

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, November 19, 2019
7:30 a.m. – Room 210 – Town Hall

Commissioners Present:

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

Absent:

David Pelletier, Dan O'Connell

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Guests: Liz White Notarangelo, RJ Media Group – Cheshire Herald

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Stanley 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 – October 15, 2019

Mr. Dobbs made a motion to accept minutes for regular meeting – October 15, 2019. Mr. Sidoruk seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

VII. Business

a) Discussion with Liz White Notarangelo of RJ Media Group – Cheshire Herald

Ms. White Notarangelo became president and publisher of the Cheshire Herald in May 2018. She was appointed publisher of the Record-Journal effective January 1, 2020. She is the fifth generation of publishers from the White family to lead the Record-Journal over its 127 years in business. RJ Media publishes the Record-Journal daily newspaper, 6 weekly community newspapers, and a website. They are proud to be an award-winning media company providing local content and marketing solutions.

Mr. Eliot White, current Record-Journal publisher, stated that “this is a major step in our business and family succession plan, and that Liz has a strong combination of education, experience and industry knowledge that she has developed over the last 18 years.” Mr. White will continue as president of the Record-Journal, chairman of the board, and will have operational oversight of the news and finance departments. Ms. White Notarangelo will be responsible for all other areas of the company and will continue as publisher of the Cheshire Herald and managing director of Homebase Digital. She is honored to carry on the family tradition and this is what she has always wanted to do. She loves working on strategies for the company’s future. Ms. White Notarangelo is also the chairwoman of the Local Media Association’s foundation board, a prominent national industry organization. She works directly with industry leaders in the evolving media industry.

Part of the company’s challenge is to find the best ideas to sustain business models for journalism which are collaborative across the industry. This includes digital media, targeted display ads, and overall solutions across product lines.

Last spring, the Cheshire Herald moved its offices from the south end of Cheshire to 195 South Main Street. The offices are located in the same building as the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. Walk-in traffic is welcomed. The Town of Cheshire appreciates that the Cheshire Herald has remained in the community and its production of the Cheshire 325th Anniversary Commemorative Magazine.

b) Speakers for Future Meetings

Tony Oh, president of Accel International, will be invited to speak at an upcoming meeting. Accel International is in the former Alexion building. Please contact Mr. Sitko with suggestions for future guest speakers.

c) Incentive Policy

Mr. Sitko discussed two incentive requests with the town council during executive session. During these discussions, he was asked to provide comparative information on incentive offerings from area municipalities. This information is included in today's package and was reviewed by the council during its meeting on November 18, 2019. The current policy, which was extended for three years, expires on June 30, 2020. Mr. Sitko would like to begin working with a subcommittee to review this policy. Through the years the subcommittee provides valuable input recommending whether the EDC policy should be renewed or modified. Recommendations are forwarded to the town council for review.

d) Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Town Attorney, Al Smith, has completed his review of the TIF policy and application. Included in today's package are two documents which include and address the town attorney's edits and comments.

The appointment of the TIF Management Committee took place last month. Committee members are: Commissioners Gromko and Dobbs, Town Council Member Slocum, Doug Johnson, president of Marion Manufacturing, the town assessor, town planner, and town economic development coordinator. It is anticipated that the initial meeting will be scheduled in December.

e) Liaison Reports

There was no liaison report. Ms. Flynn-Harris was not re-elected to the town council. Mr. Stanley and the EDC would like to formally thank and recognize her.

f) Coordinator's Report

- An incentive request proposed for 75,000 SF medical office building at 759 West Johnson Avenue was received from Cheshire Surgery Center Realty, LLC. The project is proposed for a 27-acre site. A field trip to the property is scheduled on Saturday, November 23, 2019.
- An incentive request was received from 1008 South Main Street, LLC (J. Ricci) for 3,500 SF office building.
- Hartford HealthCare is open for business at 1008 South Main Street. It offers physician and laboratory services, rehabilitation, and imaging. It is part of a

plan to expand Hartford HealthCare's presence and services in Cheshire and surrounding towns.

- Viron Rondo Osteria renovations are near completion with a new dining room, chandelier, and bar set to open at the end of the month. The owner wants customers to be treated as guests and to experiences that tantalize senses not just taste buds. Every renovation aspect is about utility and beauty. The restaurant has remained open during this challenging and artisanal work. It has been an undertaking of approximately \$7 million.
- Fuoco Apizza will be opening at 461 West Main Street which was the former location of Lora's Italian Deli. The restaurant will specialize in New Haven coal-fired version pizza.
- Ball & Socket Arts – Fundraising efforts are ongoing for Ball & Socket Arts. The remediation funded by a state grant for \$750,000 is nearing completion.
- CK Greenhouses will utilize H2A labor because it cannot hire enough people willing and able to produce and harvest its crops. H2A is a Federal Program that allows U.S. Employers or Agents who meet specific regulatory requirements to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary agricultural jobs. Workers and be in the United States for up to 9 months and are required to return home for a minimum of 3 months each year. These workers will be utilized at CK Greenhouses for 6-9 months dictated by weather and how quickly crops can be produced, harvested and shipped. Workers will be housed at 344 E. Johnson Avenue and will travel by 3rd party bus to work locations at Schoolhouse Road, McCausland Court, and E. Johnson Avenue. Housing will be monitored and inspected by the CT Department of Labor and will be fit out at or above the OSHA standard for Migrant Labor Housing.

X. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted:

Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary, EDC

