



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, January 29, 2014 ■ 5:30 PM
Council Chambers ■ Audrey Beck Municipal Building**

Agenda

Call to Order/Roll Call

Opportunity for Public to Comment

Approval of Minutes

- November 21, 2013

Reports

- Business activity
- Events
- Chamber of Commerce/Mansfield Business and Professional Association (MBPA)
- Other

Old Business

1. Water Supply Project (formerly Water Supply EIE)
2. Mansfield Tomorrow initiative
3. Developing an EDC Work Plan
 - Project list and volunteers
 - Update on business visitation survey (McGuire & Hirschorn)
 - Updates from other Commission members

New Business

4. Economic Development Budget/Resources
5. Next meeting/agenda items

Communications

Adjournment

DRAFT MINUTES
MANSFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 21, 2013
Council Chamber, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

Members present: Dorgan, McGuire, Ferrigno, Bresnahan, Kazerounian, Hirschorn, Fecho (5:37 pm)
Staff Present: Matt Hart, Town Manager
Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by Ferrigno.

Public Comment

- No public comment was received. Painter introduced Thomas Gerson from UCONN, who will be working on the Technology Park.

Approval of Minutes

- October 24, 2013 – McGuire MOVED, Hirschorn SECONDED approval of the minutes as written. The motion was approved unanimously.

Reports

- **Business Activity.** Painter and Hart updated the Commission on recent business activity including the opening of the UCONN Coop Bookstore at Stores Center the week of November 25th and the pending expansion of the Public America Gas Station and Convenience Store.
- **Chamber of Commerce/MBPA.** Hart suggested that the new Director of the Windham Chamber and Director of the Tolland Chamber be invited to attend a future meeting; members concurred.
- **SBDC.** Painter noted that she met with Greg Lewis, the northeastern Connecticut liaison for the newly reestablished Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at UCONN. Lewis will be invited to make a presentation at a future meeting.

Old Business

1. **Water Supply EIE.** Hart updated the Commission on the approval of a Letter of Intent with Connecticut Water Company. The draft agreement with CWC will be forwarded to the Commission for review after the December 9th Town Council meeting.
2. **Mansfield Tomorrow.** Painter noted that staff and the consultants are continuing to work on the plan. A link to the Economic Development Strategy Report was sent to members for review and discussion; this will be a focus at either the December or January meeting.
3. **Developing an EDC Work Plan.** The Commission discussed potential performance metrics provided by McGuire and Dorgan as well as the initial list of projects developed through the past two meetings. Hirschorn and McGuire volunteered to work on development of a business ambassador program, including a visitation survey. Hart and Bresnahan volunteered to work on regional initiatives and coordination. Dorgan volunteered to work on metrics. Members agreed to identify projects/tasks that they would like to work on at the December meeting.

Kazerounian departed the meeting at approximately 6:35 pm.

New Business

4. **Adoption of 2014 Meeting Calendar.** McGuire MOVED, Fecho seconded approval of the 2014 meeting calendar as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.
5. **2013 Regional Performance Incentive Program Application.** Painter presented an overview of the proposed joint application between Mansfield, Tolland, Coventry and Bolton for regional economic development assistance. Dorgan MOVED, McGuire seconded a motion to authorize the Chair to submit a letter of support for the application to the Town Council.
6. **Next Meeting/Agenda Items.** The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 19th. Agenda items include discussion of a budget for economic development activities and volunteers for specific projects.

Hirschorn departed the meeting at approximately 7:00 pm.

Fecho MOVED, Bresnahan seconded to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:02 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda M. Painter, AICP
Director of Planning and Development

2014 EDC Work Plan (DRAFT)

Economic Development Strategy Implementation

Baseline Information

Develop baseline information and process for maintaining/updating data. Tasks include:

- Identifying list of businesses currently located in Mansfield (type, location, contact information, etc.)
- Identifying other information needed based on metrics/performance measures
- Identifying needed resources

Implementation Resources

Linda Painter ▪ *Matt Hart* ▪

Identify resources needed to implement the Economic Development Strategy. Tasks include:

- Preparing Economic Development budget for 2014-2015
- Researching business information sources (CERC, ESRI, etc.)
- Identifying grant opportunities and preparing applications
- Developing partnerships (UCONN, etc.)

Zoning Regulation Update

Linda Painter ▪

Participate in update of Zoning Regulations to reduce barriers to business development. Tasks include:

- Representing EDC on Zoning Focus Group
- Reading draft regulations and preparing comments/suggested revisions

Metrics/Performance Measures

Kathy Dorgan ▪

Identify performance measures to track the community's success in achieving its objectives. Tasks include:

- Developing list of performance measures/metrics
- Identifying potential partners to assist in developing baseline information/tracking
- Identifying needed resources

Business Retention

Business Ambassador Program

John McGuire ▪ *Marty Hirschorn* ▪

Develop a formal program for business outreach to improve knowledge of current business climate and business needs. Tasks include:

- Creating a business visitation survey
- Developing a target list of businesses for outreach
- Preparing informational materials, including welcome packets for new businesses
- Identifying strategies for outreach such as individual visits, focus groups, meet and greets, etc.
- Identifying needed resources

Business Recognition and Support

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Develop a program for recognizing, supporting and promoting local businesses. Tasks include:

- Creating formal program for business recognition (i.e. certificates, nominations for Chamber awards, etc.)
- Developing business support/promotional programs (i.e. Local First Mansfield, 'cash mobs,' etc.)
- Identifying needed resources

Business Recruitment

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Develop a business recruitment program. Tasks include:

- Preparing information on how to start a business in Mansfield (registration, permitting, etc.)
- Developing informational materials on Mansfield (print and web)
- Identifying target industries
- Preparing list of potential recruitment tools (i.e. tours, outreach, policy incentives, etc.)
- Identifying needed resources

Regional Coordination

Pat Bresnahan ▪ *Matt Hart* ▪

Develop a formal program for coordinating economic development activities with surrounding communities. Tasks include:

- Identifying target communities for partnerships
- Developing program of events (quarterly regional EDC meetings, civic roundtables/community conversations, etc.)
- Researching joint/regional grant opportunities
- Identifying other regional partners (UConn, Chambers, etc.)
- Identifying needed resources

Mansfield Economic Development Commission

Informal Meeting to Discuss an Initiative to Interview Business Owners in Mansfield

December 16, 2013

Attendees: John McGuire, Marty Hirschorn

1. Questions that would be discussed during an interview:
 - a. Why did you locate your business in Mansfield?
 - b. Did the Mansfield location meet your expectations?
 - c. How have you dealt with the lower population in the summer?
 - d. What are the obstacles to doing business in Mansfield?
 - e. How can the obstacles be mitigated?
 - f. Would organizing local businesses to support tourism, University relations and cooperating with other business help?
 - g. What is your customer mix (% students; % faculty; % Non Faculty Resident;, % Outsiders)
 - h. Do you have ideas that would make Mansfield more attractive to the business environment?
 - i. How can the EDC – (and the Town of Mansfield) be helpful to your business?
2. Determine how business rental rates are established and how competitive they are within the town and compared to nearby towns.
3. Work closely with UConn to encourage their participation. (i.e., some free advertising on WHUS or promotions in the Campus Daily. Meet with someone who can help make the correct contact – i.e. Charlie Eaton, Controller.
4. Schedule meetings with Tolland, Coventry and Bolton EDCs to explore cooperation.
5. Form a committee of three to meet with businesses in the community. The initial round of meetings should be conducted in pairs from the committee.
6. Start from the Municipal Building and work out. Start with business within one mile radius of the Municipal Building, then within a one to three mile radius and then the rest of the town.
7. Establish a list of businesses in the three areas – even if incomplete -- and create a letter of introduction.
8. Develop a Questionnaire to be completed during the interview. A sample is attached (from Leon Florida).

Economic Development Questionnaire

1. Please list our features, regulations, and practices that you consider as **favorable** for economic development:

2. Please list our features, regulations, and practices that you consider **obstacles** to economic development:

3. Please **rank** the following forms of business recruitment **in the order of priorities** we should give them:

- Out of town businesses that invite us to take part in a "city selection competition".
- Out of town businesses we are familiar with and approach to branch/relocate here.
- Local businesses that ask for assistance in expanding current business or opening a new one.
- Local businesses that we know have potential and encourage to expand.

_____ (add others)

4. Briefly describe what you think should be the role of **government** in economic development:

5. Briefly describe what you think should be the role of our **universities** in economic development:

6. Please provide **additional comments, observations, or suggestions** for economic development:

IMPORTANT: Time permitting, we will highlight a few of today's questionnaire responses, please check:

- Yes, you can cite my responses anonymously, No, do not cite my responses openly
- I would like to be called so I can personally sum up my responses (limit 1 minute)

OPTIONAL (Please provide information below if you will like to be contacted for further input on this issue):

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Potential Metrics
prepared by Kathy Dorgan

Workforce Preparation

- Merit Scholars
- Graduation Rate
- Two year Plus

Entrepreneurial/ Innovation Culture

Connectivity

Business Support

- Quality of Life
- Local Purchasing by Institutions
- Available Space
- Cost of Space

Impact

- Income
- Enterprises
- Entrepreneurial Income
- Property Taxes
- Sales Taxes
- Visitors
- Dollars spent by visitors
- Employment Rate

Quality of Life

- Air pollution
- Traffic Congestion
- Safety
- Cultural Option
- Entertainment Options
- Retention of Local Farms
- Walkability
- Affordable Housing
- Water Quality
- Community Perception