



**TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT**  
**Economic & Community Development Department**  
2750 Dixwell Avenue  
Hamden, Connecticut 06518

**Dale Kroop, Director**

Town of Hamden  
Economic Development Commission

Minutes of the SPECIAL MEETING of **Tuesday, August 20, 2013** in the Third Floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center, 2750 Dixwell Avenue, at 5:30PM

Commissioners in attendance: Anthony Sacchetti, Bob Zambrano, Anthony DelGrego, Steve Diaz  
Steve Rolnick, David DeNicola, Rachel Gretencord

Commissioners Excused: Anthony Inzero, Dolores Giannini, Sherri Borelli, Donald Moses

Others in Attendance: Director of Economic & Community Development Dale Kroop, Gerry Tobin,  
Commission Clerk

1. Call to order

Mr. Sachetti called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

2. Reading and Approval of minutes of July 9, 2013

**Ms. Gretencord made a motion to approve the minutes of July 9, 2013. Mr. Diaz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

3. Report of the Director

Financials – Mr. Kroop reported that Mo's Southwest Grill was paid. The committee approved a loan for Hamden Dental for \$25,000 for dental equipment, but they ended up turning us down. We incurred some legal fees. They planned to spend \$130,000, and ended up spending \$50,000. They didn't spend enough to get incentives. They ended up not collecting any of what we were giving them. \$8,000 is committed to projects and some was returned to the kitty for incentives. The Council has Burt Processing before them for review at their next cycle. Financials are attached and show \$95,608.78 in accounts receivable.

Regarding the micro loans, we have problems here. Mr. Kroop distributed information. We have five loans out now. Mr. Kroop said two pay religiously, DeSorbo, and Augur. Lenox has Alphabet Academy. They have other properties and are opening up a day care at Yale. They seem to be always behind. Mr. Kroop spoke to the principal and told him he should just pay off the loan. He said he might want to borrow more from us. They are now three months behind. Mr. Kroop contacted the principal's wife today and told her that they owe us three months. Clean Gear keeps

making attempts, pays triple payments and then no payments. We have a mortgage position on the home. We don't want to put him out of business. They have one substantial loan and one small one. Mr. Sachetti said both Clean Gear and Lenox don't see the urgency in paying their loans. Mr. Zambrano asked Mr. Rolnick if we don't demand, do we forgo our right to demand. Mr. Rolnick said no, that contract language usually addresses that situation. Mr. Kroop has told the principal that if he doesn't pay, we will have to go after him. Mr. DeNicola asked if their taxes were current, and Mr. Kroop didn't know the answer. Regarding Clean Gear, Mr. Kroop gave Richard Pearce the assignment to take a look at Clean Gear's books and try to help him. M. Pearce reported 4-5 months ago that his revenues were increasing, he planned to make triple payments to pay off the small loan, and then pay down the larger loan. He hoped to capture certain markets (sports equipment), but horses became the major portion of his business.

The Board felt we should get Attorney Susman involved and demand payment. Discussion followed. Mr. DeNicola asked if this would put him out of business. Mr. Rolnick said we could put an attachment on his house. Mr. DeNicola asked if there was any way to extend the loan to make his payments more palatable. Mr. Rolnick suggested we could ask for automatic payments from his checking account. Mr. Kroop would like to see him pay off the small loan and get that one out of the way. If he says no to the automatic payments, then we will know there is no money. Mr. Kroop will have Attorney Susman look into the note.

Mr. Kroop wants Lenox to start paying. Lenox is located on Benham Street. The property at Colonial Tymes is leased from Mr. Perrotti. We want a guarantee from the day care at the Colonial Tymes property. We need to hold more security. Mr. DelGregio suggested we have Attorney Susman send him a letter. They purchased the property on Benham Street. Mr. Rolnick said we should get a mortgage on the Benham Street property. The other loan was for renovations. The total of the loans was probably \$50,000

Mr. Kroop said we are not getting a plethora of applications, but we do have money to lend. He will be doing a mass mailing of the commission's brochures. ECD is using Constant Contact for mailing, and they will include the Spanish markets starting in September. The brochure is on the web site, and they have it in PDF form. The Spanish language brochure is still under review.

C-Pace – tax financing program for energy improvements. Mr. Kroop brought this proposal to the Legislative Council at their last cycle, and things did not go well. C-Pace is a finance mechanism for financing energy improvements (large projects). We will have a FAQ on the web site. There were concerns about the program costing the Town money and extra work for the Tax Office. The Tax Office would bill monthly for the loan payment and would collect the payment and eventually C-Pace would receive a check from the Town. Mr. Kroop said because of the \$150,000 minimum requirement, they would probably only have one or two projects per year. C-Pace has been passed by almost 60 towns in Connecticut, but the proposal looked like it was going to fail at the Council meeting. Things got out of control. Republicans and Democrats alike were against it. At the end, it was tabled. Mr. Rolnick suggested the next time it goes to Council, we should have speakers from other towns come in and talk about how it works.

Mr. Kroop said his Department is putting together podcasts with Richard Pearce, showing the major elements of the services we provide and inviting businesses to come in and learn something.

Mr. Kroop said he took a break from the speaker series, and asked commissioners if they want speakers for the October, November and December commission meetings. He thought employee benefits, and healthcare exchanges (which come into effect 10/1) would be interesting topics. Commissioners should submit topic suggestions to Mr. Kroop.

Mr. Kroop wants to do upgrades to the web site including job training, and he will contact Steve Diaz.

Corporation Business – HEDC secured a five million dollar grant to turn the Newhall Community Center into business incubator space. Mr. Kroop is doing the paperwork now for the State, and this requires approval by the Legislative Council. This has received a lot of publicity and will receive a lot more. Work will probably begin by spring of 2014. It is hoped that twenty businesses will locate there.

Newhallville structural improvement program – several commissioners toured the area to look at structural improvements to the houses. Five million dollars was spent, 95 houses were repaired, and several local contractors were used. That program is coming to a close. It has been 2.5 years. Mr. DeNicola asked if the people that had work done (foundations, cracks, new windows, etc.) stayed. Mr. Kroop replied that some did. Eight houses were purchased and demolished, and new homes will be built on the lots. Some of the lots are adjacent, and a couple are non-conforming. One will be purchased by a church for use as a parking lot. We now own one house. Every house we rehabbed we sold almost immediately. Mr. Kroop has told people about the incubator businesses moving in, the plans for the parks to be renovated, and there is another school interested in the old Middle School. The outside grounds will be remediated by RWA partially this year, and once a use is determined, they will finish remediation. A study was done that relieved concerns about the interior of the building.

4. Old Business:

5. New Business:

6. Project Updates: Redevelopment, Openings, Etc.

Mr. Kroop reported that some businesses closed and some are opening. He distributed a schedule of grand openings. The positives are Campus Customs, B&D Deli at the corner of Todd Street and Whitney Avenue, DC Luxe Designs, Q Bank ( beautiful building) and Monkey Joe's on Marne Street (a kids party place where planet fitness used to be). After labor day there will be a grand opening of Hamden Dental and a new photography studio in Highwood Square. A smoke shop which also sells lottery tickets will open near SiManga where Emerald Bakery was located. A sale is pending on the smoke shop at the corner of Whitney Avenue and Colonial Drive.

Negatives: Griff's Chicken closed, Midas Muffler closed, the frozen yogurt shop at Tommy Kaye's Plaza closed. Also the Jamaican Jerk business in the Hamden Plaza closed, but Verizon Wireless moved into that space. Another Whitney Avenue deli temporarily closed due to internal issues, but they plan to reopen. (Enzo's).

Mr. Kroop mentioned that a franchise – Massage Envy – with over 3000 franchises in the country is planning to open in Hamden. There is lots of activity going on. Mr. DeNicola asked about the Whitney Avenue/Colonial Drive nail place and cigar store. Mr. Kroop said reports are a bank is going on that corner. Also, there are reports that another doctor is planning to move in to the office building on the opposite corner.

#### 7. Adjournment

**Mr. Zambrano made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Diaz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

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