

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of October 23, 2013

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

Advisors: Julie Nash, Kathy Alagno not present

Absent: Greg Harla

Guest: Julie Nash – Director of Economic and Community Development

- 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 John DePalma to approve the minutes of September 25, 2013, as presented.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. Chairman's Report – As is the routine and the general rule, Chair Kapusta met with the Mayor regarding the agenda a day prior to the EDC meeting. Mr. Kapusta stated that the next EDC meeting will conflict with the Thanksgiving Day Holiday so the EDC meeting has been rescheduled for Wednesday, November 20. The Mayor stated that he would make every effort to be in attendance. The Mayor also commented that the Restaurant Week was well attended. It was discussed to invite Jill Dion as the next guest speaker. Chair Kapusta contacted Jill Dion and she said she would absolutely come and be a guest speaker but this particular date she could not because of a tutoring project with the City. Mayor Blake also mentioned that the Milford Pension Program is ranked in the top 5 of all of the cities in the State of Connecticut. The Mayor also visited the Tesla auto dealership and was extremely impressed with this operation. A motion was made by Suzanne Cahill and seconded by John O'Neil to move the EDC meeting to November 20, 2013.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- IV. Public Comments – None
- V. Correspondence – There were two pieces of correspondence. A letter to Dr. Elizabeth Feser thanking her for her presentation on September

25 and a Press Release regarding the presentation from Dr. Feser on the State of the Milford School System.

- VI. Economic Development Activity – Julie Nash commented that Tesla and Sonic are opening. Also Ms. Nash spoke with the DMBA in regards to the restaurant week and the restaurant owners agreed that it was a huge success and it was the best week that they have had in the entire year. There was a tremendous turnout and they are looking forward to doing the restaurant week again next year. Nello's has transferred ownership to a chef out of Bridgeport and Sophie Claire's is having a ribbon cutting. Ms. Nash also attended the Step Up conference which was hosted at the Boys and Girls Village by the Milford delegation. It was well attended by over 200 businesses around the area. This conference offered suggestions about what is available for small businesses and what kind of incentives they are offering. Ms. Nash also visited the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, which is another great tool for businesses in the area.
- VII. Guest Speaker – Chair Kapusta discussed Ms. Nash's background briefly. He stated that Ms. Nash graduated from Laurelton Hall, Villa Nova and graduated from Southern Connecticut Law School and she is a member of the Bar Association for the State of Connecticut. Ms. Nash was the Government Affairs Manager of the World Wrestling Entertainment Company and has had previous experience as a law clerk for Carol Wolven for Connecticut Superior Court. Ms. Nash also was a State Legislative Aid for the 19th District and campaign coordinator.

Julie continued stating that she is involved with the FEMA applications and the deadline for those to be completed is November 22. Ms. Nash planned the Ajax Missile Dedication with Eric Muth. She has been attending all of the pertinent meetings such as DMBA, MPI, Walnut Beach and the Chamber of Commerce. Kathy Alagno has asked Julie to serve on the Board of Directors for the Chamber. She has gone out and tried to meet and build relationships with members of the community. She stated that the energy enthusiasm in Milford businesses is fantastic. Ms. Nash believes that Arts and Economic Development come hand in hand and one of the best parts of Milford she believes is the Arts involvement in Milford.

Ms. Nash is in the process of meeting with Dr. Feser and Mike Cummings to become involved with the STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) program on the educational front. These programs have become a great economic and community development tool and the City of Milford in looking into getting more involved with the program. Julie also stated that Joe Griffith is a huge asset in streamlining processes. Julie believes her main goal is to attract youth to the City of Milford. There will be a huge wave of

job openings in Milford as major companies like U.I., Sikorsky and Yale have employees retiring who have been employed for over 30 years. Ms. Nash also believes building relationships with businesses in and around Milford is extremely important and to inform these companies that there are tons of incentives for the businesses that they are not aware of. Julie would like to come up with tasks for the EDC to concentrate on for the next year as their goals. She would like to develop Industry Business Alerts for all kinds of businesses and make sure everyone has information that is needed and she is also open for suggestions for any other ideas.

VIII. Standing Items/Committee Reports

- A. Downtown Parking & Liaison to P&Z Board – Mr. O’Neil attended the Planning and Zoning meeting and introduced himself to the Chairperson, Mark Bender and they agreed that they would meet in the future. Mr. O’Neil will meet with the police sergeant who is in charge of parking. A discussion continued regarding towing and the parking issues that exist with the parking lot behind Colony Grill.
- B. Chamber – No Report.
- C. Visitation Report – Mr. O’Neil stated that Jim Amann is the driving force for the Film Festival. John has been in touch with Jim and they are planning on meeting in the future.
- D. 375th Anniversary of Milford – Ms. Nash stated that they had the initial meeting and they are forming committees. The next meeting is on November 6 to plan a calendar of events. Ms. Cahill commented that the Mayor approved her to be the official guide for Milford.
- E. Permit & Land Use Process Report – Mr. Ferrante contacted Joe Griffith and he stated that his job right now is like turning a big ship. He is in the process of making everything more customer friendly and he plans on implementing new processes. Mr. Griffith is trying to have computer software more utilized.
- F. Visitation Report – Mr. DePalma visited Tesla Motors and took a test drive. The automobile is comparable to riding in a heavy vehicle and is extremely quiet. The car is totally electronic. They took it up on the highway and the car is very powerful and fast. The car is expensive and should bring diversified people to the area. The car can go 300 miles on one charge which costs \$10. In a car crash the car will not explode and it goes up to 130 mph. It is built in Fremont, CA. Charging stations for these vehicles will be stationed in many areas. The price range is \$67,000 to

\$115,000 – considered an upscale automobile. They are located on the Boston Post Road. A discussion continued on the pros and cons of this vehicle.

IX. Old Business – None

X. New Business – Ms. Cahill believes that the EDC should have someone from Walnut Beach or Devon business community come and speak. The businesses are reinvesting in their buildings. They have a program that consists of a pool of funds coming from the redevelopment of the condos and they will match 50% of the cost to improve the buildings to build better business. Mr. DePalma stated a problem on South Broad Street and the direction of the traffic clog. Mr. O'Neil will investigate this issue.

XI. FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY – Ms. Cahill reported that Brats On A Bun will be on NBC News on Wednesday, October 30 at noon. They are featuring the business in Downtown Milford.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Donna E. Holden