I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pelletier called the meeting to order at 7:32 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 – April 20, 2010 Regular Meeting

MOTION by Mr. Stanley that the minutes from the April 20, 2010 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted as presented. SECONDED by Mr. Miller.
VOTE: In Favor – Miller, Pelletier, Sepp and Stanley  
               Opposed – None

The motion passed 4 – 0.

MOTION by Mr. Stanley that the minutes from the May 18, 2010 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Commission be accepted as presented. SECONDED by Mr. Miller.

VOTE: In Favor – Miller, Pelletier, Sepp and Stanley  
               Opposed – None

The motion passed 4 – 0.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

VII. BUSINESS

A) Discussion with Ye Old Station Auto Body

Chairman Pelletier and Mr. Sitko welcomed John Mazzella, President of Ye Old Station Auto Body who was present to talk with the Cheshire Economic Development Commission this morning. Mr. Mazzella stated that Ye Old Station Auto Body will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. The business was started by his father in 1960 at the old railroad station on West Main Street. Mr. Mazzella talked about how he came about purchasing the former Westbrook Nursery property on Waterbury Road and his hopes of bringing more people to that end of Town. It has taken him 5 years since he started the approvals and now the only items remaining are the plantings for the front of the property on Waterbury Road. The auto body shop is now located on Waterbury Road and the original location of Ye Old Station Auto Body on West Main Street has been turned into a service station for such things as brakes, oil changes and tune ups, which is something they hadn’t done before.

Mr. Mazzella commented when asked that he did not hire any new employees for the new Auto Body location, it is the same number as before; 5 guys on the floor, 1 guy that is responsible for the grounds and a part time office worker. The new location is 3 times the size of the original location and Mr. Mazzella invited all the Commissioners to stop by to see the new facility. Mr. Sitko commented that the facility really is a state of the art place.
Mr. Miller asked how many storefronts were out in front on the Waterbury Road property? Mr. Mazzella replied that there are 3 on the main level, upstairs is an office for an electrical engineer and a personal training facility. Mr. Mazzella stated that he is looking to rent out the “old drywall building” behind Rossini’s Restaurant, next to his West Main Street property.

Mr. Miller asked how big the whole facility is on Waterbury Road and Mr. Mazzella replied 10,400 square feet for the space occupied by Ye Old Station Auto Body. Mr. Sitko noted that the retail building is an additional 8,500 square feet. Mr. Mazzella commented that the biggest “bear” of the whole project was the parking lot. Mr. Miller asked if there were any contamination issues with the property after Mr. Mazzella purchased the property on Waterbury Road. Aside from the contamination from the run off coming from the Town Dump, there were two small spots in the barn from fertilizer and where the tractor had been parked for years, plus two other small spots on the property, but no big surprises.

Mr. Mazzella commented that he has about another 2 acres in the back of the Waterbury Road property that he was thinking about making a farm on. He also noted that he is going to be re-doing the signage for the Waterbury Road property. Mr. Mazzella stated that the State of Connecticut owns 20 feet from the white line and requires that the signage meet “breakaway” sign regulations. If he wanted to install his sign on the State property, he would have to pay $40.00 a month to lease the land and it would be required to be a breakaway sign.

Mr. Mazzella commented that the Fire Department gave him the most trouble on this project. With the separate entrance and exit on the property, it means there has to be a looped fire system, which cost him an additional $100,000 because it needed to be 8 inches and an engineered system. There are 2 hydrants located on the property. If he had known this, he would have designed the layout differently.

When asked how difficult it is to be in the Auto Body business, with all the EPA regulations, Mr. Mazzella stated that Ye Old Station Auto Body became “green” in a lot of different ways when he built the new facility. The biggest concern is hazardous waste removal. The spray booth is great and was created to be a safe environment for its users.

Mr. Mazzella commented that the first year in the new location, he had $4,000 more in sales than the year before in the original location.

Chairman Pelletier thanked Mr. Mazzella for attending this morning’s Economic Development Commission meeting.

B) Meetings with Cheshire companies

Mr. Sitko suggested inviting Jordan Caterers to the September 2010 Economic Development Commission meeting. Another suggestion for a future meeting was Campion Ambulance.
C) Pratt & Whitney

Mr. Sitko reported that Pratt & Whitney’s District Court appeal as to when they can start moving work out of Connecticut began on June 9th. If Pratt & Whitney prevails, they can start shutting down their Cheshire and East Hartford facilities before December 2010, which is when their union contract expires. If they loose the appeal, Pratt & Whitney expect to close these facilities early next year. If this does occur, they have said they expect to be out of the Cheshire facility by July 2011. One way or another, the facility looks like it will be closing, it’s just a matter of how quickly.

Mr. Sitko also stated that he has talked with U.S.I. regarding the disposition of the Pratt & Whitney property in Cheshire. They are located on Knotter Drive in a 294,000 square foot building, which is considered modern and very clean so it will show well to prospective new tenants.

Mr. Sitko talked about a Legislative Act that was possibly passed concerning Connecticut’s Competitiveness in the aerospace and defense industries, similar to the Enterprise Zone, which appears would apply only to this Knotter Drive location in Cheshire and the Pratt & Whitney property in East Hartford. Mr. Sitko will be researching this more and doing an analysis of the Legislation for the next Economic Development Commission Incentive Committee meeting.

D) Focus Group Meetings

Mr. Sitko stated that he has arranged for a Focus Group meeting for the local manufacturers for June 24th at 8 a.m. He reminded Commissioners that not more than 3 members should attend this Focus Group meeting; otherwise it will have to be posted as an Economic Development Commission meeting.

E) West Main Street Commercial Area Streetscape Improvements Project Update

Mr. Sitko reported that a pre-construction meeting has been scheduled for June 23rd with GPIC and Sons to review the construction schedule for the West Main Street Streetscape phase 1 project. The next West Main Street Commercial Area Streetscape Subcommittee meeting has been scheduled for June 25th.

Chairman Pelletier asked when Yankee Gas will be in this area of West Main Street for their expansion project? Mr. Sitko stated that he needed to verify the time frame.

F) EDC Representative to Town Beautification Committee

An Economic Development Commission representative to the Town Beautification Committee is still needed, anyone interested should notify Chairman Pelletier or Mr. Sitko. The Town Beautification Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 a.m.
G) W/S Development Project - Update

Mr. Sitko stated that there is a request for a 1-year extension from W/S Development that has been submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission. There was a zone text amendment approved recently by the Planning and Zoning Commission that would prohibit an extension on projects past the 10-year mark.

Chairman Pelletier asked if Mr. Sitko had a feel for if there is any interest from potential tenants? Mr. Sitko stated that W/S Development has told the Town that there is interest but retailers are slow to sign up for much of anything because of the economy.

H) Summer Meeting Schedule

Chairman Pelletier suggested holding the July 2010 Economic Development Commission meeting as scheduled and suspending the August 2010 scheduled meeting, unless something urgent comes up.

I) Regional Economic Development Districts

Mr. Sitko stated that this is the latest attempt by the State of Connecticut to get Regional Economic Development Districts established. A memo from the State Commissioner was included in this meeting’s packet describing the proposed Regional Economic Development Districts purpose. Commissioner McDonald is proposing 8 districts across the State, made up of no fewer than 20 towns.

J) Liaison Reports

Mr. DeJongh commented that the Inland / Wetland Commission remains quiet.

Mr. Lesky commented that the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Golf Tournament is coming up and there still may be spots available. Also, Leadership Cheshire will be starting up soon with the help of Quinnipiac University. If anyone knows someone that would be interested in attending, they should contact the Chamber.

Mr. Schrumm, Town Council Liaison noted that the Capital Budget season is fast approaching in July and August. The Waste Water Treatment Plant facility plan that was sent to the State DEP 2 years ago is back on track. A public hearing is scheduled for June 23rd; once that is done the design work can start and go to construction. The price has gone from $35 million originally to $31 million at their last meeting with a 20% Grant from the State.
Mr. Schrumm would like to get the expansion of the Linear Trail towards Southington back on the list for future Town projects. He also reminded everyone that the Community Pool referendum vote is scheduled for June 22nd at Cheshire High School.

K) Coordinator's Report

The Incentive Committee is made up of Mr. Pelletier, Mr. Stanley and Mr. Miller; Mr. Sitko looks forward to a meeting some time this Summer.

The Business Appreciation Day Committee is made up Mr. Pelletier, Ms. Campo and Mr. DeJongh. Mr. Sitko has talked with Mr. Dill at the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce about when he would prefer to put together the event, this Fall or in the Spring. Mr. Dill has said that he would prefer the Spring. Mr. Sitko would like to use Mr. Hostage’s suggestion for the event to recognize businesses that have been in Cheshire for 50 years or more. Mr. Lesky suggested recognizing businesses that have been formed within the past year in Cheshire, too.

The Capital Budget requests have been submitted to the Town Manager for his review, before they are passed along to the Town Council. There is a request in from the Streetscape Committee for additional funding of $400,000 for the project. Chairman Pelletier asked wasn’t there enough money in the Grants the Town had received for the project? The Grants have totaled $900,000 but the Committee has always said that the proposed total project would cost $1.2 - $1.3 million, which is where this additional request for the project comes from for the Capital Budget.

The Town Beautification Committee’s Adopt a Spot program is up and running again this year at 5 locations in Town. Pink Petunia, Dunkin Donuts, Suburban Garden Club, Dietrich Gardens and White Bowman are the companies / organizations from Town that are participating this year.

The decorative wall by the main entrance to Town Hall has just been completed. This was a Town Beautification Committee project that was done in part by a Grant from the Julia Humiston Fund.

Mr. Sitko would like to work on having some promotional signs about Cheshire put up along Interstate 691. He is going to look into prices and options.

Mr. Sitko talked about some plans for upgrading 25 Church Drive, with an exterior painting of the building and a possible bread bakery opening up.

L) Other

None.
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pelletier adjourned the meeting at 8:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Recording Secretary