

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, October 15, 2019
7:30 a.m. – Room 207/209 – Town Hall

Commissioners Present:

David Pelletier, Derek Gromko, Don Dobbs, William Stanley, Steve Sidoruk,
Peter Nichols

Commissioners Absent:

Dan O'Connell

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests: Brian Bedard, Elim Park Baptist Home; Patti Flynn-Harris, Town Council
Liaison

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pelletier called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was determined.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting – July 16, 2019
Special Meeting – August 13, 2019

Mr. Nichols made a motion to accept the minutes for the regular meeting – July 16, 2019.

Mr. Stanley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Stanley made a motion to accept the minutes for the special meeting – August 13, 2019. Mr. Nichols seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

VII. Business

a) Discussion with Brian Bedard of Elim Park Baptist Home

Mr. Bedard was appointed president in October, 2017. He replaced Ron Dischinger who retired after 40 years. Elim Park is a continuous care retirement facility with 257 units (251 are currently occupied). The facility has independent living apartments, 90 skilled beds, and 42 rest home beds. It is a vibrant community that includes Starbucks Coffee, an in-house bakery, fitness center, and a state of the art theater for performing arts. Mr. Bedard oversees Elim Park's campus, strategic planning, and facilitates the home's mission of honoring God.

Mr. Bedard has over 25 years of experience in the senior living health care industry. He began his career after college working in youth services for the Town of Cheshire. He was the program supervisor at Cheshire High School's Student Center. He said that he has come full circle and is thrilled to be back in Cheshire working at Elim Park. Mr. Bedard is a graduate of Quinnipiac University and is a licensed Nursing Home Administrator.

Mr. Bedard stated that the increase in the hourly minimum wage from \$11.00/hour to \$15.00/hour approved by the state will present challenges in hiring employees. Currently, health care employees at Elim Park receive \$14.00/hour standard and \$15.00/hour with experience.

Elim Park is currently working with architects to build a 30 bed memory section adjacent to the wellness and nursing areas.

A culinary program was discussed with the possibility of getting high school students to participate. Mr. Nichols will reach out to Mr. Bedard regarding this.

Mr. Bedard and Mr. Kimball have spoken about continuing to build positive relationships. Elim Park serves the community in more ways than providing healthcare. It reaches out to clergy and special needs children within the schools.

b) Speakers for Future Meetings

Liz White Notarangelo, president and publisher of the Cheshire Herald, will be the guest speaker at the meeting in November. In addition, Tony Oh, president of Accel International has expressed interest in attending a future meeting and has volunteered to give a tour of the new facility. Accel International is in the former Alexion building.

c) Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The appointment of the TIF management committee is on the town council's meeting agenda for October 15, 2019. According to the master plan, the committee should have two EDC commissioners as members. Mr. Sitko has included drafts of the policy for TIF Credit Enhancement Agreements and the CEA application as part of today's meeting package. The drafts are being reviewed by the town attorney and once completed will be posted on the town's website. The management committee's responsibilities will be to educate the public about TIF and review CEAs. Some townspeople may not understand the concept and think that it is a way to raise taxes.

d) Status of Conveyance of State-Owned Land in Interchange Zone

Mr. Sitko spoke with Melanie Fadoir in the DOT's rights of way unit. She said that the DOT is doing a "concurrence review" of the state's IC Zone property. DOT is determining the parcel to be conveyed to the town and receiving comments from state departments that are interested in the conveyance. Once the reviews are completed, the town will receive a map and deed. This will be in a few months as Ms. Fadoir's department is short staffed and involved with other conveyances. Mr. Sitko will check in with Ms. Fadoir and report back to the commission.

e) Liaison Reports

As noted earlier, Ms. Flynn-Harris stated that a town council meeting is scheduled this evening and that the appointment of the TIF management committee will be discussed.

f) Coordinator's Report

- Bovano Industries – Mr. Flood of Bovano Industries emailed his concern about his tax bill and not being notified of a 22% increase in property taxes.

- Viron Rondo Osteria – Has completed the expansion of a new outdoor space which includes a patio, new indoor bar and dining room, and a 3,000 sq. ft. subterranean kitchen. This will allow the restaurant to host more functions – i.e., parties, small weddings, etc. Renovations are scheduled to be completed by October 31, 2019.
- Bergamo Martial Arts – Plans to move from its current location at 460 West Main Street to a new facility at 266 Sandbank Road. Ralph Bergamo, the owner, said that much more space is needed. The additional space will provide more focus on martial arts. The building is 2,800 sq. ft.. Mr. Bergamo is planning a grand opening on January 1, 2020.
- EDAC and Hanwha Aerospace – EDAC has been purchased by Hanwha Aerospace, a South Korean aerospace firm for \$300 million. Hanwha’s CEO, Hyunwoo Shin, said that the company is strategically placed in proximity of its customers and supply chain networks.
- Macy’s – A portion of Macy’s logistics operation in South Windsor will relocate to a new facility in Ohio. Where 78 jobs will be cut, it will not impact current operations in Cheshire.
- Ball & Socket Arts – An “Evening in White” dinner event was held on August 22, 2019. Money raised will be used to restore windows in the building off of Willow Street. Progress is being made with the remediation work through the receipt of a state grant of \$750,000.
- NW Quadrant of Interchange Zone - The town’s Planning and Zoning Commission has approved subdivision plans for development in the NW quadrant of the interchange zone. The commission voted in favor of a application submitted by Miller Napolitano Wolff LLC and Tri-Star Development LLC to convert 1953 to 2037 Highland Ave. into eight new lots varying in size from 1.6 to 46.8 acres. A conceptual design for the properties includes a convenience store, restaurant, retail spaces, medical offices, a fitness and health club, residential housing, assisted living and active adult units, etc.
- Cheshire 325th – The Cheshire Herald has been promoting Cheshire’s 325th Anniversary and a holiday ornament will be sold embossed with the 325th logo.

- Incentive Policy – The incentive policy expires in 2020. In the past, the EDC recommended that the policy and practice of granting incentives be reviewed every three years. The Cheshire Town Council last approved renewal of the policy on June 27, 2017.
- Hartford HealthCare – Hartford HealthCare will be fully occupied soon. Some comments have been made about the scale of the building. An opinion in a Cheshire Herald article mentioned that the town should not be giving tax breaks to Cheshire Medical Associates LLC. Hartford HealthCare is the tenant. It will receive a real property tax incentive for seven years.
- Arby's site - There has been interest in the "Arby's" site, including, a pop-up art gallery.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Pelletier adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary, EDC