no power to do anything about this offender. He suggested making a recommendation on chronic blight areas and ways to address it.

VII. Old Business

A. Rules of Procedure – Mr. Settineri suggested adding an attendance requirement and if not adhered to it leads to an

automatic resignation of this member. Mr. Gregory will check to see if the Committee can ask for a resignation if attendance is not adhered to.

- VIII. New Business – Mr. Kapusta made a motion and it was seconded by Mr. Settineri to send a letter to the Governor to endorse the Mayor's opposition of the transfer of control of Platt Tech to the City of Milford.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna E. Holden