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Economic Development Commission

Branford, Connecticut

MINUTES from: **May 7, 2025** held at the Branford Town Hall - 1019 Main St

Meeting was called to order at 8:00am. Present were Commission Members: R.Squeglia (Chair), A.Canosa, J.Fennell, F.Hird, K.Ragonese, J.Vernon; also Michiel Wackers and Perry Maresca (Staff),

Approval of Minutes: Motion to accept Minutes by A.Canosa, seconded by K.Ragonese, passed unanimously.

Staff Report: P.Maresca- The Lockworks Tavern emerged as the winner of the 8th Annual Chili Challenge. Town Center Merchants' Spring Shop, Sip, and Stroll being held Thursday May 8th from noon-8pm. Saturday May 10th is the 3rd Annual Local Author Book Signing event from noon-3pm on Main Street. The reconstruction of Main St from Chestnut to Laurel has been delayed due to some changes. Friends of Blackstone Library's September Tent Book Sale will be holding that event near Foote Park between Indian Neck School and the concession stand at Sliney Fields. FreeThink Technologies held a Ribbon-Cutting/Reception to celebrate their new, larger facility at 688 Main St.

Planning & Zoning Report: P.Maresca- [IWWA] The items heard at the Inland Wetlands meeting throughout the month of April were concerning residential properties. [P&Z] New Town Planner, Michiel Wackers, comes to Branford with over twenty years of experience. We have already coordinated and communicated with a few businesses looking to move into town. Position of Assistant Town Planner is still open. Construction at the old Regency Theater is moving along. [Town Planner] M.Wackers discussed the survey he developed. Intention is to get a pulse on the concerns and priorities with zoning. Will send out to EDC for each of them to fill out as well. Goal of expediting the approval process is priority.

Commission Members' Reports: F.Hird referenced the US News and World Report ranking CT as 15th overall. Included factors were employment, healthcare, manufacturing, business environment, and fiscal policy

Shoreline Chamber of Commerce: No Report

Selectman's Report: No Report

Old Business: - Subcommittee Reports: **Marketing** through social media continues to exceed expectations with comments and sharing of posts increasing tremendously. Different billboard designs will include promoting the Town Center, Restaurants, Way-of-Life, Business Environment, and Business Types. **Retention** – P.Maresca met with owners of *Shahani, Inc.* at their new headquarters on Sycamore Way. Their continued growth created the need to find larger quarters than their previous location on East Industrial Rd. Azitra on Business Park Dr recently entered into a share purchase agreement that should yield a 20 million investment into their continued growth.

New Business: Town Planner has started a list of developable properties that include the acreage, zoning, sewer/water/gas hookups, approved use types. Allows prospective users to determine options and speeds up approval process.

There were no demolition applications, letters, or public comments.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:06am after a motion by A.Canosa and seconded by J.Fennell.

Next Regular Meeting to be held on **June 4th, 2025** at the lower level conference room of Town Hall.

Perry Maresca
Economic and Business Development Manager
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Rich Squeglia (Chair) • Elena Cahill • Al Canosa • Jim Fennell • Frank Hird • Karen Ragonese • Jared Schulefand • Jeff Vernon
First Selectman Jamie Cosgrove [ex officio]

Branford Economic Development Commission - 1019 Main Street - Branford, CT 06405 - 203-315-0637 <https://www.bestcitiesforbusiness.net>