

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
CITY HALL  
253 Main Street  
Ansonia, Connecticut 06401  
Telephone (203) 736-5930 FAX (203) 735-5422

Sandro "Vito" Epifano  
*Chairman*  
William Luneski  
*Vice Chairman*  
Ralphine Siggars Ford  
*Secretary*  
Gregg Seccombe  
*Treasurer*

Claude L. Perry, Sr.  
*Executive Director*

## MINUTES

### REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2011 ALDERMANIC CHAMBERS 7:00 PM

The Economic Development Commission held its Regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 6, 2011. The meeting began at 7:10 P.M.

Roll call:

Sandro Epifano	absent
William Luneski	present
James Hooker	absent
William Gallant	present
Greg Seccombe	present
Ralphine Siggars Ford	absent
Terri Goldson	present
Vincent Scarlatta	present

5 present, 3 absent

also present:

John Marini, Alderman  
Tara Kolakowski  
Carol Forcier

Mr. Luneski opened the meeting at 7:10. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mr. Luneski entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Mr. Scarlatta made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goldson. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Lueski then opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Randy Carroll, 40 Fourth Street was present. He asked the Board if they knew what was happening with the former Ansonia Copper and Brass property. The Board informed him that they didn't know what was happening with the property at the present time.

There was no one else that wished to speak during the public session.

Mr. Luneski then moved on to old business. In regard to the business survey, Mr. Scarlatta indicated that from the information gathered from the survey; approximately 50% of the issues that the businesses remarked about were those that the EDC could handle. 75% of those that responded did not know what the Economic Development Commission does and feels that the Commission doesn't do anything. There was mention that there are different issues that concern the Wakelee Avenue businesses have compared to those of the businesses on Main Street. He then indicated that he was able to speak with the production manager of Farrels/Ansonia Copper and Brass.

Mr. Carroll asked if he could address the board again. He was told that he could. Mr. Carroll stated that he attended the Land Trust with the Board of Alderman where they discussed the Ansonia Copper and Brass property as well as the property across from the Police station, if the city is still interested in taking over these properties in lieu of taxes. He was wondering if Mr. Scarlatta was aware of this and if this was going to happen. He was told that this was not discussed at all. It was more of a social call.

Mr. Luneski stated that he feels that this is an excellent beginning to what we as a board needs to do to connect with the small businesses in the city. He requested that there be a motion to continue to have the survey as a part of the agenda. Mr. Goldson suggested that the commission continue to seek input from the small businesses and to have an open dialogue with them. Alderman Marini asked if the survey was ready to be published at this time. If not, what would be a good return rate that would have useful statistics? Mr. Scarlatta stated that he does not think it's ready at this time and as a matter of fact, he feels that this is actually a "no confidence" vote from the businesses. He further stated that he feels that we should have at least a 50% response before we could share it with the public. Mr. Luneski stated that he was told that some of the businesses thought that they were reporting the information back to the city and thus were apprehensive about responding to it. He further explained that we need to build our credibility before we could do anything further.

Mr. Scarlatta stated that we may be able to get more responses if we enlisted the help of other people. He spoke to the principal of the High School and they discussed the possibility of having some of the students go to the businesses and gather responses from them as part of a community service project. The school feels that this would be a great project for the students.

Mr. Goldson suggested that the board is going in the right direction, but he feels that they should focus on a specific area of the city. Alderman Marini suggests that they use the students to gather more responses from the businesses and then move on from there. He further suggested that some type of press release come out of the office regarding the survey, possibly in the

Mr. Scarlatta made a motion to continue to research putting together a volunteer group of high school students to assist the commission regarding the survey. The motion was seconded by Mr. Seccombe. All

were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Luneski stated that one of the suggestions that some of the businesses made are to have a web site attached to the City of Ansonia web site with a directory of the businesses in the city. He has contacted a web developer that may be able to do this for the city pro bono.

Alderman Marini asked if the results of the survey were ever published. He was told that they have already been published on the City of Ansonia's web site. Mr. Goldson suggested that a brief synopsis of the data from the survey be published in an executive summary via a press release that includes what the board will do with this information. Mr. Luneski stated that he would like to have this created and presented to the board for the next meeting.

Alderman Marini stated that the Ansonia Business Counsel was a group where the business owners were able to gather monthly and network and gather ideas, etc. Unfortunately, this group has become a bit inactive lately. He believes that the last meeting was held in the spring time. Mr. Luneski is willing to revive this group again, but Alderman Marini stated that he believes that they need to speak to the Mayor regarding this before it could move forward.

Mr. Luneski requested that a motion be made regarding stopping the existing data for the survey so that we can move forward. He stated that the motion should be to cut off the existing survey and gathering the data for it and create an executive summary to be reviewed at the next meeting and then published afterward. Mr. Gallant made the motion as stated. Mr. Seccombe seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Mr. Gallant made a motion to revive the Ansonia Business Council. Mr. Luneski stated that he believed that this was beyond the scope of the commission. A member of the board could be a part of this group as a liaison. A brief discussion regarding this motion took place and Mr. Gallant withdrew the motion. He then made a motion to draft a letter to the Mayor that he revitalizes the Ansonia Business Council. Mr. Scarlatta seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

Moving on to New Business, Mr. Luneski stated that there is a problem with absenteeism on the board. He was told by the former chairman that the board could adopt rules for the commission. He drafted a preliminary template that he based upon what the City of Danbury has in place. He opened it up for discussion. Mr. Scarlatta stated that he uses much of his personal time to work on business, he feels that when they cannot act on some items because of a lack of a quorum at a meeting, it's a waste of his time. Mr. Goldson asked what the city's current policy for the other boards. He was told that there are only two boards or commissions that have an attendance policy stated in the Charter. One of those boards is Planning and Zoning. The other board is possibly Recreation. The understanding is that in order to institute an attendance policy, it may have to go to Charter Revision. Alderman Marini suggested that this be reviewed by Corporation Council before going ahead with this. Mr. Goldson suggested that this is looked at further before being adopted.

Mr. Scarlatta made a motion to investigate having an attendance policy for the board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Seccombe.

Roll call:

Sandro Epifano	absent
William Luneski	yes
James Hooker	absent
William Gallant	abstain
Greg Seccombe	yes
Ralphine Siggars Ford	absent
Terri Goldson	no
Vincent Scarlatta	yes

3 yes, 1 abstain, 1 no

The motion passed.

There was a long discussion regarding the pros and cons of having an attendance policy such as this. Mr. Scarlatta volunteered to work on this project.

Mr. Luneski presented a suggestion on having a file to be kept by the secretary of all of the projects that the commission will be discussing and dealing with. He suggested that each of these projects be assigned a specific number, a date and a short title for tracking the projects. Alderman Marini asked how this would actually look. He was told that the commission would break down each of the pieces of the projects and have a way to keep on top of them. Alderman Marini stated that presently we have a system of identifying each project as “old business” and “new business”. He wonders if this is basically reinventing the wheel. He feels that this may be a bit cumbersome for someone to be able to take care of. Mr. Luneski stated that it would possibly be that the secretary keeps a lock box of all of the files that she would transport to all of the meetings and the board would be able to research any project at a given time. Mr. Gallant stated that he felt that the board is not there yet. The Board decided to table this idea for the present time.

Alderman Marini stated that he had an idea that he felt that the Board may want to get involved with. He stated that Universities have a way of raising funds all the time even in a bad economy. He suggested that we form a fundraising type of committee. He suggested contacting former residents of the city in order to raise funds for various projects such as the Armory. He suggested that we ask the Mayor to create an LLC in order to do some fundraising rather than to raise taxes. This could be a way to supplement grants. He suggested that the board contact the Mayor and asking for his input regarding this idea. Mr. Seccombe questioned if this was part of the duties of the commission or if this was something more than what the board is able to do. Mr. Goldson questioned if this was actually the role of the Board to do this.

Mr. Secombe made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goldson. All were in favor of the motion.

The meeting ended at 9:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Sardinha  
Secretary