

**MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
TOWNSHIP OF MONROE
APRIL 19, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission was called to order by Chairperson Michael Mellace at 7:05pm in the Court Room of the Municipal Complex. Adequate notice of this meeting was given as required by the annual notice of meetings.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairperson Michael Mellace led the Commission in the salute to our flag.

ROLL CALL

Present: Richard Coe, Christine Feggans, Brian McBride, Michael Mellace, Daniel Ryan, Janet Schaefer, Peter Sideris, Steven Slotnick, Thomas Swartz

Absent: Chelsea Valcourt

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Christine Feggans made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted of the Economic Development Commission Meeting of February 16, 2021. The motion was seconded by Daniel Ryan; all in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS AND OTHER MATTERS

- Discussion of EDC budget
 - Currently as it stands, the budget for the EDC consists of two line items. The first is for the Commission with \$5,000 and the second is for a consultant with \$35,000. Michael recommends that at this time the Commission should have no consultant and all \$40,000 be allocated to the Commission. Brian suggested that the money would be used to conduct and evaluate studies such a bleed study. It is important to know what types of goods and services are bleeding out of Monroe Township because it shows which businesses the town should be recruiting.
 - Thomas mentioned that a consultant would still be required to answer phone calls and emails from prospective businesses and to essentially be the front-person of the Commission. Michael thinks that the Commission should wait before appointing a consultant because as of right now, there are no forms, no studies completed and nothing to give to the public.
 - Michael asked for a motion to bring the budget recommendation before council. Brian McBride made a motion to bring the recommendation before council. The motion was seconded by Christine Feggans. With Steven Slotnick being the only member against the motion, the motion was passed.
- Planning for Ernie Carbone tribute
 - Ernie was the former Chairperson of the Economic Development Commission and also led the Main Street Commission. He was dedicated to growing Monroe Township. With his recent passing, it would be nice to pay a tribute to Ernie at the next meeting. Steven will lead the tribute and invite Ernie's family to attend.
- Discussion of business flowcharts

- It would be beneficial to perspective business owners if there was something in writing that showed the process of opening a new business in town. Three flowcharts will be created:
 - A brand new business (breaking ground)
 - A new business moving into a space that was similarly zoned
 - A new business moving into a space that requires a change in the use
- Michael suggested starting an ambassadorship program. If someone is trying to open a business, members of the EDC could take turns being an ambassador and help them through the process of obtaining all their approvals.
- Discussion of June commercial developer / real estate meeting
 - The June meeting will have potential developers and real estate agents in attendance. Peter brought in contact information so that invites could be sent out. If you would like a copy of the packet, please contact Peter.
- Video overview
 - A local video production company, Monark Media, has volunteered to come out monthly and video interviews of local business owners. The end result would provide the Commission with professional videos that could be used to promote Monroe Township. Michael asked for volunteers to conduct the interviews and mentioned that the videos could be posted to the Facebook page.
- Establish a meeting date for Main Street business outreach
 - A member of the public, Alan Dodd, would like to join the subcommittee with Christine. Other members are of course welcome.
- Volunteers to database records from the fire district
 - The Fire Marshal, Skip, has the most complete list of businesses in town because he does yearly safety inspections. Michael has asked Chelsea to ask Council if the Commission can have 2 laptops with excel access to create a spreadsheet of business names and contact information based on Skip's records.

After discussing all new business, Michael went around the room and asked for each member to give a report.

- Brian – Advertising was brought up in tonight's discussion and will be incorporated into the budget.
- Janet – From May to September Janet is very available. She is looking forward to help the Commission, whether it is by conducting interviews of businesses or being an ambassador, she is excited to be involved.
- Steven – Steven wanted to explain his vote against the motion from earlier in the meeting. He thinks it is important to have a contact in the Township building that can be readily accessible so that opportunities are not lost with respect to new businesses.
- Daniel – Daniel made an announcement tonight that he will be resigning from the Commission. With a lot of time and effort required in his full-time career, he would like to see someone on the Commission who has the time and is able to fulfill the duties of a full-time member. Everyone expressed thanks to Dan for his time and dedication to the EDC.
- Christine – Production means so much more than shooting a video. Christine is very excited for the relationship with Monark Media and is looking forward to showcasing Monroe Township. She also thinks that partnerships with the media (ABC, NBC, etc. would be beneficial.
- Peter – Peter suggested that the Commission be assigned a phone number and extension with the Township. When someone is looking for information, they could leave a message and would receive a call back within 24 hours. This would allow all calls to come directly to a Commission member and assistance could be provided.

- Richard – The Planning & Zoning Board secretary, Dawn Farrell, would be an amazing resource for questions regarding applications and approvals that are required. Richard also pointed out a state law that says a corporation or LLC must be represented by an attorney to appear before the Planning or Zoning Board.
- Thomas – Thomas pointed out that small businesses are not always required to go in front of the Boards. He also pointed out that a major hinderance of bringing business into town and particularly on the Black Horse Pike is the infrastructure. Water and sewer aren't available in some areas and will not be improved on the ratepayer's dollars, but if a business comes to town and makes it available to homeowners, they are not given any credit. Michael suggested inviting members of the MUA to one of the upcoming meetings to learn more about this topic.
- Michael – He is appreciative of everyone's help and willingness to volunteer. Please know that if anyone ever has something they would like to see on an agenda, just shoot an email and we can certainly add it.

PUBLIC PORTION

With no one from the public in attendance at the meeting, the public portion was skipped.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chairperson Michael Mellace asked for a motion to adjourn. Richard Coe made a motion to adjourn the Monroe Township Economic Development Commission Meeting of April 19, 2021. The motion was seconded by Steven Slotnick; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Ballard, Secretary

The next scheduled Monroe Township Economic Development Commission meeting is May 17, 2021 at 7:00pm.

These minutes were prepared from excerpts of the tape-recorded proceedings of the Economic Development Commission Meeting of April 19, 2021 and serve as only a synopsis of the proceedings.

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