

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
MINUTES of the Meeting of January 27, 2016

Present: Commissioners: John O'Neil, Chairman; Suzanne Cahill; John DePalma;  
Victor Ferrante; Michael Lynch; George Hunihan

Advisors: Julie Nash

Absent: Greg Harla, Kathy Alagno

- I. CALL TO ORDER/ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2016** - Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

Chairman O'Neil made a motion to nominate Greg Harla for Chairman and Michael Lynch for Vice Chairman. He commented that Mr. Harla has scheduling conflicts with upcoming EDC meetings and will continue to serve until April, at which time Mr. Harla will take over as Chairman. The motion was approved unanimously.

- II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** - A motion was made by Ms. Cahill and seconded by Mr. Lynch to approve the minutes of December 16, 2015.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

- III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS** - None

- IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None

- V. CORRESPONDENCE** - None

- VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY** - Director Nash reported they have been working on ideas for this summer's "River Street Wednesdays". It will start on June 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm in front of City Hall. Once the marketing is complete, she will distribute the list of activities to the Committee.

"Kick Off to Summer" will begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>, including fireworks on July 4<sup>th</sup>. She reported that more people attended the fireworks last year than expected and she is working on closing the street, blocking off parking and arranging more food trucks.

She is also arranging celebrations for the 100th Anniversary of City Hall. The first event will be on Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at City Hall starting at 5:30 pm. Activities will include an ice sculpture demonstration and a hypnotist. There will also be a canteen truck run by "The Dinosaurs", a group of retired firefighters, and a bonfire. She is also planning an additional event scheduled for June 17<sup>th</sup>.

Director Nash reported data on new business leases in Milford: Home Care Assistance, Caldwell & Walsh Building Construction Inc, CADO Modern

Furniture Company and Atlantic Diagnostic Laboratories. She added that the City of Milford's Economic and Community Development Department (ECDD) is working with Connecticut's Small Business Development Council (CTSBDC). Chris Pizarz of CTSBDC will be offering weekly office hours to assist small business owners; those meetings will be held by appointment at Parsons on Thursday's from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

She plans for the Micro-Enterprise Assistance Program to be finalized soon and anticipates a start date in February. CTSBDC will vet Milford businesses then pass those recommendations on to ECDD and the Committee for review. She also reported on the status of the M&M Farms building; that the new owners did not realize the extent of work needed and repairs are taking longer than expected. She added that there is a possible new tenant for the space previously occupied by Indigo restaurant and expected to learn about the details soon.

Ms. Cahill commented on the construction project taking place on the bridge near Patriot Bank; that nearby businesses are being affected because people are avoiding the area. Chairman O'Neil mentioned the lack of resources available to compensate those businesses and suggested reaching out to legislators in the area for assistance; Mr. DePalma offered to make those contacts. Director Nash added it is a State of CT project and she could make an inquiry to DOT for a timeline.

Mr. DePalma expressed concern over the approval of two marijuana dispensaries in Milford and a discussion ensued. Ms. Cahill commented there are laws in CT that allow for it, adding the other proposals were rejected because they were not vetted properly. Mr. Hunihan commented that one of the dispensaries is a medical facility. Director Nash stated community partners, such as Milford Prevention Council, are actively involved and will keep an eye on the dispensaries as they move forward.

## **VII. STANDING ITEMS/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. DOWNTOWN PARKING - Director Nash reported there will be 180 new parking spots on High Street within the next month that should help with parking issues downtown. She added that the Downtown River/High Streets Development Committee (DRHSDC) had their first meeting last week. The DRHSDC was formed to oversee development of the High and River Street properties including the parking project.

B. CHAMBER - Ms. Cahill reported that Kathy is retiring and the search for her replacement is ongoing. She suggested inviting Nell Moll to the EDC meetings to report on Chamber activities.

C. PERMIT & LAND USE - Mr. Ferrante will ask Joe Griffith to come to the next EDC meeting to give an update.

D. VISITATION REPORT - Mr. DePalma visited Oscar's in Woodmont where Sloppy Jose's used to be. He also commented that a prior restaurant owner in that area had concerns about the location being difficult to find.

E. TOURISM - None

**VIII. MILFORD MARKETING PLAN RFP REVIEW AND APPROVAL** - Director Nash reported she reached out to the Marketing Department at Sacred Heart University. They are in the beginning stages of working with Department Chair, Dr. Joshua Shuart, and have a tentative meeting set up for February 4<sup>th</sup> to go over the RFP.

**IX. EDC PROJECT DISCUSSION** - None

**X. OLD BUSINESS** - None

**XI. NEW BUSINESS** - Ms. Cahill reported she is moving out of town and the Committee will need to find a replacement for her.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 a.m. A motion was unanimously carried to finalize the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Diamond  
Recorder