

**CHESHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2015 AT 7:30 A.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ROOM 207/209**

Commissioners Present:

Chairman David Pelletier, Derek Gromko, Dan O'Connell, Steve Sidoruk, William Stanley and Ray Voelker

Commissioner Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator; Leslie Paier, Head of the Business Department at Cheshire High School (departed at 8:10 am)

Others Present:

None

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

It was determined that a quorum was present.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting October 20, 2015

MOTION by Mr. O'Connell that the minutes from the October 20, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted as submitted. **SECONDED** by Mr. Sidoruk.

The motion passed unanimously by all present.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications directly to the Economic Development Commission.

VIII. BUSINESS

A) Discussion with Leslie Paier, Head of Business Department at Cheshire High School

Chairman Pelletier welcomed Ms. Paier to the Economic Development Commission. He stated that she was going to talk to the Commission about the programs at Cheshire High School and see if the Commission can help the students further their education and career paths with the businesses in Cheshire. Chairman Pelletier also noted that Ms. Paier is also very active with the School / Business Partnership program.

Ms. Paier asked members of the Commission to identify the businesses they work with or have been affiliated with. She shared with the Commission her background, which prior to teaching was in the investment business.

Ms. Paier explained that the overall mission of the Business Department at Cheshire High School is to help the students connect what they are learning in their different business classes with the real world. She reviewed the list of classes that are currently offered and compared them to the classes that were offered in 1980. The School of Business is currently in the process of getting an Advance Placement Economics class and ECE (Early College Credit for UConn) Economics course.

Chairman Pelletier asked if the Personal Finance class is a requirement for all students and Ms. Paier replied that it is now, either Personal Finance or Financial Literacy is a required class for graduation. The Investment and Economics classes really talk about the cause of the Financial Crisis along with Mortgage-Back Securities Crisis.

There was discussion about not having to spend a large amount of money for continuing education after high school in order to make a very nice, comfortable living for a student's future. There was also discussion on public speaking and written communication skills that need to be developed by students to make the bridge to their future, especially with the influence that texting is having on these skills.

Ms. Paier talked about some of the extra-curricular activities that are happening at Cheshire High School. Including a Mock Trial Club, which connects with the law class, Future Business Leaders of America Club that participates in statewide events each year in areas such as an Accounting Testing, Business Plan Preparation, Public Speaking and Impromptu Speaking. Cheshire High School is in the process of putting together DECCA (an organization related to marketing, advertising and sales).

Ms. Paier talked about connections the Cheshire High School Business Department would like to make. Some of the best Professional Development days they have had are when the Business Department goes out to visit Connecticut businesses. Another connection is with the students doing job shadowing, which they do in February each year or with internships, which happen in the Fall and Spring. A third connection is for local businesses looking for part time work from the students. Ms. Paier also suggested that if any of the Commissioners wanted to come in to speak to the students, which could be arranged too. Mr. Sitko suggested that if there are some days that he could help to arrange visits for the students to local businesses, he would be very happy to help arrange it.

Chairman Pelletier thanked Ms. Paier for coming to speak with the Economic Development Commission this morning. He asked Ms. Paier if she would ask as a liaison between the schools and this Commission to report every 2-3 months as to what is happening at the schools and how this Commission could better support the Business Department's efforts. Ms. Paier stated that she would be happy do this going forward.

B) Speakers for Future Meetings

Commissioners suggested inviting a local grower, UTC Aerospace, HD Segur Insurance and Peter Goia of CBIA to future meetings of the Economic Development Commission. Mr. Sitko stated that he would try a local grower for the next Commission meeting.

C) Economic Analysis

Chairman Pelletier stated that he, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Gromko and Mr. Sitko met last Friday to work on the Economic Analysis project for Cheshire, noting that Economic Development of Cheshire was a hot button topic for many of the candidates of the most recent elections. During this meeting the group talked about the Incentive Policy for Cheshire, which Mr. Sitko included a copy of the current policy in this meeting's packet along with the incentives that have been extended out to some of the businesses in Town.

Mr. Gromko and Mr. O'Connell both stated that they agreed that a solid Incentive Policy is an important step in Cheshire's Economic Development future. Chairman Pelletier suggested going to the Town Council in January for a discussion on Cheshire's Economic Development's future direction. He would appreciate when this is scheduled, that as many of the Commission members that can make the meeting come to support the discussion.

D) Incentive Policy

Information on the current Incentive Policy was included in this meeting's packet for Commissioners to review for future discussion.

E) Liaison Reports

There were no liaisons present at this meeting. Mr. Sitko talked about the importance of having liaisons present as well as their role in reporting back on the activities of the Economic Development Commission to the liaison's organization.

F) Coordinator's Report

Mr. Sitko informed the Commissioners that he has received the first application for the C-PACE Program from Paws Pet Resort at 312 East Johnson Avenue. They will be financing \$105,000 for solar improvements through C-PACE.

Mr. Sitko reported that Macy's has been approved by the Town Council for a 45% tax break, based on the State Statue, for a fuel cell that was installed at their Knotter Drive location in 2013. He added that Macy's continues to add jobs and personal property each year.

Ball & Socket Arts continues to move forward with their Data Gap Analysis for remediation of the West Main Street property. Mr. Sitko attended a meeting recently in which the State talked about helping with funding for the remediation of that property.

Marbridge Retirement Center has submitted revised plans for a 12,000 square foot expansion of their property on West Main Street near Carter Lane; this is all taxable property.

PowerStation has an application for a 3800 square foot addition to their property at the former Jordan Caters location on Highland Avenue.

Mr. Sitko talked about the property at 36 Wallingford Road, which an attorney is looking to move into and will have to make arrangements for leasing parking spaces from the Town as a sub-lease of the 50 spaces the Town leases from the Cheshire Grange.

1154 Highland Avenue was sold for \$ 2.3 million to a group out of Newington and St. Mary's Urgent Care Clinic will be leasing between 3,500 and 7,000 square feet.

Lane Construction was merged with an Italian company and Mr. Sitko has been told there will be no change in the company, which currently employees about 120 people in Cheshire.

There are a number of articles included in this meeting's packet including one on Connecticut Cities and Growth.

G) Other

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pelletier adjourned the November 17th meeting of the Economic Development Commission at 8:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary