## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Meeting of December 16, 2015

Present Commissioners: John O'Neil, Chairman; Greg Harla, Vice

Chairman; John DePalma; Michael Lynch; George Hunihan;

Julie Nash, Advisor; Sarah Ofosu-Ameyaw

Absent: Kathy Alagno, Suzanne Cahill, Victor Ferrante

**I. CALL TO ORDER** - Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

- **II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** The minutes of the November 18, 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.
- **III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT/INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS** Chairman O'Neil met with Mayor Blake to inform him that he is going to step aside as Chairman of the Commission. Elections will be held at the next EDC meeting in January and he recommended Greg Harla for the position.
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS None
- V. CORRESPONDENCE None
- VI. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY None
- VII. STANDING ITEMS/COMMITTEE REPORTS None
  - A. DOWNTOWN PARKING None
  - B. CHAMBER None
  - C. PERMIT & LAND USE None
  - D. VISITATION REPORT None
  - E. TOURISM None
- **VIII. MILFORD MARKETING PLAN RFP REVIEW AND APPROVAL** Director Nash reported that changes to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Milford Marketing Plan were suggested at the last meeting and provided an updated version. The Committee reviewed the updated RFP and discussion ensued.

Mr. DePalma asked about the estimated cost; that it might not be the right project for a large firm but someone who knows the business should review the proposal. He asked the Committee if someone local would be qualified for the job; someone with out-of-the-box marketing ideas. Mr. DePalma added that it might be a good project for college students.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Mr. DePalma's comment about finding someone local to review the RFP and reminded the Committee that, at the last meeting, Suzanne and Kathy mentioned they knew of marketing professionals in Milford

who would be interested in this project. He suggested finding out who they had in mind and was also in favor of reaching out to local colleges/universities. Chairman O'Neil stated the purpose of the billboard is to improve Milford's public image; he recommended interviewing local business owners to ask their opinion about this. Chairman O'Neil asked about a timetable and how to proceed since the plan was to have the billboard up by March.

Director Nash thought the budget was appropriate for a small firm or a large firm to take on pro bono. She also liked the idea of involving college students; she will contact the Mayor and, if approved, she will start reaching out to colleges. She thought about approaching CT Economic Resource Center, possibly inviting them to the next meeting and partnering with other organizations that have financial interests in Milford such as Milford Progress Inc. As far as the timetable, Director Nash thought of the Marketing Plan as a piecemeal project and the billboard is part of the first phase.

Mr. Harla commented that some aspects of the RFP could be costly such as copies to duplicate the submissions. He thought students could be involved in the RFP as class project; that the proposal can be submitted to the professor and could potentially be a half-semester project but they would need to get it out to the colleges before the Spring semester begins at the end of January.

Director O'Neil encouraged the Committee to continue to review the RFP. He commented that, considering budget constraints, the proposal will need refining and would be better suited as a college project or for someone local, suggesting Suzanne and Kathy can provide information on the people they had in mind. All agreed the proposal should be sent out with instructions to submit their feedback before the next meeting in January, at which time the Committee will review the responses. The election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman will also take place at the next meeting.

- IX. EDC Project Discussion None
- **X. OLD BUSINESS** None
- XI. **NEW BUSINESS** None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 a.m. A motion was unanimously carried to finalize the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Diamond Recorder