

MINUTES
MANSFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 22, 2014
Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: Bresnahan, Fecho, Ferrigno, Hirschorn, McGuire, Thompson
Staff Present: Matt Hart, Town Manager; Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Ferrigno.

Public Comment

- Tom Gerson from UCONN was present and offered to answer any questions the Commission had regarding the Technology Park.

Approval of Minutes

McGuire MOVED, Thompson seconded approval of the January 29, 2014 and February 27, 2014 minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

1. **Mansfield Tomorrow.** Painter gave an update with regard to the PZC's review of the draft plan. Painter noted that the next step after the plan is completed will be to work on zoning regulation updates to eliminate current barriers to business development such as limited areas zoned for technology-related businesses. However, even if zoning were to be changed to allow for such businesses in areas such as Four Corners, many businesses graduating from the UCONN incubator program are looking for existing space and don't have the capacity to build. Bresnahan questioned whether there was a possibility of multiple towns collaborating to develop a facility in one community with revenue sharing for all towns that participate. Hart and Painter are to research for a future meeting.
2. **Developing an EDC Work Plan.**
 - *Regional EDC Forum.* Painter noted that four members attended the forum hosted by Coventry in April which focused on the UCONN Tech Park. Hirschorn questioned the University's plans for building more housing related to the NextGenCT initiative noting that more on-campus housing would be needed than was provided for in the budget. Mansfield will offer to host the next regional forum in the fall; the Commission will work on developing an agenda at a future meeting. One possible topic would be discussing the idea of collaborating on specific projects with the potential for revenue sharing.
 - *Business Visitation Program.* McGuire and Hirschorn reviewed the draft questionnaire they have developed and the list of initial businesses. They hope to start interviewing businesses at the beginning of June and will be looking for two volunteers to assist after they have completed the initial interviews and made the necessary adjustments.
 - *Updates from Other Commission Members.* Bresnahan noted initiatives related to water planning including a new statewide water planning process and realignment of the Water Utility Coordinating Committees to be consistent with the new COG boundaries.
3. **Economic Development Budget/Resources.** Hart noted that the budget for FY15 includes a new economic development program with a \$10,000 budget.

New Business

4. **Four Corners Sewer and Water Project.** Hart provided an overview of the water and sewer projects at Four Corners. Hart noted that the MOA with Connecticut Water Company creating the Water System Advisory Committee includes a representative from the EDC. John McGuire volunteered to serve on behalf of the Commission. This item will be kept on as Old Business on future agendas.

5. **EDC Membership.** Hirschorn suggested that each member of the Commission be assigned to subcommittees/projects. Discussion on other membership issues was postponed to the June meeting
6. **Next Meeting/Agenda Items.** The next meeting is scheduled for June 26th.

Reports

- **Business Activity.** Painter updated the Commission on recent business activity including the scheduled grand opening of Price Chopper, the projected July opening of Deanston House banquet facility at Four Corners and the closing of Yukon Jacks.
- **Chamber of Commerce/MBPA.** Painter noted that the Chamber sponsored a meeting with Senator Blumenthal to urge his support for a TIGER grant to upgrade the freight capacity on the central corridor rail line.
- **Other.** Connecticut Magazine has an article in their recent edition on the Farmer's Cow Calfe.

Ferrigno adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda M. Painter, AICP
Director of Planning and Development