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Economic Development Commission

Branford, Connecticut

MINUTES from: **September 4, 2024** held at Joe Trapasso Community House - 46 Church St - Branford

Meeting was called to order at 8:03am Present were Commission Members: R.Squeglia (Chair), E.Cahill, A.Canosa, J.Fennell, F.Hird, K.Ragonese, First Selectman J.Cosgrove, Shoreline Chamber of Commerce President Dee Jacob, Mary Howard from ABCT, and Perry Maresca (Staff).

Approval of Minutes: Motion to accept July Minutes by A.Canosa, seconded by K.Ragonese passed unanimously.

Staff Report: P.Maresca- Town Center Merchants Sidewalk Sale was held August 8/9/10. Los Charros on North Main St is changing to The Essex Brassiere with same owner and expanded menu from the restaurant in Old Saybrook.

Planning & Zoning Report: P.Maresca- Application presented for oil change facility at 1201 West Main St. Public Hearing closed for apartments and storage facility at 329 East Main St. WPCA is conducting tests to address concerns by a Commercial Parkway property owner. Additional tie-ins could be at stake.

Commissioners' Comments: Frank Hird spoke of interested party creating a Biotech Cluster requiring 25,000sq' that could be boosted with available Grants. Future meeting scheduled to consider options. Existing buildings a plus. Mary Howard noted that improvements made by the town can be included in the grant process.

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce: Dee Jacob- Women of Excellence Luncheon well attended. Local Shoreline Gift Guide will be distributed electronically and promoted as *Shop Local; Shop the Shoreline*. Tie in with big raffle prizes of \$15,000 to \$25,000. TownGuide distributing at the BigE. The Health and Wellness Fair is scheduled for November 2nd at the YMCA. Autac on Thompson Rd celebrated over eight years of accident-free in the workplace. Many of Chamber's small businesses are affected by the increased electric bills.

Selectman's Report: Jamie Cosgrove- Personal property tax exemptions continue to be a concern especially with BioTech and other companies with lab equipment. Overall business climate is positive.

Old Business: Chairman Rich Sgueglia noted how the social media is sparking excitement about Branford. Al Canosa spoke on how the 18 posts in 28 days were seen by over 2,000 people, resulting in 130 followers. The SEO will allow us to determine prospective areas and business to target. Through the efforts of the summer intern, we now have multiple lists detailing the types, sizes, sales, and amount of employees within Branford.

New Business: There were two Demolition Applications. Commission had no objections for removal of structure at 91 Highland Ave nor structures at 558 West Main St. There was no other correspondence in the mail. There was no public comment.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:10am after a motion by A.Canosa and seconded by J.Fennell. Next Regular Meeting to be held on **October 2nd, 2024**.

<https://www.bestcitiesforbusiness.net>

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Perry Maresca · Economic and Business Development Manager

Richard Sgueglia (Chair) · Elena Cahill · Al Canosa · Jim Fennell · Frank Hird · Karen Ragonese · Jared Schulefand
First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove [ex officio]

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