

Approved

MEETING MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
NOVEMBER 20, 2019 8:00 AM  
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
31555 W. ELEVEN MILE ROAD  
FARMINGTON HILLS MI 48336

**CALLED TO ORDER BY:** CHAIRMAN CANTOR AT 8:04 AM.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** ANHUT, BEIERMEISTER, CANTOR, ELLIOTT, HARTSOCK, LINDSEY-FEAGIN, ZACHOS

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** SLAUGHTER

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Samantha Seimer, Economic Development Director; Gary Mekjian, Assistant City Manager; Diane Holcomb; Ronnie Jamil; Wafaa Jamil;

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Beiermesiter, support by Elliott, to approve the agenda as presented.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 18, 2019:**

Motion by Beiermeister, support by Hartsock to approve the minutes as submitted.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:**

- a. **Presentation of Small Business Retention Award**
  - Chairman Cantor turned the meeting over to Mr. Elliott to present the first City of Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation Small Business Retention Award.
  - Ronnie and Wafaa Jamil were present to accept the award. Ronnie purchased the shopping center at 29970 W 12 Mile Road. He purchased the plaza two years ago but has had his business, Bella Vino at that location since 1998. Mr. Jamil informed the board that his current tenants include his business, Bella Vino; a pizza shop, Bella Mia; Farmhouse Coffee and Ice Cream; School of Dance; a massage parlor and incoming new tenant. He and his wife have lived in Farmington Hills for over 20 years. Mr. Jamil thanked the City for their support over the years. Mr. Jamil noted that they renamed the plaza, “Nathan’s Plaza,” after his late brother.
- b. **13<sup>th</sup> Year Update**
  - Chairman Cantor stated that he sent an electronic update to the Board from Ms. Bauman at Farmington Public Schools about the 13<sup>th</sup> Year Program.
  - Mr. Beiermeister stated that he has an upcoming meeting with Dr. Hererra, it was suggested that the potential for partnerships be discussed, indicating the three current EDC members who are interested in being involved.
  - Mr. Hartsock also spoke about being involved in career day at the schools.
  - Involvement in the 13<sup>th</sup> year program should be taken incrementally with primary buy-in from the schools.
- c. **Hawk Incubator Update**
  - Ms. Seimer informed the Board that the RFP for a feasibility study was extended for an additional week. As the deadline approached, there was only one response. She reviewed the summary of bids with the Board. It was added that Ms. Seimer, Chairman Cantor, Mr. Boyer and Ms. Monico would be meeting later in the afternoon to review the bids and how to proceed.
- d. **Historical Relationships with Other Boards and Commissions**
  - Chairman Cantor stated that The EDC has supported and worked with many other City Boards and Commissions including the Beautification Commission, and played a role in the conception of the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority.

- Chairman Cantor spoke about the Community for a Lifetime designation and would like to work with the Commission on Aging to promote Farmington Hills as a Community for a Lifetime on the website, city signage and marketing materials. He suggested having the Commission on Aging present to the EDC in January.
  - Chairman Cantor added that Children Youth and Families have a variety of afterschool programs that the EDC could be involved with.
  - He wants the EDC to be aware of what other groups in the community are doing and see where the EDC can support and get involved.
  - It was suggested to organize a meeting with the Chair of each commission to talk about projects and select opportunities for synergies where we could work together.
- e. **City Board and Commission Involvement**
- Discussed in agenda item e above.
- f. **Interests/Issues Committee Discussion**
- Chairman Cantor suggested having an interests/issues committee to discuss potential upcoming issues, or ways to be more involved
  - Mr. Zachos stated that one of the largest challenges to the EDC is its lack of funding. It was suggested that the EDC explore how it can generate some revenue to help support projects with a larger impact. Ms. Seimer will do some research and report in our first quarter of 2020.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

a. **Tech248**

- Ms. Seimer gave the Board an update on involvement with Tech248. She reviewed that Tech248 is an initiative that started with Oakland County, the County divided its geography into five areas based on the concentration of tech-based businesses. Farmington Hills, Southfield, Lathrup Village, and Farmington are in the South-Central District. Each district hosts approximately two meet-ups annually. Oakland County is home to 2,000 tech firms with 42,000 tech jobs, more than twice the number of any county in Michigan and 58% of regional Detroit's tech.
- Tech248 is designed to help businesses grow, connect firms to top talent and create better brand awareness through the network.
- Ms. Seimer reviewed that Farmington Hills will be more involved in this program moving forward. She invited the EDC to attend the Centrepolis Accelerator Special Event on December 3 and added that Farmington Hills company AGC will be hosting an event in mid-January with many other companies interested in hosting an event in the future. EDC members are encouraged these meetings showing our interest and involvement.
- Ms. Seimer stated that she will send the flyer to the EDC Board electronically and can register members if necessary.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

a. **Business Incubator**

- Discussed in agenda item C of the Chair's Report.

b. **Connected Farmington Hills**

- Ms. Seimer reviewed the marketing materials that were presented for Connected Farmington Hills at the Oakland County One Stop Ready Showcase on November 1. She thanked Mr. Zachos for his support at the event and stated that Connected Farmington Hills was received well by developers and community partners. An email list has been started for the future listserv newsletter.
- Ms. Seimer stated that the survey is ready and she will be meeting with the Chamber to discuss a distribution strategy soon.

**BOARD MEMBER'S COMMENTS:**

- Mr. Anhut spoke about his new experience no longer serving as the Chair of the EDC. He stated that he continues to make cold calls and assist Chairman Cantor through the transition. Mr. Anhut spoke about many developments in the community including The Edge Fitness and the newly renovated Rivera Theater at the West River Shopping Center. He added that he was contacted by Mercedes Benz Financial Services regarding their new

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development and corresponding zoning text amendments. (Samantha: did anything come of this contact to include here? If not, we may want to leave it out.) Beaumont has opened up a new Urgent Care facility in the former Zak's restaurant on Grand River. Mr. Elliott spoke highly of the many developments occurring in the community. He added that Ginopolis has closed permanently and demolition should begin soon to prepare the site for redevelopment. He added that Edward Rose is working with the Mercy property and the Sarah Fisher Site is back on the market with a variety of interest.

- Ms. Lindsey-Feagin stated that Bosch North America is doing well, adding that the company is completely self-funded, and tightening budgets on a global level.
- Mr. Hartsock asked about the vacancy on the EDC. Ms. Seimer stated that there is currently one vacancy on the Board from the departure of Ms. Martin from the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Hartsock suggested potentially making a recommendation to the Mayor for TR Carr since he was always present at EDC meetings, actively involved in the board and has prior economic development experience. Chair Cantor is pursuing several options here before a decision is made.
- Mr. Zachos spoke about the importance of talent in the Connected Farmington Hills marketing – noting the need for attracting a young vibrant crowd to the workforce and community. This also works together with the mentorship aspect of the EDC.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Ms. Holcomb offered to assist with the 13<sup>th</sup> Year Program.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- The next meeting of the EDC will be December 18, 2019 at 8:00 AM.

Chairman Cantor adjourned the meeting at 9:02 AM

Minutes drafted by: Samantha Seimer