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4 **Economic Development Commission**
5 **Regular Meeting Minutes**
6 **January 7, 2013**
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9 **Members Present:** Joseph Mirra, Chairman
10 Richard Nunn, Vice-Chair
11 Mark Gingras
12 Rosemarie Preneta
13

14
15 **Members Absent:** Gary Fappiano
16 Tom Collette
17 Jim Wolfe
18

19 **Others Present:** Dr. Sal Menzo, Supt. Of Schools
20 Doreen DeSarro, Bus. Recruiter
21 Lynn Wolff, Secretary
22 Eric Vo, Record-Journal
23

24 Chairman Joe Mirra called the meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at
25 6:32 p.m.
26

27 1. **GUEST:** Joe Mirra introduced Dr. Menzo and asked everyone to introduce themselves to him.
28 Some of the points by Dr. Memzo include:

- 29 • Over the last three years, both the elementary schools and middle schools have been
30 restructured. The elementary schools are now K-2 and 3-5. Middle schools have
31 upgraded their technology, including ceiling projectors, wi-fi and new computers.
- 32 • The test scores are the highest since 2006
- 33 • Middle schools are now able, as a result of restructuring, to offer 3 years of language
34 and music, without additional budget costs.
- 35 • He hopes, next year, to offer Spanish to students in 3rd grade. By starting in 3rd grade, a
36 student could take as many as 3 languages over the next 9 years of school.
- 37 • Plans are underway to transform the high schools over the next 2.5 years; plans include
38 offering more project-based classes (internships and externships).
- 39 • Dr. Menzo was able to get donations from businesses to fund three paid sabbaticals.
40 Two teachers and one administrator are currently on a year-long sabbatical. Their
41 mission was to identify a problem in the Town's schools and propose a solution. They
42 want to achieve a 100% graduation rate. One of the first events is a January 15

43 luncheon/discussion on how to achieve this goal. Attendees are urged to read the book
44 entitled, "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success"; copies have been distributed and
45 read by school staff and administrators, parents and community leaders. Dr. Menzo said
46 if an EDC member needs a copy of the book to call his office. The library also has
47 copies and Spanish versions are available through SCOW. Once the community read is
48 completed, the books will be returned to the school and assigned as summer reading to
49 local students. Other events are planned, including a discussion on March 20 hosted by
50 TV news anchor Al Terzi; a discussion about core values for the Town (also in March);
51 and a visit by the book's author, Carol Dweck, in the fall.

52 Mark Gingras asked Dr. Menzo for a copy of the schedule of events; Dr. Menzo said
53 he would do so.

- 54 • There is a plan to host another bus tour with real estate agents to show them the
55 schools and the area.
- 56 • The BOE received a state grant to fund Adult Education and Alternative Education
57 internships with Holo-Krome and Ulbrich.
- 58 • Dr. Menzo is trying to find money to fund a food truck, which would offer food prepared
59 by VoAg.
- 60 • Lyman Hall High School is currently farming salmon and tilapia in cooperation with the
61 Sound School. By 2014-15, Dr. Menzo would like the school to have a fish market to
62 sell the product.
- 63 • Dick Nunn asked about adult education. Dr. Menzo said Paul Flinter is the new Director
64 and sees the programs expanding. There has been an increase in interest in classes for
65 the medical field, in particular.
- 66 • The school system is currently working on ways to improve school security.
- 67 • The high schools will offer robotics in the fall.

68
69 Mark Gingras asked if the EDC could get a brief recap of what Dr. Menzo outlined tonight;
70 Mark said it would be useful when we meet with businesses. Dr. Menzo said he has a power
71 point program that he would send to the EDC. He also said that if the EDC ever needs him to
72 talk with any company about the Town's schools, he would be happy to do so.

73 Joe Mirra and the EDC thanked Dr. Menzo for coming; he left at 7:05 p.m.

74

75 **2. Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated December 3, 2012 –**

76 **Mark Gingras made a motion to approve the December 3, 2012 regular meeting minutes**

77 as drafted; Rosemarie Preneta seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion
78 carried.

79

80 3. **Election of Officers** – Mark Gingras nominated Joe Mirra as Chairman and Dick Nunn as
81 Vice-Chair; Rosemarie Preneta seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion
82 carried.

83

84 4. **Review of Monthly Expenditure Report - 2012** – The secretary said that, based on office
85 accounts, almost half of the budget was expended by December 31, as anticipated.

86

87 5. **Staff Reports** - Doreen DeSarro distributed and reviewed the December marketing report (*copy*
88 *attached*). Some of the items mentioned: the draft budget will be reviewed with the Marketing
89 Committee on January 23 and presented to the EDC at its February meeting; March 21 is the
90 date for the Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce Business Expo and the Marketing Committee is
91 working on plans for a retractable banner for use at this event.

92

93 6. **Committee Reports**

- 94 • **Marketing** – Mark Gingras said the Committee discussed the highway sign on the Merritt,
95 whether to keep it or consider putting up something at the railroad station. He commented
96 that he has gotten a lot of positive feedback on the I-91 signage.
- 97 • **P&Z Liaison** – Joe Mirra said Jim Wolfe and Don Roe were attending a joint meeting on the
98 Incentive Housing Zone held tonight between Town Council and the Planning & Zoning
99 Commission.
- 100 • **Retention/Incentives** – Rosemarie Preneta said the Committee will meet on January 10.
101 The Committee will meet with Jim Krupp to discuss his offer of assistance to local
102 businesses.

103 Doreen DeSarro told the EDC that company visits have been scheduled for February 26
104 and February 28 and asked for suggestions about who to visit. Rosemarie Preneta
105 suggested Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

106

107 7. **Discussion Regarding Meeting and Committee Scheduling** – Joe Mirra said it was
108 suggested that the EDC monthly meeting start at 6 pm and be limited to 1 hour. This change
109 would allow staff to schedule a committee meeting either before or after the monthly meeting.
110 What did members think about this suggestion? The EDC agreed to the suggestion and said
111 staff can work with the committees to revise their meeting schedules.

112

113 **8. Regional Matters**

114 • **Central CT Alliance for Economic Development** – Doreen DeSarro said the group will be
115 meeting tomorrow. Also, an e-newsletter will be sent out in January.

116 • **Greater NH Chamber of Commerce** – No report.

117 • **New Haven Manufacturers Association** – No report.

118 • **Quinnipiac Chamber of Commerce** – Doreen DeSarro reminded the EDC about the
119 Mayor’s State of the Town on January 22. Rosemarie Preneta, Joe Mirra and Dick Nunn
120 plan to attend. *Doreen will contact the other Commissioners to see if they plan to attend.*

121 • **REX** – No report.

122 • **Workforce Alliance** – Joe Mirra said the Workforce Alliance is having a workshop targeted
123 to unemployed management; a flyer was distributed. The free workshop will be held at the
124 Public Library on February 8 from 9:30 am to 4 pm and includes lunch. Space is limited so
125 anyone interested in attending should quickly contact Workforce Alliance. Joe asked if Mark
126 Gingras would take Laura Collins of Collins Group (who is leading the workshop) to an
127 upcoming Rotary meeting. Joe said she is willing to make a presentation or just attend to
128 promote the workshop during “Happy Buck” time; Mark will make some calls on Tuesday.

129

130 **9. Community Involvement** – The secretary distributed a copy of the new bus route and
131 schedule.

132

133 **There being no further business, Mark Gingras made a motion to adjourn the meeting at**
134 **7:40 p.m.; Dick Nunn seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

135

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Sincerely,

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Lynn M. Wolff, Secretary

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Attachment

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