

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of September 25, 2013

Present: Commissioners: Robert Kapusta, Chairman, John O'Neil, Vice Chair, Suzanne Cahill, John DePalma, Victor Ferrante, Greg Harla, and Michael Lynch
Advisors: Kathy Alagno and Julie Nash
Guest: Dr. Elizabeth Feser, Superintendent of Milford Schools

- I. Call to Order - Mr. Kapusta called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
- II. Minutes – A motion was made by John O'Neil and seconded by Suzanne Cahill to approve the minutes of August 28, 2013, as presented.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. Chairman's Report – As is the routine and the general rule, Chair Kapusta meets with the Mayor regarding the agenda a day prior to the EDC meeting. Mr. Kapusta also met with Jim Amann and the Economic Development Commission will appoint a representative to the Film Festival committee to monitor this effort, which will take place next September, 2014. John O'Neil so appointed. Mr. O'Neil pointed out that the main idea of this Film Festival committee originated from the Economic Development Commission. Mr. DePalma stated that John Ratzenberger, a working actor, is an honorary chair person to this committee. The 375th Anniversary of Milford was also a topic of discussion. Julie Nash has been appointed by the Mayor to be chairman of this committee. The Mayor stated that he would like Julie Nash to be the next Guest Speaker of the EDC and she has accepted. Mr. Kapusta also mentioned that the Westfield Group has sold seven of their properties for \$1.6 billion to Starwood Capital Group, LLC.
- IV. Public Comments – None
- V. Correspondence – There were two pieces of correspondence. A letter to Joseph Griffith thanking him for his presentation on August 28 and a letter to Dr. Feser to confirm her acceptance to be the next guest speaker on September 25 at the Economic Development Commission meeting.

VI. Economic Development Activity – None

- VII. Guest Speaker – Chair Kapusta discussed Dr. Feser’s background briefly. He stated that Dr. Feser’s background is extensive, she brings a wealth of experience to Milford and she has been with the City’s Board of Education for over two years. Dr. Feser has served as Superintendent of Public Schools in Windsor, Principal of Danbury High School, she received her B.A. from St. Xavier College in Chicago and has an extensive background of education.

Dr. Feser thanked Chair Kapusta for being invited to the meeting and proceeded to hand out her presentation to all committee members. Dr. Feser stated that she would be reporting on all test scores in Milford. She continued by saying that she was extremely disappointed in the decline of these test results but there will be a major shift in the system because CMT and CAPT testing is over and will not be given any longer. She also stated that she would give a quick overview of all testing and the scores. The State is in the process of establishing a new program for testing called Common Core State Standards, which is much more rigorous and aimed at students being college and career ready. There will be a field test this year, next year and in 2015. Dr. Feser reviewed the results of test scores in Milford and the comparison within the State. She did mention that our school system lost 2 ½ weeks because of the inclement weather which contributed to the results. Dr. Feser also praised their Advanced Placement curriculum. A discussion continued explaining the many aspects of the teaching environment and how to prepare the students for the new testing.

VIII. Standing Items/Committee Reports

- A. Downtown Parking & Liaison to P&Z Board – Mr. O’Neil just started this month on this topic. He spoke with Kathy Alagno regarding her work and she has done excellent work to identify places where citizens can park downtown that may not be obvious to anyone. Mr. O’Neil said he would send a copy of the list to everyone. There are a few glitches to this list because there are different criteria on different days. There are limitations with all different parking lots. The goal is to take the list and try to coordinate with the owners of these lots and see if they can simplify the criteria to make it more user-friendly. There may be more progress on getting a grant to build a parking garage behind the court house. Short term they are trying to make better use of the parking lots that are available.

B. Chamber – Ms. Alagno mentioned Restaurant Week and she said several restaurants approached her about the subject back in January. She sent out a call to all of the restaurants and asked the owners to come to a meeting if they had interest. Ms. Alagno stated that about 7 or 8 restaurants came to this meeting and that began the process and they joined forces with Priscilla Lynn and put all of the funding together. They have a huge advertising campaign going on for this special event. The learning curve will come with the restaurants. The restaurants are not prepared for the number of people that will be attending. Ms. Alagno recommended making reservations.

C. Visitation Report – Mr. DePalma said he recommends Pop's Restaurant and he runs his business the way a business should be run.

IX. Old Business – None

X. New Business – None

XI. FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY – Chair Kapusta stated that by hiring Dr. Feser the City of Milford has struck gold.

There being no further new business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna E. Holden