

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of March 27, 2013

Present: Commissioners: Robert Kapusta, Chairman, Suzanne Cahill,  
John DePalma, John O'Neil and Robert Stanton

Robert Gregory, Kathy Alagno, Advisors

Bryan Anderson, Aldermanic Liaison

Guest: Sheila Williams, Principal, Platt Tech

Sam Bergami, President of Alinabal

Press: Neil McNamara, New Haven Register

Absent: Victor Ferrante

- I. Call to Order - Mr. Kapusta called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
- II. Minutes – A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of February 27, 2013, as presented.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. Public Comments

Mr. Bergami, President of Alinabal, said that he supports the Tech school system as it is presently constituted and has hired numerous Platt Tech students in the past. He said Platt has a reputation as one of the best, if not the best, tech schools in the state.

- IV. Guest Speaker – Sheila Williams, Principal, Platt Tech

Ms. Williams said she taught high school English in Montville for 20 years, 1991-2004 was a consultant for the Teacher Writing Project, and 8 years before accepting the assignment at Platt, was at Wilbur Cross High School as an Assistant Principal. She has degrees from Southern Connecticut State University, Wesleyan, and Albertus Magnus.

She said her experience at Wilbur Cross prepared her for principalship at Platt. She complimented Gene Laporta for his past leadership and said that her leadership style was different than his. Ms. Williams said that she is new to the state tech system.

She said her goals are in line with the state direction of administrator and teacher evaluation being implemented. 40% of evaluation of

administrators and teachers will be based on student performance. Because of her work in New Haven, which was a model for the state, she is well aware of these criteria for evaluation. 5% of evaluation will be based on feedback from students and parents.

Some shops are under scrutiny...like culinary and hairdressing.

Milford is the fourth largest contributor of students to Platt Tech following Bridgeport, New Haven and West Haven.

Discussion was held on the culinary aspect of Platt and getting more of the general public to have lunch there. Ms. Williams is having discussions with the students about expanding their service. Chairman Kapusta suggested contacting service clubs to have lunch would be a good idea.

Security is being addressed at Platt. Ms. Williams said that there is an increased interest in providing more security. State Police were concerned that the flow of people into the building was so relaxed. The school is open because so many shops service the public. Principal Williams told the State Police that Platt will not become a fortress.

Ms. Williams said that they constantly listen to the trade groups so Platt can teach the students skills they will use. There will be a manufacturing expo next Friday so other students can see what is going on.

Mr. Bergami said that a few years ago he, Armand Cantafio and Lou D'Amato sponsored a team that won national honors in an AutoCad competition.

When asked about connections to the community Ms. Williams said she is learning about the community. She wants to put together an action plan to address the matter. She said there is a need to have the public see what skills the students have. Principal Williams invited all to come to Platt to see what was going on.

When asked about academic standards, Ms. Williams said that Platt Tech scores higher than the public high schools. Mr. Stanton said that a high number of graduates go on to higher education.

Ms. Williams said that as a state operation they must follow state rules. She reports to the State Supt. of Tech Schools under the Dept. of Education. She does not know of any control by the State Dept. of Labor. She has met with people at various colleges. Principal

Williams said she looks forward to working together with the Commission and other groups in the community.

V. Correspondence

A copy of a letter from the Mayor to Mr. Settineri was included. Mr. Kapusta entertained a motion to send a letter from the EDC to Mr. Settineri. Such a motion was made and seconded.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

VI. Economic Development Activity

Mr. Gregory noted that in addition to those items listed in the report the aftermath of Storm Sandy had an economic affect on the community. Many people are not living in their homes. The City is applying for funds to assist them in rebuilding. These funds cannot duplicate any other funding homeowners may have received.

He noted that Gustof Whitehead was proven to be the first to fly in a plane heavier than air. Potential for tourism exists.

Mr. Gregory said that Jim Amann is planning a film festival for next September. Next year is also the 375th anniversary of Milford's birth.

Mr. DePalma brought up the removal of the air traffic controllers from the smaller airports. He felt it would have a negative economic affect.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Platt Tech – Chairman Kapusta appointed Ms. Alagno to report each month.

B. Boardwalk Repairs – Mr. Stanton said that the target for the state for repair was Memorial Day. One of the problems was the shortage of materials. Ms. Cahill noted that Ms. Patrick has arranged for a carousel to operate at Walnut Beach this summer. There is a plan for a small food stand in the future.

C. Colony Grill – Mr. O'Neil said that they were planning a May opening.

D. MPI and Chamber – Ms. Alagno reported that Mr. Averaimo is working on Wayfinding Signs. She said that there is no funding for tourism. There is some talk that the metro chambers are seeking

funding for tourism for their regions. She said the chamber is working on a new website.

VIII. Old Business – None

IX. New Business

Alderman Anderson stressed the need for small business to apply for Sandy aid. He asked about the property that floods on North Street. Mr. Gregory said that a scaffolding business is operating there. Previous development for housing did not move forward.

Mr. DePalma questioned Ms. Alagno about tourism. She responded that Europeans and former residents look for shopping, beaches, historical areas, and Audubon.

Time of the meeting was discussed. It was decided to move the meetings to 12 noon.

X. For the Good of the Community

Chairman Kapusta said that our mission is to address anything that relates to economic development.

Discussion of what EDC should be doing. Ms. Alagno suggested an outside moderator be brought in and do it offsite. Mr. DePalma suggested we follow what the Mayor wants us to focus on.

Chairman Kapusta asked Ms. Alagno to report on MPI and the Milford Chamber at each meeting.

Mr. DePalma asked Ms. Alagno about the shops opening at night. Ms. Alagno said it is a regular matter of discussion at DMBA meetings. It is an individual choice.

Chief Mello will be asked as a speaker at the next meeting.

The business visitation will be activated again.

Ms. Alagno said Restaurant Week will be in September.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert B. Gregory