

**MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
JANUARY 9, 2012**

The Reorganization Meeting of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission was called to order by Substitute Secretary Aileen Wojciechowski at 7:00PM in the Joe Pace Meeting Room of the Municipal Complex. Notice of this meeting was given as required by the annual notice of meetings.

2011 Chairperson Michael Kretschmer led the Commission in the salute to our flag.

SWEARING IN

As 2011 Chairperson of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission, Michael Kretschmer administered the oath of office to Jared Valdez with an unexpired five-year term, expiration of December 31, 2013.

ROLL CALL

Present: Sherene Ginyard, Michael Kretschmer, Anthony Langella, John Robinson, Jared Valdez, Cncl. Ron Garbowski

Absent: Victor Peters

NOMINATIONS & ELECTION

Secretary Aileen Wojciechowski conducted nominations and election and opened the floor for nominations for the 2012 Chairperson. A nomination was made by Sherene Ginyard for Michael Kretschmer as Chairperson and seconded by Anthony (Tony) Langella; no other nominations from the floor. John (Bud) Robinson made a motion to close nominations and seconded by Tony Langella; all in favor, no oppositions. Michael Kretschmer is the Chairperson of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission for 2012.

Chairperson Michael Kretschmer opened the floor for nominations for the 2012 Vice-Chairperson. A nomination was made by Bud Robinson for Tony Langella as Vice-Chairperson and seconded by Jared Valdez; no other nominations from the floor. Bud Robinson made a motion to close nominations and seconded by Jared Valdez; all in favor, no oppositions. Anthony (Tony) Langella is the Vice-Chairperson of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission for 2012.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bud Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the Economic Development Commission Meeting of December 12, 2011. The motion was seconded by Tony Langella and approved by all remaining members of the Commission in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Secretary Aileen provided a copy and read aloud the title of Resolution EDC/R:01-12 in reference to the Economic Development Commission 2012 Meeting Dates. Tony Langella made a motion to approve EDC/R:01-12. The motion was seconded by Jared Valdez and approved by all remaining members of the Commission in attendance.

Michael welcomed guests in attendance. In attendance was Dr. Scott Aumenta of Aumenta Chiropractic & Wellness Center, which is located in Williamstown. Dr. Aumenta approached the Commission on how his business could better reach out to the public about the Chiropractic services he offers in Monroe Township. Christine Feggans was in attendance. Also in attendance was Elizabeth Lillie, Director of the Monroe Township Public Library.

Mrs. Lillie spoke in reference to the idea of the Economic Development Commission holding a Small Business Seminar at the Monroe Township Public Library. She mentioned that the library now has video conferencing equipment; if there is a commission, group or organization that they may be able to benefit with having a video conference, this can be accomplished.

Mrs. Lillie spoke in reference to Small Business Incubators, mentioning the business incubator (NJBIN) through Rowan University. She mentioned that there are federal grants and programs available, such as the BTOP (Business Technology Opportunities Program). This program filters through the states to primarily community colleges, where individual skill courses on computer skills for people who are job-seekers are offered to free of charge; those who are unemployed, trying to re-train, if they've been downsized, trying to get back into the job market. These courses are taught by instructors from community colleges. The library currently has a BTOP series going on; one was in December and another will be in February. Small Business Incubators assist people who would like to start their own business by providing critical support services including coaching, access to capital, technical and business resources and networking opportunities. Mrs. Lillie informed the Commission that she has spoken with the Executive Director Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship. Not as a Director of Rowan University, but as an independent entrepreneur, she has asked him if he could put together a syllabus of a curriculum that can offer an abbreviated course work, not exactly the kind of things that the people who are currently in the incubator are doing in their course work, but can provide information to direct a person on how to make their business an LLC, for example. She didn't speak to him in reference to fees for this, but would like to ask him and she would also look for grants to help pay for this and look for organizations that would match funds, depending on charges. Mrs. Lillie feels that advertisement of this curriculum would need to be made in great effort and have people who are interested, to make a commitment when signing up for it. Mrs. Lillie was hoping that the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission would consider, once she receives more information, that she could come back to a future meeting and present it to the Commission. Michael asked if this is to be offered only to Monroe Township; it is to be offered to everybody, outside of Monroe Township also. Cncl. Garbowski said that with having this, it may generate interests in other courses such as having a small business administration come to in to do a program, or a financial company assisting with small business loans, etc. Jared asked Mrs. Lillie if this would be free of charge or if there would be a charge for those interested. Mrs. Lillie thinks that it depends on how they will be able to work it out. She feels that a small investment would be appropriate to request from individuals, because that would kind of "cement" their commitment; that maybe an 8-10 week program and the information it would provide would be worth the small financial commitment.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS (*cont'd*)

Mrs. Lillie reiterated that nothing has been set up yet; she is waiting to speak with the independent entrepreneur. Dr. Aumenta's wife, Shannon, was also in attendance and asked Mrs. Lillie if this would also be appropriate for businesses that are already open; Mrs. Lillie was not sure and she and Cncl. Garbowski said that they would have to review the syllabus to be provided and that hopefully it would help both. Christine Feggans provided Mr. and Mrs. Aumenta information for a BNI (Business Network International).

Jared and the other Commission members spoke in reference to the Business Directory for Monroe Township. The Commission spoke in length about how to keep it updated and how to find out when a business has opened, because the township does not have mercantile licenses; maybe through CO's through the Zoning Office or fire inspections through the Fire Prevention Department. Jared is trying to work with the Dun & Bradstreet lists. He will also try to work with the lists of businesses the Commission had previously put together. Jared can put a draft list on Google Docs and all the members can take pieces of it and work at contacting the businesses to see if they are still open. The members discussed who and which organizations can help with this project; Christine asked if maybe there are Rowan University students who could help and receive credits. Jared said he contacted Rowan and Penn State University for some suggestions on how to go about this project. He said that they suggested the Commission get a GIS professional to extract all business names and run it through a map. The Monroe Township Economic Development Commission has a budget. Aileen will help contact the township's engineer, Adams, Rehmann & Heggan Associates in reference to the GIS service. Bud asked, once this directory is completed, if it will be posted on a website; it could be posted on the Monroe Township website. The Commission informed Jared that they have started a Facebook page; he said he can help maintain it. Jared can also help with setting up a website for the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission.

Michael mentioned setting the date for the Business Seminar. He will contact Mrs. Lillie for a date that would be available for a meeting room at the library; maybe for the earlier part of May. The members discussed that a Thursday may be the best; evening time, around 7pm. Bud asked what would be presented at the Business Seminar; maybe the business incubator, Lisa Morina from the Gloucester County Economic Development Department, a small business financial planner, etc. During discussion, Michael asked Bud to contact the local Union representatives to see if they could come to the business seminar and explain the benefits of union representation; he said he would try.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Tony Langella made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission Meeting of January 9, 2012. The motion was seconded by Jared Valdez; all in favor, no oppositions. Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Aileen Wojciechowski, Substitute Secretary

The next scheduled Monroe Township Economic Development Commission meeting is Monday, February 13, 2012 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the tape-recorded proceedings of the Reorganization Economic Development Commission Meeting of January 9, 2012 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

Approved as submitted _____ Date _____
Approved as corrected _____ Date _____