



**City Middletown, CT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes from the Economic Development Committee Meeting
April 13, 2021**

Meeting was conducted via video conference call

Present: V. Loffredo, T. Gennaro, J. Blackwell, E. McKeon Absent: P. Pessina, Executive: Staff: J. Samolis, T. Marano, L. MacPherson

Meeting Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman V. Loffredo called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.
2. **Minutes:** J. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by A, Gennaro to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 9, 2021.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

3. **Public Session:** Jeff - Trevor
J. Pugliese, Vice President of the Greater Middlesex Chamber of Commerce spoke to support the small business grants and support businesses.

Chairman Loffredo closed the public session.

4. **Communications:**
There were no communications from the public.

5. Old Business

- a. **Update on \$55 Million Bond** – J. Samolis stated Council approved purchasing four properties with \$2.55MM from the bond. This brings the total to bond funds invested to \$3mm from the bond.

Vote: No vote was taken.

Restaurant RFP for 80 Harbor Drive (aka Canoe Club) – J. Samolis reported the Mayor is forming a committee to review the five responses. They are a mix of experienced local and out of state restaurateurs.

Vote: No vote was taken.

Riverfront RFP Responses - J. Samolis updated the members on the responses to the RFP. The Committee will meet to recommend a choice to the Council. J. Samolis to send a map of the parcels we are purchasing, and those we are considering.

Vote: No vote was taken.

b. Small Business Grants – L. MacPherson reviewed the grant applications. Item was moved to after New Business.

- i. Shear Perfection - LMI**
- ii. McEwen Construction – microbusiness**
- iii. Hair by Alicia Russo - LMI**
- iv. Hybrid Entertainment - microbusiness**
- v. Lan Chi Restaurant LLC – LMI**

E. McKeon Made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell to move the grants to the Common Council once they are fully qualified

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

6. New Business

a. Planning, Conservation and Development Staff Restructuring – J. Samolis reviewed the restructuring of the PCD, Arts and Parking Departments. Mayor putting emphasis on Economic and Community development. There are two vacant positions and several new positions proposed. The restructuring will save an estimated \$64,000 annually. There will be two new departments:

Economic and Community Development: includes economic development, community development, arts and parking

Department of Land Use: will include a director, environmental planner, assistant planner, ZEO and land use assistant

The members discussed the two new organizations. Staff was directed to provide a clearer organization chart. The members decided to table any action on the restructuring plan until the May EDC meeting.

Vote: No Vote Taken

- b. River Road Property Purchase Resolutions** -- J. Samolis reviewed the properties the City is purchasing in support of expanding Harbor Park along the riverfront. The City is investing \$365,000 in bond funds for properties totaling 9 acres. Staff is working with Valley Rail and DOT to bring the train to Middletown. J. Samolis read the resolution to purchase the properties. J. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by A. Gennaro to forward the resolution to the full Common Council. Members discussed the resolution and the purchases.

Vote – unanimous in favor of the motion

- c. R. M. Keating Park Leases** – J. Samolis reviewed the new leases and tenants moving into or expanding at Keating Park. Build out of these spaces totals nearly \$100,000.

- i. Skatz Smokezz BBQ & Catering – leasing 1,000 sf,
- ii. Kiro Bespoke LLC – moving to new location to expand to 2, 000 sf
- iii. Found Apparel LLC – screen printing, leasing 3,000 sf
- iv. 860 Brewing LLC, dba Forest City Brewing – currently leases 1,000 sf, + 400 sf for storage. Company is expanding in adjacent space.

E. McKeon made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell to forward the leases to the Common Council

Vote – unanimous in favor of the motion

- d. Historic Structures Rehabilitation Tax Abatement Application:** J. Samolis discussed the HSR Tax Incentive application. This was presented for information only.

Vote: No Vote Taken

7. Adjournment

J. Blackwell, made a motion, seconded by A. Gennaro to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM