

**MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
MAY 19, 2014**

The Regular Meeting of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission was called to order by Chairperson Tony Langella at 7:11pm in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room of the Municipal Complex. Notice of this meeting was given as required by the annual notice of meetings.

Chairperson Tony Langella led the Commission in the salute to our flag. Christine Feggans offered the Invocation.

ROLL CALL

Present: Manny Bermudez, Tony Langella, Jared Valdez, Christine Feggans, Natalie Wentz, Cncl. Ronald Garbowski

Absent: Aileen Chiselko, Jill Simmermon.

SWEARING IN

Before the start of the meeting, Chairperson Tony Langella administered the Oath of Office to Natalie Wentz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Manny made a motion to approve the minutes, as corrected, of the Economic Development Commission Meeting of April 28, 2014. The motion was seconded by Jared and approved by all members in attendance of the Commission, Natalie abstained.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Gloucester County Freeholder Heather Simmons was a guest speaker at the meeting, she came to talk to the commission about what the county was doing and to inform them of how county could compliment their efforts and help the businesses stay in business in Monroe and grow. This year the county is updating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, a plan that the county does every five years. The plan gives the county the opportunity to identify big projects in terms of construction, business attraction, educational opportunities, Brownfields Reuse projects, and other economic development activities that help generate jobs, retain and attract business to Gloucester County. As businesses are brought in, well paying jobs and additional opportunities for educational obtainment are created and this helps our community by creating a place where people want to live and raise a family, it improves the quality of life and sustainability of our communities. The other important reason to complete a plan is to have the ability to have access to federal funding. Each plan will have 16-19 individual projects within them. 75% of businesses in Gloucester County are considered small businesses. Supporting Monroe businesses is important to the County. The County Economic Development Department is very aggressive and very good at finding grant money for training, subsidize for hiring, money for energy efficiency programs for small businesses, resources for business plan developments, attracting businesses for vacant areas in the town. The county helps towns with Small Business Summits, which are something that are very helpful for small businesses. They are attended by Gloucester County College and the Gloucester County Librarian The GC Librarian has access to a lot of information for businesses and it is free.

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

Gloucester County College helps with education for employees and finding and using grants that are available for these services to be provided at zero to low cost. Also, every week Clarence Fullard, of Rutgers Small Business Administration, helps small businesses write business plans for free. Once they have a plan in place they are eligible for grant money. Other help is available too, businesses in older facilities may also be eligible to receive money toward becoming more energy efficient. Freeholder Simmons also mentioned a database of vacant lots for businesses to consider, and said to make sure the township's locations are in that database. Jared asked which conferences Freeholder Simmons felt were worth attending, she is going to get back to him with them.

Cncl. Sebastian stopped in on the meeting briefly and was asked by Tony what his thoughts were about getting a sponsor. His suggestion was to go to several banks and let them know what was needed for sponsorship. He also suggested asking the Guzzo Company, that just built the large complex on Cross-Keys Road for sponsorship. Cncl. Garbowski said that he would go to Walmart and ask if they would be able to help with the sponsorship.

Cncl. Sebastian said that there should be a list of privately owned properties that are available for ratables.

The next Spotlight on Business will highlight Scoops, and ice cream shop across from the middle school on Clayton Road.

Tony and Manny put a letter together to give to the potential sponsors, after corrections are made it will be put on letterhead.

Tony broke down sponsorship into levels since getting one large sponsor is unlikely. Tentative levels are: Platinum level for \$9,500, Gold level for \$4,500 and Silver level \$500. Each level changes amount of advertising that the business gets, platinum being the most amount of exposure.

Natalie introduced herself, she is a family law attorney in south Jersey and has been practicing for 12 years. She lives in Williamstown and has an office in Mullica Hill. She is married and has 2 children, her family is involved with the Monroe Township Youth Soccer. Jared would like to move forward and have a small business summit; Cncl. Garbowski stated he thinks September or October would be a good time to have the summit. Christine would like to see how we can link with Rowan because there are thousands of students and many are Williamstown HS graduates. Manny would like to find a sponsor, he hopes that presenting it in levels will increase our success. Manny said he feels the success of the program is going to be based on the marketing that is done.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Tony asked for a motion to adjourn Manny made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission Meeting of May 19, 2014. The motion was seconded by Jared; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquelyn Allen

The next scheduled Monroe Township Economic Development Commission meeting is Monday, June 16, 2014 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the tape-recorded proceedings of the Regular Economic Development Commission Meeting of May 19, 2014 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

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