

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
JUNE 19, 2017
7:00pm

The Regular Meeting of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission was called to order by Chairperson Anthony Langella at 7:01pm 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: Ernie Carbone, Richard Coe, Christine Feggans, Anthony Langella, Thomas Swartz, Jared Valdez, Richard Sanford, Tom Duffy, Cncl. Joe Marino

Absent: Robert Bender

Guests: Cncl. Bart McIlvaine, Cncl. Bob Heffner, and Aileen Chiselko

WELCOME

Today is June 19th. This is the Economic Development Commission meeting. Tony welcomed the commission members and guests; and new Secretary, Meryl Lynn Murtha

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were approved for the May 15th meeting, due to the prior secretary, Tara Park, not submitting to the members for approval.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS
VOLUNTEER HOUR REPORT

The members reported their volunteer hours to the Secretary

SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS

Christine reported that she and Quandel Inglesia spoke at a program with the Mayor and Council. He also came on her radio show and talked about the township, graduating from Williamstown High School, and his Photography business, an LLC. His work has been featured in several magazines and newspapers, and he is continuing his career path by going to a photography trade school.

A recommendation was made to add "Spotlight on Business" to the agenda for the Council Meeting on July 24th. Targeted businesses: New Nail Salon; new shop near Sam's Club; and Spotlight on Business for August – the two new Microbreweries

Cncl. Joe Marino arrived and Tony indicated he is the liaison between EDC and the Council.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Tony reported there are four new Board of Directors Members of the Chamber, now numbering 16 and that Katherine Falcone is doing a good job getting new members – reaching beyond Williamstown.

The Chamber just sponsored a Speed-Networking Event. It went over well and they are planning on doing it annually. The benefit brought in other professionals than Chamber members.

A Network meeting, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, is scheduled at Cardinal Village, in Washington Township for Thursday, July 22, 2017 at 8:30am, providing breakfast.

Council members Bart McIlvaine and Bob Heffner arrived, welcomed & introduced by Tony.

MAIN STREET COMMITTEE

Ernie reported that we're kicking-off a process to reach out for sponsorship to begin a street-scaping program to put business names on banners throughout Williamstown. When the banners replaced, the sponsor, will cover the cost. Also we're proposing to reline the street with the parking spots, adjusting the signage for parking, and do the crosswalks.

MUSIC FESTIVAL

Tony inquired about the success of the Music Festival. Cncl. Marino responded that the attendance has gotten bigger each year; Cncl. Heffner said one estimate for 2017 was 13,000; another estimate was 16,000. People are coming from all over. Kudos to Jim Bonder. Over 100 exhibitors participated. Coordination was good between the Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Response, Parks and Recreation Department, volunteers, etc. - the huge effort by a couple hundred volunteers and the perfect weather made it a great success. Parking – Shuttle buses were running from the High School and Middle School. The handicap accessibility must be worked out

ROTARY

Christine reported that the Rotary Acts , has grown in their second stage, had 20-30 kids coming out for their programs. She attributes the success to the advertisement and family involvement.

SOUTH JERSEY LAND AND WATER TRUST

Tony asked Jared about a meeting he attended re: So. Jersey Land and Water Trust – The Pinelands Board suggested we can have a member from our board. Cncl. Heffner indicated that he was Mayor Teefy's representative. EDC representation couldn't make an impact because their projects are typically not relevant to our Commission.

NEW BUSINESS

SUSPENSION OF TAX CARD PROGRAM

Tony remarked that the program was on hold rather than suspended. He submitted a letter in February to the Mayor indicating we need support. Cncl. Marino reported that the RFP expired, should be discussed and edited. Rick Coe felt matter should have been reserved for discussion. Problems should have been resolved in order to move on. Cncl. Marino stated this is a positive program and should be generating for the township. Cncl. McIlvaine suggested speaking with Mayor Teefy and Business Director (Kevin Heydel) ASAP to the keep/start the momentum and focus on the tax card. Council doesn't have the authority to hire/fire or appoint anyone. Rick Coe said he would participate, also Cncl. Marino. Cncl. Marino said the person in charge of the tax card needs to have the authority to do what is necessary. He added that Council agreed to add funds, and whoever is driving this has to report to the EDC. This program is a benefit to taxpayers. Jared pointed out there were internal struggles with the tax card program getting off the ground. Ernie added that the EDC needs to have total buy-in. We have a budget, we're fiscally okay.

Cncl. Marino feels that it's a good idea for this board to edit the announcement RFP. The job is a 1099 – subcontractor. Not full time. Someone with sales experience is needed. Pay is \$26,000/yr plus mileage – less than 20 hrs/wk. Rich Sanford added that businesses are needed. Tony said we need a mature person who knows the town and businesses and who the merchants have a rapport with, not an intern. Tom Swartz showed a potential Tax Card flyer – Come Shop with Us - We need branding. Cncl. McIlvaine suggested that Mayor Teefy and the business administrator be invited to meet with this board, at our next meeting, to hear opinions and concerns. Only the Mayor can redirect. Rick Coe, and Cncl. Marino will meet with the Mayor in the next couple of weeks to keep the momentum going, then invite him to our next meeting.

Jared said we need to better coordinate with the township. Tony reminded the Board that Suasion was our decision to use. It comes out of our budget. Tony reiterated the project is our responsibility. Cncl. Heffner said that the Director of Community Development, Rosemary Flaherty, needs also to be included. Resolving issues, problems and objections can be addressed by all the participants.

Tom Swartz displayed an informational Tax Card flyer using our logo. He explained where the Sponsor's name is inserted and that it hangs in their establishment. Tony thanked Tom and added that Tom's work on it saves us \$600.

SUASION COMMUNICATIONS: REVIEW OF SERVICES

Ernie distributed pages to members containing outline of what Suasion did, re: advertisement/promotion in 2016. Tony said that Suasion was the most qualified company, after our research. Ernie reported that the success of the Music Festival is because people now know who and where we are, due to Suasion. The pages showed a list of what they did for us. We got media coverage in the Sunday Inquirer; We paid \$27,000 but received \$1,000,000 in exposure; We were listed three times in the real estate section in 2016; The Mayor and Cncl. Cody Miller got to interact with the forces at the Journal; Suasion came up with an approach to our rebranding and to give us the guidance we needed; We launched our branding at the Music Festival last year. We had a video put together but we weren't satisfied with it. Suasion helped us with a photo-shoot, incorporated into the video, also to be added to our website but the process stopped; in 2016, we put together a Trolley Tour for builders and developers but only two developers were there. This year's tour will take place in the fall of 2017. Engineers and realtors on this board are asked to get us in touch with the builders and contractors; we have a marketing analysis that's being underutilized. The result of that study is now being used when businesses come to town but it's not being used for target marketing as planned; The Mayor does Comcast Newsmakers; The New Jersey League of Municipalities nominated us for a governance award for our branding, logo and website development projects and as a result the township was recognized at the Mayor's luncheon at last year's New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference for the efforts and innovation; Suasion did a piece on their own network, with advertising and a social media push for this town as well.

Ernie proposed to move forward again with either Suasion or another company to put a marketing plan into effect. He asked for any questions. Tony thanked Ernie for his report.

Question: Our website "Come Grow with Williamstown," who updates it? Who has control of it?

Ernie commented that we have control of it but we don't actually have the hands on to change/edit it. EDC has a problem in this town with communications. Ernie made a suggestion to the Mayor to have the Williamstown website expanded to include links for all other website, Facebook and social media in this town so our public can access what's happening in the town. The IT manager is too busy. Ernie spoke to him several times. The website was out there but it was taken down. Tom Duffy offered to assist and look into having that correction made with a problem at the bottom of the screen that pointed to only one broker

Discussion ensued regarding "Come Grow with Williamstown" and the Chamber of Commerce on the Township Website. We will maintain our own website with updates but need a link. Right now, Suasion's doing it. We just need a password. Choice Media created the website and the township has a webmaster to maintain (basic) it with WordPress. Williamstown needs to be kept up to date on Social Media with constant content to keep people engaged. New businesses should be highlighted. Rich Sanford suggested committee members update on their phones. We just need the website portal open – take a pic, post on your phone and it can go to desired websites. There is an EDC Facebook page where things can be posted. Committee should share through phones, etc. for maximum coverage. Rich agreed to head up the Social Media communications. Tony thanked Rich for agreeing to take care of this.

BUDGET SPENDING

Tony asked about Suasion and the Trolley Tour. Ernie answered that part of the \$6625 we put aside last year will go for the Trolley Tour this year. Ernie showed a promotional video made for Woodbury. It's on a flash drive that can be utilized for target marketing and in conjunction with our website. We already have a fact card with info that can be used. We should enhance and embellish what we already have. Another suggestion is that we should use money from our budget for signage around town to indicate properties for redevelopment availability. Redevelopment areas have to be specified. Have to work with Redevelopment Committee – There are a lot of legalities involved. Signs are premature. We don't necessarily own the land, not our property. Cncl. Marino said there are tax abatements too. We need to look into how abatements worked in other areas. Ernie said an inventory of commercial property for sale is needed and that all requests should go through the Community Development Office here and stay transparent. Tom Duffy reported that all potential buyers have different needs and criteria. Send specifics to Community Development or to committee for follow up and follow through with people with potential interest in the town. The process needs improvement and Williamstown needs to be more flexible since neighboring communities are. Realtors said there is an inventory of properties. Tom continued

that some areas have a person helping to develop a site plan for potential buyers. We need to expedite the process for the buyer. Community Development is the key to the project.

Tony questioned the development of RT 42 in Williamstown. Rick Coe explained that the reason is that after Sam's Club the water and sewer is stopped. You have to have developers with big bucks to be able to develop that area because the MUA will not invest in infrastructure. The MUA can't take the money from the consumers and use it to invest in the infrastructure. The cost could be \$2m to bring water down RT 42 for Williamstown so a Big developer would be needed. Tax abatements could be a possibility.

Christine Feggans and Cncl. Bart McIlvaine left at 8:33 PM

Tony asked if bonds for water and sewer were a possibility. Rick Coe answered that any bonds that the MUA would do would be paid by rate payer's money. They have bonds now. There may be creative ways to do it. Tom said that MUA should work with the developer. They will not work with the Chelsea Farms pump station project.

INCENTIVES

Rich S. expanded that Spotlight on Businesses seemed only to be for new businesses. Existing businesses should get the same attention. Tony said that the social media and our website need to include info about existing businesses. A suggestion was made to ask these businesses owners to give us their video to be included on our website. Ernie suggested that we stay in touch with our businesses. The prospective Tax Card person can report on their status. There was discussion about problem landlords. There should be a township person that a business owner could go to do discuss and receive help with a landlord issue.

REPORTS

COMMUNICATIONS

Ernie and Christine will be meeting with Patrick McDevitt of Sustainable Monroe. They are putting a social media program together working in conjunction with EDC and Main Street Committee. Tony reported about Catherine Falcone. She started the Chamber of Commerce and brought in 116 members within a year.

MUNICIPAL

Richard Coe and Cncl. Marino had nothing else to add to what was previously reported tonight.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Tony asked Jared to contact Kevin Heidel, Business Administrator, regarding tickets to the October convention.

Jared asked about budget spending for 2017 re: the Tax Card. Ernie added that we have to speak with the mayor first. We'll have to decide at the next meeting. On the Comcast Spotlight the Mayor announced this program

Tony said that Jared suggested going on the jobsite Indeed for the position. We want to talk to Kevin first; someone in particular, through OS, Ordinary Services, does a job like that. We have to start with the mayor and get a structure together from the administrative side.

ROUNDTABLE

The Roundtable was dispensed with for this meeting.

Before adjourning the meeting, Tony asked Cncl. Heffner how town can grow. Cncl. Heffner remarked that because of the water pipe problem on Black Horse Pike, we need to push efforts to areas that do have the amenities. There are standing buildings not occupied. Developer and landlords need to spend to improve. We need to make our town a destination.

Tony thanked Cncl. Heffner for coming, wished Meryl luck as the new secretary, and thanked Aileen for her dedicated assistance.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairperson Tony Langella asked for a motion to adjourn. Rick Coe made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission Meeting of June 19, 2017. The motion was seconded by Jared Valdez; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Meryl Lynn Murtha, Secretary

The next scheduled Monroe Township Economic Development Commission meeting is Monday, August 14, 2017 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the recorded proceedings of the Regular Economic Development Commission Meeting of June 19, 2017 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

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