



## **Minutes: Economic Development Advisory Committee January 09, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Economic Development Advisory Committee was held on January 09, 2023 with Joe Memoli (Chairperson) presiding.

**Board Members:** Tom Marchesani, Jared Acosta, and Deborah Emin in person. Beverly Brown via zoom.

**Absent:** Gina Bertucci and Ed Regina

**Township Staff:** Annette Atkinson, Supervisor, and James Brechbiel, ED Manager.

**Township Residents/Guests:** None

Meeting called to order at 5:31pm with Joe Memoli presiding.

### **Minutes and Agenda**

- Joe Memoli made a motion to approve the January Agenda and December Minutes. Deborah Emin seconded the motion, followed by Beverly Brown. Motion passed 3-0.

### **Correspondence**

- No correspondence

### **New Business:**

- **Reorganization**
  - Joe Memoli was confirmed as Chairperson for the Economic Development Committee (EDC) at the Board of Supervisors (BOS) Organizational Meeting on 1/3/23.
  - Beverly Brown nominated Jared Acosta for Vice Chairperson, which was seconded by Deborah Emin. Jared Acosta accepted the position.
  - Members discussed the assignment for Secretary. Joe Memoli motioned that this position vote / nomination will be tabled until the next EDC Meeting and was seconded by Deborah Emin. Tom Marchesani volunteered himself for the role should Gina Bertucci not decide to reconvene with said position.
- **Goals for 2023**
  - James Brechbiel spoke to the EDC about the 209 Revitalization Grant that will be rolled out in 2023. Redrafted plans were submitted to the BOS for review and the hope is to have the award recipients announced in June of 2023, with projects to be completed by June of 2024. Annette Atkinson reviewed that American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds are being used, with the Township paying half of the total estimated project costs, and the applicants committing the other half. Annette Atkinson also mentioned that the cap for the award amounts is what is currently being discussed and, once determined, will be communicated to the public. Deborah Emin asked how the public is going to know about the grant and Annette Atkinson noted that it will be announced via mail, Facebook, and other avenues. The EDC discussed guidelines for how the awardees will be considered and James Brechbiel noted that visibility from 209 and viability are two criteria that will be a part of the newly founded 209 Revitalization Committee's guidelines for presenting prospects to the BOS. Annette Atkinson reviewed that said Committee, which will be up for resolution by 1/19/23, the soonest, will have the task of picking recipients for Zoning to review and the BOS to determine awards for. Said Committee will consist of members from the EDC, Planning Commission, Historic Commission, and the public. Details will be outlined in said program once it is approved by the BOS. Joe Memoli asked for EDC members to consider if they would like to be on the committee, or any they would like to recommend to the

committee. He noted that the EDC will vote Yea, or Nay at the next meeting regarding the EDC member (s) who will be selected for the 209 Revitalization Committee.

- James Brechbiel noted that the Township followed up with the commissioners regarding the issues of broadband / cell service that currently are facing residents. There are no updates on the county side to report at this time. Deborah Emin asked if the Township can get money from the “Internet for All” initiative. James Brechbiel noted that the maps of coverage were reviewed, but that the Township would also be reaching out to April Nivers with Rep. Matt Cartwright’s office to determine if the Township is eligible. Jared Acosta and Joe Memoli noted that cell phone service is even more worse condition than the broadband coverage.
- There was a discussion regarding Restaurant Week for 2023. Joe Memoli mentioned that it would be worth noting if the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau was planning on doing a Restaurant Week. James Brechbiel noted that Bethlehem and Emmaus are partaking in Restaurant Week programs for 2023.

### **Business Updates:**

- James Brechbiel reviewed the following updates on new businesses in the area:
  - **Basic Power / American Magnetic Energy (AME):** The one property AME is considering within the Township would require a great deal of development, which is not conducive to the move in ready prospects they are looking into. Other properties and options to still utilize the 5224 Milford Rd. property are being considered.

### **Community Updates:**

- James Brechbiel reviewed the following community updates:
  - ESU MLK Celebration at The Terraview at Stroudsmoor Country Inn - 257 Stroudsmoor Rd, Stroudsburg, Pa. 18360 on Monday, January 16, 2023 at 8am.
  - Pocono Chamber of Commerce Report to business at Kalahari Resorts and Conventions - 250 Kalahari Blvd., Pocono Manor, PA 18349 on Thurs., 1/26/23, from 8 am – 10 am.
  - Middle Smithfield Township Person of the Year at the Township’s Community and Cultural Center on Fri., 1/20/22, from 7 pm – 10 pm.

### **Old Business:**

- James Brechbiel reviewed the following feedback from the 2022 Holiday Shop Local Campaign:
  - Upon going back to the participating businesses, many that were new to the program were very pleased as it helped showcase them to the community and residents who didn’t know they existed before. Businesses who are not new to the program noted that the program helped to recharge their base. A suggestion that was made to James Brechbiel by Tom X was to have a possible tour map, or something like it for next year.

### **Announcements:**

- Joe Memoli thanked the Township for the EDC business cards as it helps to establish credibility for members when they communicate with businesses.

### **Public Comments:**

- None

**Next meeting date: 02/13/23 at 5:30pm. Meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.**