

**TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING - THURSDAY EVENING
SEPTEMBER 4, 2008**

PRESENT: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella (arrived at 7:21 o'clock PM), and Barboza

ABSENT: Herreshoff

The Council met in special session on Thursday evening, September 4, 2008 in the Burnside Memorial Building, beginning at 7:07 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Marshall presiding:

Council Chairman Marshall informed those present that the purpose of this special meeting was solely to interview candidates for the Economic Development Commission. He also stated that one of the charges of the Economic Development Commission is to "better utilize the talents" of Enterprise Zone Executive Director J. Alan Crisman.

Andrew Tyska - 43 Monterey Drive

Mr. Tyska informed the Council that his business interests have required that he "live" economic development in Bristol over the past few years and that he felt uniquely qualified to serve on this Commission due to this experience. He also informed the Council that he was comfortable to speak on behalf of small businesses.

Mr. Tyska reminded the Council that the Town has a dedicated workforce and of its goal to have people work and also live in Bristol.

Councilman Cordeiro mentioned the upcoming approval of the Comprehensive Plan with Mr. Tyska informing the Council that he was one of those who worked on the economic development section of the Plan.

Mr. Tyska also informed the Council that he was of the opinion that the "access" to Town Hall concerning permitting was in need of improvement and that he would work on this matter if he were selected to serve on the Commission.

Council Chairman Marshall termed the Economic Development Commission as an "exciting opportunity" and suggested that all of the candidates review the Comprehensive Plan draft.

Mr. Tyska reminded the Council that the State of Rhode Island is well known for not being "business friendly." He also noted that one of the goals of the Commission might be to focus upon those businesses already operational in Bristol and to support their efforts to remain here.

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Council Chairman Marshall noted that the Economic Development Commission will be charged with "public relations and marketing" on behalf of the Town.

Councilman Barboza stated that it appeared from the dialogue that all present appeared to be "on the same page."

Michael Byrnes - 7 Leyland Court

Mr. Byrnes informed the Council that the Town does a good job concerning economic development but that he sees ways in which the effort might be improved. He asked to know how the Commission will interrelate with the Town and State with Council members responding that the Commission will likely refine its charge in time.

Mr. Byrnes echoed the sentiments as expressed by Mr. Tyska in that Rhode Island is generally regarded as not 'business friendly', although he did state that the State Economic officials were effective.

Mr. Byrnes spoke about the development of a "Bristol Brand" and that the Town has the advantage of a good work force that is effective in certain areas (boat building).

Mr. Byrnes stated that the Town should look for new "fit" industries and develop a "global outlook" for its economic future.

Councilwoman Parella arrived at this point in the meeting (7:21 o'clock PM).

Mr. Byrnes informed the Council that as a small business owner (Old China Trader) he was appreciative of the issues and challenges facing his peer group and that he would like the opportunity to represent the small business sector on the Commission.

Mr. Byrnes informed the Council that he was a member of the Kickemuit Education Foundation and that he supports what used to be termed a voc-tech education. He stated that the Commission might work along with established industries to realize this goal.

Council Chairman Marshall stated that the Commission must help the Council in developing its "charter" and that the Commission will be charged to help and advise the Council and Planning Board.

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A discussion ensued regarding the Bristol Industrial Park with Mr. Byrnes agreeing that the property needs 'attention.'

Councilman Barboza noted that one of the prime responsibilities of the Commission will be to broaden the Town's tax-base.

E. Keith Maloney - 60 Van Wickle Lane

Council Chairman Marshall stated that the Council was quite familiar with Mr. Maloney.

Mr. Maloney reminded the Council that he appears to be the only applicant who is retired from full-time employment and thus has a great amount of time to devote to the Commission.

He noted that he is active with the Redevelopment Agency and has thirty (30) years of business experience with a large company and at one time managed a budget of \$35 million.

Mr. Maloney suggested that the Charter of the Commission might include starting with a 'plan' and determining the 'assets' the Town may offer to businesses and build upon those strengths including the putting forward of tax-breaks, etc.

Councilwoman Parella suggested that a first-step for the Commission might be to analyze the benefits offered by other communities and to examine "what is out there." She further stated that the Commission might develop action steps based upon its analysis.

Mr. Maloney suggested that the Commission might endeavor to prepare a five year plan.

Kirsten DiChiappari - 9 Echo Farm Drive

Ms. DiChiappari informed the Council that she would bring the perspective from the service industry. She noted that Bristol appears to be more business friendly versus the Town of Warren.

Ms. DiChiappari also informed the Council that she is a member of the East Bay Chamber of Commerce and sits on that groups Board of Directors.

She noted that she, too, was interested in vocational schools and that she does not wish for Bristol to settle for being a 'bedroom community.'

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Ms. DiChiappari informed the Council that she has "a passion for seeing things go well" and that she also sits on the Board of the Mount Hope Enterprise Zone.

Ms. DiChiappari stated that the Commission might become a 'clearing house' for information for business.

Councilwoman Parella stated that the candidates' position on vocational education was "absolutely right" and that the community needs a "better link" between business and those adult education programs offered.

Ms. DiChiappari informed the Council that she was a member of "Voices for Bristol" and that this group advocates the concept of lifelong learning. She also noted that her background includes expertise in human resources. She stated that an overall goal of the community should be to create "employable persons."

David Parker - 295 Hope Street

Mr. Parker informed the Council that he is a small business owner and that he is aware of the property issues facing the community. He noted that although he believes that the marine industries are strong in Bristol, he supports diversification so as to protect the Town from downturns in a single business entity.

Council Chairman Marshall asked Mr. Parker if he was available to meet on a regular basis as a member of the Commission with Mr. Parker responding affirmatively.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Cordeiro, seconded by Councilman Herreshoff and voted unanimously, the Chairman declared this meeting to be adjourned at 8:00 o'clock PM.

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk