

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
MINUTES of the Meeting of July 22, 2020

*A virtual/telephonic meeting was held via Zoom as the result of publicly declared CoVID-19 state emergency necessitating remote meetings*

Commissioners present: Michael Crowley, Chairman; Ani Chaghatzbanian, Vice Chair; Michael Lynch; Albert Franke; Peter Cozzolino

Advisors present: Julie Nash; Paige Miglio; Pamela Staneski

Others present: Cassandra Schull

Commissioners not present: John DePalma; Jessica Stram

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 12:04pm

II. VOTING ITEMS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 24, 2020 REGULAR MEETING

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON JULY 20, 2020

Mr. Lynch and Mr. Franke made and seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Unanimously approved.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT & INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS – None

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

V. EDC PROJECT DISCUSSION

A. BUSINESS SURVEY DISCUSSION

Chairman Crowley opened discussion on the EDC business survey; a questionnaire EDC can send to businesses to see how they have been affected by CoVID-19 pandemic, find out what industries need, provide resources, and put together guidance based on responses. Director Nash stated the Reopen Milford Advisory Group is tasked with CoVID-19 response for various industries in Milford. She has questionnaires for businesses and suggested to combine them with Chamber surveys then split the responses among EDC commissioners to start outreach. Chairman Crowley stated the EDC business survey and economic injury worksheet look similar; he offered to combine with Chamber survey then distribute to Commissioners.

VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Director Nash reported on new business starts, unemployment data and real estate transactions. She commented about increase in home businesses resulting from layoffs and she is finding less workforce development issues than expected. She also said new event guidelines from Governor were issued.

VII. STANDING ITEMS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. TOURISM

Ms Miglio reported on Pantochino curbside plays, summer theater camp, virtual MAC offerings, MAC popup performances around the city and an outdoor event with local band. They are also collaborating with Pantochino on a Halloween event. She also reported for Ken Sterba from CT Post Mall who is working on using contained parking lot for drive-in theater and outdoor concerts.

Director Nash said she is working with Ms Schull on “A day out in Milford guide” with map to help visitors plan a day trip in Milford to discover what the city has to offer. Mr. Cozzolino suggested including the guide in the survey to drive people to different businesses in the city. Chairman Crowley said he will add it to the next draft of the survey.

B. CHAMBER

Ms Staneski reported on new memberships; attendance at P&Z meetings; promoting businesses on the Chamber Facebook page; Milford Restaurant Week and their Best of Milford contest. They are working with Milford Board of Education on reopening schools. She is in contact with businesses on reopening; she stated there is a need for childcare, marketing, and ease of regulations.

She commented about working with a Milford manufacturer to create a southwestern manufacturing association to assist manufacturers with workforce needs, supplies, sharing resources, advocating for policies, and manufacturing innovation funding. Chairman Crowley asked if they will be working jointly with New Haven Manufacturers Association. Ms Staneski said there is a need for centralized version of NHMA in the southwest region. Chairman Crowley commented on supply chain disruption and creating database of supplies for manufacturers to share.

C. PERMIT & LAND USE – None

D. VISITATION REPORTS

Discussion on visits to Tavern on Point and Founder’s House. Mr. Cozzolino reported on free oil change and filter for first responders at NAPA locations. Ms Staneski talked about hosting virtual wine tasting on the Chamber Facebook page.

E. REOPEN MILFORD ADVISORY GROUP

Mr. Franke, Mr. Cozzolino and Mr. Lynch said their industries are busy. Director Nash asked if they see this activity lasting a while. Mr. Lynch said his office has seen the increase since January due to lower interest rates. Mr. Franke reported only 10-20% of sales from out of town residents and said eviction stays were extended. Discussion on mortgage deferment program, mediation program, and foreclosure projections for the fall.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. DIGITAL BILLBOARD DISCUSSION – None

B. CT POST MALL DISCUSSION – None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

There will be no meeting in August

The next regular meeting is scheduled for September 23<sup>rd</sup>

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Diamond  
Recorder