



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

**Dale Kroop, Director**

**Minutes:** The Economic Development Commission, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Steve Diaz, Anthony DelGrego, Anthony Sachetti, Rachel Gretencord, Steve Rolnick, David DeNicola, Donald Moses, Robert Zambrano, Armando Rodriguez

Others in Attendance: Economic Development Director Dale Kroop  
Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

1. Call to order

Mr. Sachetti called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Reading and Approval of minutes of the Meeting of May 13, 2014

Review informal notes of June 10 and July 8, 2014

On Page 1, item 2, change Mr. DelGrego seconded to Mr. Zambrano seconded  
Correct Mr. Rodriguez' name under attendance and on Page 2, first line.

**Mr. DelGrego made a motion to approve the May 13, 2014 minutes as corrected. Mr. Diaz second the motion. Ms. Gretencord abstained. The vote was eight in favor.**

3. Report of the Director

Mr. Kroop thanked everyone for their support and well wishes during his recovery from his recent heart attack. He is back to work part time and starts cardiac rehab tomorrow.

Mr. Kroop reported that all micro loans are paid up to date. We will be paying out Burt Processing and Moler shortly, because they are both complete. We have one more to reapprove tonight. We have \$416,000 on hand, plus accounts receivable in the amount of \$26,668.

4. Old Businesses

3 year plan – As previously discussed, the Ordinance runs out on 12/31/14. Basically, the Ordinance gives us the ability to offer the incentives. Because of Mr. Kroop's health issues he will ask the council to extend the current plan to June 30<sup>th</sup> if necessary. The subcommittee should start formulating the new plan over the next couple of months.

Mr. Kroop said his contract expires around the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in November. He spoke to the Mayor's office and told them he won't be back 100% until well into the fall, but for 16 years the Town has been getting a very good deal. He is hoping to make Sharon permanent very soon.. So much of what he does is clerical. A grad school student as Economic Development Coordinator would be a perfect addition to his staff at a salary of somewhere in the 40's. He is expecting some help in his office. He will ask the commission to write a letter, sign it, and attend the council meeting when it

comes up, but if there is anything commissioners feel should be mentioned, in the letter, either speak to him tonight, or email him. The way the Charter reads, his contract can only go one year beyond the Mayor's term. Extending the plan will allow him to finish his conversations with the Mayor about the future.

Mr. Sachetti mentioned that the Town only funds 50% of Mr. Kroop's salary, which means he has to raise the other half through grants, etc. The contract ensures that he will get paid no matter what and it is a commitment that goes beyond the current Council's time, so if the Mayor doesn't win, his contract would overlap and he gets to work with the new Mayor who has a chance to get to know him. Mr. Kroop said he probably has ten more years to work and likes the security of the Contract. If you read the Hamden Charter, it does not mention that the Mayor has to appoint an Economic Development Director, only that there has to be an Economic Development Department. There were six people in nine years in Mr. Kroop's position before he came here. Another reason for the contract is that some of the projects take 3, 5 or 7 years to complete.

Mr. Sachetti said we also have to look at the successes of the Corporation over the last few years. The corporation is managing the remediation and restoration of Mill Rock Park and Rochford Field. There are a lot of details to this \$12 million dollar project. The costs are shared one third Town and two thirds State funding. Commissioners hope to get Mr. Kroop's salary fully funded.

The PhilMor application was approved in June but we didn't have a quorum. This will go on the October Council agenda. They will be investing \$3.7 million for a self storage building on a \$700,000 parcel of land on Putnam Avenue near the industrial park. There is no grant involved, and permit waivers are not allowed at that level of investment per Ordinance. The new assessor was at the meeting. A declining tax abatement of 40%, 30%, and 20% is recommended. This property has been on the market since 2009.

**Mr. Zambrano made a motion to approve the incentive as presented. Attorney Rolnick seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

Mr. Kroop said the Lock Tight self storage facility on Sherman Avenue might be bought out by these people.

## 5. New Businesses

### 6. Project Updates: Redevelopment, Openings, Etc.

The self-storage facility on the former SBC property is a higher level facility. The company is out of Ohio and they have a few facilities in the North East. This facility is subject to new zoning regulations. Their market is older or older middle age. They will probably be ready by spring and figure it will take two or three years to lease up. These two self storage facilities will add \$9 million to our tax base.

The owners of Mather and Dixwell still plan to build 10,000 SF retail, but it will not be a dollar store.

The property at 100 Skiff Street has been sold at auction. This all happened around the time Mr. Kroop was out. They hired an auction company to see if they could get someone to bite. They started at the high number \$2.5 million and kept going down until someone bid. He heard the property went for under \$1 million to a residential developer that will build rental housing. There have been many potential developers for this site over the years including Target, Loews, a movie theater, self storage, the Berkshire shopping center, and numerous housing and student housing

projects. There was discussion on the Farmington Canal Greenway and the tunnel. Attorney Rolnick felt the trail would be a plus.

Mr. Kroop heard about two food establishments, a restaurant and a food store, showing interest on Dixwell Avenue next to Bed Bath and Beyond.

Muscle Maker opened in old Nine West site in the Hamden Mart. They sell healthy fresh food.

Burt Processing – one of Hamden's best manufacturing companies is having a ribbon cutting at their new facility on Overlook Drive on Tuesday from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. We have helped them with incentives two or three times. They manufacture sewage treatment equipment. They have the largest solar array of any property in Hamden. They will have an open house from 10-3 on that day, but the speakers and festivities will happen at noon.

Ibiza in New Haven sold, but Hamden survived and is doing well.

Mr. Kroop reported that the Hamden Plaza, and Hamden Mart are 100% occupied. Staples plaza has 10,000 sf available. Home Depot is almost 100%.

A preferred developer has been chosen for the old Middle School property. If you think about all of the investments in Newhallville, the incubator, the parks being completely redone, and now a good offer for the Middle School, which will take some years to complete, this is exciting. Mr. Kroop doesn't want to say any more at this time.

The Hamden Incubator is finishing up a small project in the basement. Mr. Kroop has raised over \$8 million toward that project with no debt and hopefully construction will start in November.

Mr. Zambrano asked about the \$285,000 in tax credits. Mr. Kroop said the Corporation owns a lot on Newhall Street and they are working with a developer that designs Leed Certified housing. Mr. Kroop applied to CHFA and CHIF for \$450,000, which is more than you could sell the house for. We have an allocation of combined funding for \$450,000 and a tax credit allocation for \$285,000 and the house gets sold. This will be a zero energy house with garage and inlaw apartment. You secure the loan but you don't take the money until you find someone to purchase the tax credits, which is a credit on their corporate taxes owed to the State of Connecticut. HDEC owns the project until the house is sold. This is a boutique type of financing. He had six weeks to find a buyer for the credits or they would be lost. He contacted several C type corporation, and CLP wil purchase the credits. Most urban projects sell for less than the cost to build. This project is on Newhall Street, across from the incubator and will make a big statement regarding energy efficiency.

There was discussion on the future use of the old Hamden Middle School. There have been two RFP's the first yielding nothing and the second yielding three proposals, one of which looks promising.

Mr. Sachetti thanked everyone for attending.

7. Adjournment

**Ms. Gretencprd made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Moses seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.**

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