

**Caroline Simmons**  
Mayor

**John R. Varamo**  
Analyst, Economic  
Development



**COMMISSION**  
**James Huerta**  
Chairman

**Stephen Fischer**  
Vice Chairman

**Mark Diamond ESQ.**  
Secretary

**Margaret Feeney**  
Member

**TBD**  
Member

**CITY OF STAMFORD**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Stamford Government Center-Stamford, Connecticut**  
**Regular Meeting- Thursday, December 9, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the City of Stamford Economic Development Commission (EDC) Office of Economic Development (OED) was held on Thursday, November 9, 2021 at 4pm via Zoom Meeting.

**1. Call to Order**

Vice Chairman Fischer called the meeting to order at 4:01pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Commissioners Present: Stephen Fischer, James Huerta, and Mark Diamond

Commissioners: Late: Margaret Feeney

Staff: John Varamo-Economic Development Analyst, Tommie Jackson, Assistant Director-URC, and Theresa Bowen, Office Manager-URC

Guest(s): Rowena Track, Jeff Benson, and Joshua Cam

**3. Boys and Girls Club of Stamford Presentation- Rowena Track, CEO**

Ms. Track gave a brief history of the club that has 1400 members with over 500 kids from the 22 schools at their two locations. The Yearwood Center is Kindergarten to third grade and the other is the Mary C. Rich Clubhouse on Stillwater fourth grade to high school. Recently added to the Stillwater location is the Gary Wendt Teen Center with 16,000 square feet for Stamford teens with no other place to go. Moving forward if the City could let her know when an organization moves to Stamford as many have objectives in terms of Community support and engagement and there is no better place to fulfill these objectives then partnering with the club. Feel free to contact her for a tour.

**Commissioner Feeney joined during this presentation at 4:04pm**

**4. Nomination & Election of Officers-Chairman, Vice Chairman & Secretary**

**Nomination for Chairman:**

Commissioner Diamond with second from Commissioner Fischer nominated James Huerta for Chairman.

Vote:

Commissioner Diamond: Yea

Commissioner Fischer: Yea

Commissioner Feeney: Yea

Commissioner Huerta: Abstained

**Commissioner Fischer handed the meeting over to the newly elected Chairman Huerta.**

**Nomination for Vice Chairman:**

Commissioner Diamond with second from Commissioner Feeney nominated Stephen Fischer for Vice Chairman.

Vote:

Commissioner Diamond: Yea

Commissioner Feeney: Yea

Chairman Huerta: Yea

Commissioner Fischer: Abstained

**Nomination for Secretary:**

Commissioner Diamond with no second, nominated Margaret Feeney for Secretary.

Commissioner Feeney respectfully declined.

Chairman Huerta with second from Commissioner Fischer nominated Mark Diamond for Secretary.

Vote:

Commissioner Fischer: Yea

Commissioner Feeney: Yea

Chairman Huerta: Yea

Commissioner Diamond: Abstained

**5. Reading and Acceptance of Minutes**

**a. Approval of minutes from the Special Meeting held on November 9, 2021**

Chairman Huerta asked if the Commissioners have read the minutes from the Special Meeting held on November 9, 2021. He then asked for a motion to accept these minutes. A motion was moved by Commissioner Fischer with second by Chairman Huerta. Motion was passed unanimously with Commissioners present.

**6. Chairperson's Report**

Chairman Huerta expressed that he had not set presentation but will be ready for the next meeting. For now, has staff heard any update on the director vacancy to which, Mr. Varamo stated they were still in the interview process. Next, he asked for clarification of what is the commission role when it comes to dealing with the areas that are of interest to the city that they can recommend and he would to review the charter.

**7. Director's Report**

Mr. Varamo stated that newly elected Mayor Simmons had decided not to keep Mr. Madden as part of the Mayor's cabinet and will be interviewing new candidates. The Q3 report has been released and sent out earlier this week. Mr. Varamo reviewed highlights of the report such as

The unemployment rate, population growth, and new companies moving to Stamford.

## 8. Old Business

### a. University Zone Overlay

Mr. Varamo reported on the recent zoning board public comment meeting regarding the UROD. There was almost unanimous opposition. Most of the concern were surrounding the development bonuses that would be awarded to the potential universities. There was also concern on what type of research could be allowed at these facilities. Lastly, there was some confusion on how the application was submitted with no map. No decisions have been made and further zoning board meetings will be held on this matter.

### b. Minority Business Engagement Update

Mr. Varamo stated Mayor Simmons is currently interviewing candidates for this position.

### c. Ordinance governing short term rentals in Stamford update

Mr. Varamo stated Mr. Madden had reported this item last meeting is currently on hold as it was pulled by the Board of Representatives and will be resubmitted under the next administration. To date, the new administration has not moved forward on this matter.

### d. Equitable Economic Recovery Study

Mr. Varamo stated he finalized the report and has been posted. The link was sent to Commissioners earlier this week. This item can be removed from the agenda.

### e. Film & TV Permit Book

Mr. Varamo stated a final draft has been sent to the Mayor for approval and upon confirmation it will be posted on choosestamford. This item can be removed from the agenda upon posting.

## 9. New Business

### a. Discuss potential 2022 calendar time and dates

The Commissioners discussed and agreed to keep the calendar as presented with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 4pm. Chairman Huerta made a motion to approve the calendar as presented with a second from Commissioner Feeney. Motion was passed unanimously with Commissioners present.

### b. Next Meeting

#### i. Discussion-Next Meeting Agenda

Chairman Huerta stated if anyone has any thoughts or ideas let him now and if staff has any information that's coming out of the department to also send to the Commission.

**ii. Confirmation-Next Regular Meeting (Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 4pm)**

Time and date was confirmed.

**10. Public Comment**

Earlier in the meeting, Jeff Benson discussed a new nonprofit in Stamford called "Will it Forward", which is a lending library of durable medical equipment which provides items such as wheelchairs, walkers, canes, hospital beds, etc.

Joshua Cam shared a few words regarding his work on the Film & TV Permit Book.

**11. Adjournment**

Chairman Huerta requested a motion to adjourn the meeting with second from Commissioner Fischer at 4:44pm. Motion passed unanimously. With no further business to be discussed, the meeting was concluded.

Respectfully submitted,



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Mark Diamond

Secretary-Economic Development Commission