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5 **Economic Development Commission**
6 **Regular Meeting Minutes**
7 **September 9, 2019**
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9 **Present:** Joe Mirra, Chair
10 Jim Wolfe, Vice-Chair
11 Hank Baum, Commissioner
12 Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner
13 Gary Fappiano, Commissioner
14 Mark Gingras, Commissioner
15 Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner
16 Anthony Bracale, Alternate
17 Rob Fritz, Alternate
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19 **Others Present:** Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist
20 Lynn Wolff, Secretary
21 Jeff Kohan, PZC Commissioner
22 Robert DeMaio
23 Ed Hohmann
24 Christina Tata
25

26 Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.
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28 **1. Discussion and Possible Action on Special Meeting Minutes dated June 6, 2019** – The secretary noted
29 that line 25 in the draft minutes should refer to the June meeting as a special, not regular, meeting. **Mark**
30 **Gingras made a motion to approve the minutes with that change; Rosemarie Preneta seconded the**
31 **motion. By a unanimous vote, the motion carried.**
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33 **2. Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** – There were no questions.
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35 **3. Committee Reports**

36 • **Marketing –**

- 37 ➤ **Update on September 5 meeting:** Mark Gingras reviewed the minutes of the Committee
38 meeting as attached to the agenda packet. The Committee discussed the draft talking points, a
39 draft of which was distributed with the September agenda packet. Mark plans to use these talking
40 points when he speaks at an upcoming Rotary meeting. Joe Mirra asked if the final version will
41 be available to everyone and perhaps posted on the web site; Mark said a final will be distributed,
42 after the Mayor reviews the document as well. Hank Baum remarked that the Committee and
43 staff had done a good job. Recently he saw a Facebook discussion about the former Brothers
44 Restaurant site and Hank wished he had this draft so that he could have made an informed

45 response. Joe Mirra reminded the EDC to encourage people to look at the whole picture, not just
46 one piece of what happens in Town.

47 Rob Fritz arrived at 6:35 p.m.

48 Tim Ryan reminded the Commissioners that this document will change as interest in topics ends
49 and new topics arise. Mark continued the report saying the Committee also discussed the
50 possibility of doing exit interviews for businesses that leave Wallingford. Mark suggested that the
51 Chair consider having a Committee, perhaps the Retention/Incentives Committee, utilize the list
52 of electric disconnects to call select companies each month and conduct a short exit interview.
53 That information might prove interesting and helpful to the Town. Tim said that the smaller
54 companies would be targeted since the Town usually already knows why a larger company has
55 left.

- 56 • **Next meeting:** October 3 at 9 a.m.

- 57 • **P&Z Liaison –**

- 58 ➤ **Update on Committee activities:** Jim Wolfe reported attending a summer PZC meeting to listen
59 to the discussion with a business located at 718 North Colony Road (the former Eyelet Specialty
60 building). He said the PZC did a great job in helping the business deal with existing violations
61 and offering conditions that would allow their application to be approved.

- 62 • **Retention/Incentives –**

- 63 ➤ **Update on Committee activities:** Gary Fappiano said the Committee did not meet over the
64 summer; the Committee decided, after a brief discussion, to meet in September.

65 Tim Ryan attended the CBIA Economic Update meeting held recently and said that most CT
66 towns are dealing with a glut of Class A office space. Tim is pleased that our Town has begun to
67 think in terms of adaptive re-use, citing as an example the former Webster Bank facility located in
68 the I-5 zone. This site, after being vacant for three years, will now be the home of Radiall, an
69 assembly facility, thanks to PZC approval of this adaptive re-use.

- 70 ➤ **Next meeting –** September 26 at 9 a.m.

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72 4. **Chair's remarks** – Joe Mirra urged the Commissioners to attend the September 10 Town Council meeting to
73 listen/participate in the discussion regarding the new Community Pool, which Joe feels is an important
74 resource for our Town. Joe also mentioned HUBCAP will be doing pipeline programs for the healthcare and
75 hospitality industries and asked Commissioners to spread the word about these programs, once the flyers are
76 finalized.

77
78 5. **Staff reports/regional matters** – Tim Ryan reviewed the June, July and August 2019 Activities report as
79 attached in the agenda. Some of the items highlighted include:

80 As reported in the July report, the continuation of the tax agreement to the new owners of the Hilton
81 Garden Inn was approved for Emerald Hospitality. However, it was determined that the hotel was owned by
82 Walford Owner, LLC, an entity formed by Emerald Hospitality, making the initial approval invalid. A request

83 by Walford for the continuation of the tax agreement did not receive adequate support to be placed on the
84 July Town Council agenda, resulting in no continuation.

85 A proposal for a hotel at 1175 Barnes Road received approvals by both IWWC and PZC but the owners
86 are now selling this site.

87 Hotel plans for 4 Miles Drive received IWWC approval and will go before the PZC in October. *Mark*
88 *Gingras asked staff to determine the number of hotel rooms in Town around that interchange.*

89 Regarding 4 Center Street – The Town Planner and EDC staff worked with a buyer for this property but
90 the deal fell through. The Town is currently citing the owner for blight.

91 Tim continues to keep in touch with the owners of 5 Research Parkway. The former BMS building had to
92 be removed from the inside out; it is anticipated that the entire building will be down by the end of September.
93 Reports on the progress are submitted regularly and, so far, everything has gone well.

94 A Manufacturing Business Expo, presented jointly by Wallingford EDC, North Haven EDC, the Quinnipiac
95 CofC and UCONN, is being planned for February. Tim will provide more information as the expo develops.

96 A property owner in the I-5 Zone met with the Town Planner, Town Engineer and EDC staff to discuss
97 development opportunities in that zone; the property owner requested that the Town consider expansion of
98 the uses in the I-5 Zone. It is also hoped that a discussion with PZC will occur regarding lowering the open
99 space requirement. Joe Mirra said that these topics were previously proposed by the EDC and are part of
100 the POCD.

101 One of the issues that lead to the PZC not approving the most recent proposal for 5 Research Parkway
102 was the lack of information regarding traffic. The Town Engineer set up a meeting with the Office of the State
103 Traffic Administration (OSTA). The EDC staff and Calare met with officials from OSTA to request traffic
104 volume data for the Route 68/I-91 interchange. It is hoped the Town will have this data by November. This
105 data will allow the Town to better consider any future proposals for that area of Town.

106 At the end of Tim's report, Patricia Cymbala and Joe Mirra both thanked Tim Ryan for the effort he has
107 made—he has worked hard to get several projects completed.

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109 **6. Dates to Remember** – Chair Mirra reminded the EDC to attend the Town Council meeting tomorrow to hear
110 the discussion about the new pool and asked members to look at the other dates listed on the agenda.

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112 **7. Other Community Business** – Members briefly discussed progress regarding the proposed Arts Council;
113 Jim Wolfe asked that the group not forget Yalesville when thinking about placement of any outdoor pieces.

114 Joe Mirra asked to return to the discussion regarding the draft Talking Points; a motion should be made
115 to approve or disapprove the draft. **Jim Wolfe made a motion that the draft “Talking Points for Public**
116 **Engagement” be approved, following review by the Mayor, and that the document be added to the**
117 **EDC’s web page.** Rob Fritz suggested that a link to this document also appear on the Home Page of the
118 Town’s web site. **The motion was amended to include the suggestion by Rob Fritz with a second by**
119 **Patricia Cymbala. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

120 Gary Fappiano and Rob Fritz have both observed that around 7:00 a.m., when a train is at the new
121 platform, the railroad gates around the old train station (Hall Avenue and Quinnipiac Street) are down,
122 causing some traffic congestion. This is not the way they understood those gates were to function. *Tim*
123 *Ryan said he will have a discussion with the Mayor regarding the railroad gates.*

124 Rob Fritz mentioned that you can now get to Bradley International Airport by using train and bus service,
125 although the times at night are limited.

126 Rosemarie Preneta felt that they blow the whistle for the train too long; it probably really annoys the
127 residents of Parker Place and surrounding neighbors. Joe Mirra and others said they had lived near train
128 tracks and found that, after a while, you don't even hear the whistle.

129 Mark Gingras asked if Tim will need help at the Big Connect Trade show in November; Tim said yes and
130 *a sign-up sheet will be distributed at the October meeting.*

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132 **There being no further business, Mark Gingras made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.;**
133 **Patricia Cymbala seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

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Sincerely,

Lynn M. Wolff, Secretary