

**Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation**

**Enterprise Zone Council**

**Minutes of Meeting of September 27, 2011**

**RIEDC: Narragansett Room**

**315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101**

**Providence, RI 02908**

**In attendance:**

**COUNCIL AFFILIATION**

**D. Varin Vice Chairman**

**M. Wood RI League of Cities and Towns**

**R. Caniglia The Stand Corporation**

**OTHER AFFILIATION**

**V. Barros RIEDC**

**J. Garrahy Moses & Afonso, LTD**

**K. Cosentino City of Providence**

**W. Clark Town of Portsmouth**

**F. Presley Town of West Warwick**

**L. DiBoni Cranston**

**M. Wojcik City of Woonsocket**

**A. Crisman Center for Economic Development**

**M. Godin ED Foundation of RI**

**At 10:00 Mr. Varin called the meeting the Rhode Island Enterprise**

**Zone Council to order and noted that there was a quorum present.**

**The first item of business before the Council was the Meeting Minutes for May 24, 2011.**

**Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the May 24th meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Caniglia. Mr. Varin asked if there were any additional comments or questions.**

**Mr. Barros provided information that was requested by the Council at the last meeting pertaining to the May certification report. He stated that the zone residency figures were subsequently added to the report and was as follows: 13 businesses created 150 new jobs of which 63 were zone residents (42% of the total jobs created).**

**There being no further discussion, all voted in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**The second part of item one business before the Council was the Meeting Minutes for July 26, 2011.**

**Mr. Caniglia made a motion to approve the July 26th meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wood. Mr. Varin asked if there were any additional comments or questions.**

**Mr. Barros presented information pertaining to Marra Meal Services claim to a zero employment benchmark at the prior meeting. He showed that their membership application verified their status as a**

**newly formed business and new to the zone.**

**There being no further discussion, all voted in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**The next item of business before the Council was a 2011 Recommendation for Membership.**

**Mr. Barros stated that there were two (2) businesses being presented for 2011 membership, both businesses submitted complete membership applications. Both applications were reviewed by the appropriate local point of contact and by EDC staff; as a result, staff recommended for approval of both applications bring the year-to-date total to eight (8) new EZ member businesses for 2011.**

**Mr. Caniglia asked if Gurit USA was a name change.**

**Mr. Barros stated it was not a name change and that this was a large international company that opened a facility in Bristol.**

**Mr. Crisman added that this company operates a large facility in China where they manufacture composite materials. They want to move some of the business back to the U.S. and are considering Bristol or North Texas. They already had a small facility in Bristol for which this EZ membership application is based on.**

**Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the 2011 recommendations for**

membership. The motion was seconded by Mr. Caniglia. Mr. Varin asked if there were any additional comments or questions. There being no further discussion, all voted in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.

The next order of business before the Council was 2010 Recommendations for Certification.

Mr. Barros stated that there were two (2) businesses being presented for 2010 year-end certification and that both businesses presented had satisfied the requirements for year-end certification; as a result, staff recommended approval of both businesses bring the year-to-date total to seventy three (73) businesses resulting in five hundred and fifty two (552) new full-time jobs created in 2010.

Mr. Varin asked for a motion to approve the 2010 recommendations for certification. Mr. Caniglia made the motion which was seconded by Mr. Wood. Mr. Varin asked if there was any further discussion. There being no further discussion, all voted in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.

The next order of business before the Council was an Update on Enterprise Zone Re-designations.

Mr. Barros provided a general overview of the upcoming zone re-designations for the Port of Providence/Cranston,

**Woonsocket/Cumberland, Pawtucket/Lincoln, and the Central Falls/Cumberland enterprise zones.**

**He recommended that the Council strongly consider extending the present zone designations for 90 days until March 31, 2012 because if a number of factors including that the zone re-designation questionnaire was only recently distributed to the communities. He added that the Council has granted such an extension in the past for the town of West Warwick so a precedent has been established.**

**Mr. Barros explained some of the challenging regarding changes in census tract boundaries from the 1990 census to the 2000 census. For example, census tract 1 in the Port of Providence was split into separate census tracts 1.01 and 1.02. The city has to decide on how to handle this because it cannot seek re-designation for both 1.01 and 1.02, the zone would exceed the 5 contiguous census tract limitation mandated by law.**

**Mr. Wood asked if that was why the zones are requesting this extension.**

**Mr. Barros said that it is not the sole reason but definitely a major factor.**

**A general discussion ensued about how best the obtaining accurate census information and the role of statewide wide planning in this**

**process.**

**Mr. Wood asked the local points of contact who were present if this extension was necessary.**

**Ms. Godin stated for the communities her organization represents it was a high priority issue.**

**Mr. DiBoni agreed that it was the same for his community.**

**Mr. Wojcik stated that he was not worried about the zone re-designation deadline but was more concerned about the city's Comprehensive Plan which is in a state of limbo at statewide planning because they want at least 50% subsidized housing. So what does the city's planning board do; do they evaluate the EZ in relation to the current Comp Plan or against the one in limbo?**

**Ms. Godin added that every community is facing a set of challenges in meeting the current zone expiration deadline of 12/31/2011.**

**Mr. Garrahy advised the Council that a formal request of an extension should be in the form of an agenda item.**

**Mr. Barros agreed to make it an agenda item for the October 25th meeting of the Council.**

**Mr. Barros provided a general overview of the 2011 Zone Re-Designation Questionnaire.**

**Mr. Crisman suggested that the questionnaire should address a projection of future job creation in addition to what has transpired over the past five years. He thought it was important to consider because the EZ job creation numbers over the past five years have been greatly impacted by the prolonged recession we've faced.**

**Mr. Varin stated that the Council will take action on the extension request and edit, deletions, additions to the questionnaire at the next Council meeting.**

**The next order of business before the Council was any Old or New Business**

**Mr. Barros provided the Council with a general overview of the recommendations of the EDC Board Subcommittee on Rebranding and Revitalization of the urban Core. He stated that at the next meeting he would provide detail overview of these recommendations.**

**Mr. Woods stated that towns like his town and others in northern Rhode Island all have main streets that are blighted and should be considered for a state main street effort. They could do a lot more with less but like everything else with these kind of programs cities and towns not in the target areas are left out.**

**Mr. Barros acknowledged Mr. Woods concerns and said the Director Stokes clearly understands that many main streets in non-urban communities have definable urban characteristics and should be considered in a comprehensive statewide main street program.**

**Mr. Wood stated that you could get some more traction by making it a competitive program and limited in scope.**

**Mr. Presley suggested that the state could tie the main street program qualifications to local redevelopment agency where they have to meet certain criteria for blight and where the communities have developed master redevelopment plans. Make this a part of main street process. It should be an incentive to have the communities as every active players; not just the state trying to infuse something, community who have a master plans in place and meet all of the criteria of blight.**

**Mr. Varin asked if there was any other business to come before the Council, there being none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wood made the motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Caniglia. Mr. Varin asked if there was any further business to come before the Council. There being none, all voted unanimously in favor of the motion.**

**Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation**

**Enterprise Zone Council**

**Minutes of Meeting of October 25, 2011**

**RIEDC: Narragansett Room**

**315 Iron Horse Way, Suite 101**

**Providence, RI 02908**

**In attendance:**

**COUNCIL AFFILIATION**

**D. Varin Vice Chairman**

**M. Wood RI League of Cities and Towns**

**R. Caniglia The Stand Corporation**

**B. Parsons RIEDC**

**OTHER AFFILIATION**

**V. Barros RIEDC**

**J. Garrahy Moses & Afonso, LTD**

**K. Cosentino City of Providence**

**H. Weiss City of Pawtucket**

**M. Wojcik City of Woonsocket**

**A. Crisman Mt. Hope EZ**

**L. DiBoni Cranston**

**M. Godin ED Foundation of RI**

**At 10:00 Mr. Varin called the meeting the Rhode Island Enterprise Zone Council to order and noted that there was a quorum present.**

**The first item of business before the Council was the Request to Extend Zone Designations until March 31, 2012**

**Mr. Barros stated all of the communities facing zone re-designation were in support of this formal request for an extension that is before the Council and that the Council had granted a similar request for the town of West Warwick, a 90-day extension of the existing zone designation. He added that the communities are all facing staffing and timing issues which necessitated the need for this extension request.**

**Mr. Caniglia asked if the 90-day extension would be enough.**

**Mr. DiBoni said that this was his first zone re-designation and it requires coordination with his planning department and others. The 90-day extension is the only way he would stand a chance of**

**successfully applying for zone re-designation.**

**Mr. Parsons made a motion to approve to the request for a 90 day extension of the existing zone designations for the zones set to expire on 12/31/11. The motion was seconded by Mr. Caniglia. Mr. Varin asked if there were any additional comments or questions. There being no further discussion, all voted in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.**

**The next order of business before the Council was a Review of the Enterprise Zone Re-designation Questionnaire**

**Mr. Barros reviewed the various sections of the re-designation questionnaire.**

**Mr. Wood asked if the questionnaire should capture information on how the change in the tax credit has impacted the program.**

**Mr. Barros stated that the impact would not be represented in any of the numbers or figures gather from 2006 – 2011 other than a measurable decrease in new enrollment during calendar year 2011.**

**Mr. Wood asked if that decrease would be flagged in the re-designation proposals.**

**Mr. Barros stated that he expected that it would be highlighted in**

**most of the re-designation proposals because it represents a significant obstacle to operating a successful EZ.**

**Mr. Crisman mentioned that there is a question in the questionnaire that addresses the impact of the program on job creation. He suggested that this is where the issue of the impact of the change on any new job creation potential will be detailed by each community.**

**Mr. Parsons stated that you may be able to see an impact or reduction in the number of businesses participating, new memberships or continuations but you won't be able to see how it directly impacts new job creation yet. That will be seen in the certification number for 2011.**

**The next order of business before the Council a Review of the RIEDC's Board: Urban Subcommittee: EZ Program Recommendations**

**Mr. Barros presented an excerpt from a report and series of recommendations put forth by the EDC Board Subcommittee on Revitalizing and Rebranding the Urban Core. He explained the subcommittee recommended the reinstatement of the EZ tax credit against personal income and the creation of an EZ II with some enhanced incentives exclusively for the targeted in five (5) urban Main Street Districts.**

**Mr. DiBoni asked why one of the targeted main streets, Broad Street,**

**stopped in Providence and didn't continue into Cranston.**

**Mr. Parsons explained that this is a pilot program and will be expanded to include other areas as it builds successes and momentum.**

**Mr. Wood asked if this was the same program initially discussed at the last meeting where we talk about its applicability to small communities and those with redevelopment agencies. He asked why not rollout this program as a pilot program in some of the smaller communities. You might have a better understanding of how these programs can be effective if you implemented some of them in small communities.**

**A discussion ensued about the validity of a pilot program and the areas selected as targeted main streets.**

**Mr. Wood suggested it should be offered to two or three smaller communities with XYZ populations or less through a competitive process.**

**Mr. DiBoni stated the problems on Cranston Street in Providence don't end at the Providence city line, they continue into the city of Cranston so the program shouldn't stop there either.**

**Mr. Wood stated that if you are doing a pilot then you're looking for**

**solutions to a couple of problems, why not open it up to the entire state to cover as many potential problems as you can, to see what works and what doesn't work. Open it up to communities that have redevelopment agencies/districts which have to meet certain slum and blighted characteristics and demographics, on a competitive basis.**

**The next order of business before the Council was a Review of the Pending Request of 2010 Certification**

**Mr. Barros reviewed a list of enterprise zone member businesses that were still pending 2010 year-end certification. He provided this list for informational purposes only, specifically for the local points of contact, in order for them to follow up with these businesses. He added a letter was mailed to all the businesses of the list informing them of their missing information status.**

**The next order of business before the Council was any Old or New Business**

**Mr. Varin asked if there was any other business to come before the Council, there being none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wood made the motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Parsons. Mr. Varin asked if there was any further business to come before the Council. There being none, all voted unanimously in favor of the motion.**