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5 **Economic Development Commission**  
6 **Special Meeting Minutes**  
7 **June 6, 2019**  
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9 **Present:** Joe Mirra, Chair  
10 Jim Wolfe, Vice-Chair  
11 Patricia Cymbala, Commissioner  
12 Gary Fappiano, Commissioner  
13 Mark Gingras, Commissioner  
14 Rosemarie Preneta, Commissioner  
15 Anthony Bracale, Alternate/Voting Member  
16

17 **Absent:** Rob Fritz, Alternate  
18 Hank Baum, Commissioner  
19

20 **Others Present:** Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist  
21 Lynn Wolff, Secretary  
22 James Gerish, Chairman/CEO, Emerald Hospitality Assoc.  
23 Arthur Borowski, CFO, Emerald Hospitality Assoc.  
24

25 Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 5:30 p.m.  
26

27 **1. Presentation and possible action re: Emerald Hospitality Assoc.** – Chair Mirra welcomed the guests and  
28 asked Tim Ryan to brief the EDC on the reason for the presentation. Tim said that Emerald Hospitality  
29 Assoc. will soon be the new owners of the Hilton Garden Inn. Three years (out of seven) remain on the  
30 existing tax incentive agreement granted by the Town Council to Winston Hospitalities. Since Mr. Winston  
31 will not remain as majority owner, the current agreement could become void upon transfer of the property.  
32 Emerald Hospitality is asking the EDC to support their request that they be granted a continuance of the  
33 remaining three-year tax abatement for Winston Hospitality.

34 \* Gary Fappiano arrived at 5:37 p.m.

35 Mr. Gerish and Mr. Borowski both spoke about their company, how their management styles differ from the  
36 current owner as well as their plans for the hotel. They own 26 hotels and, if the purchase goes through, this  
37 will be the 10<sup>th</sup> Hilton Garden Inn – they understand the brand and will not change it. Joe Mirra asked if they  
38 plan to make any personnel changes; Mr. Gerish said they only plan to do more staff training to enhance their  
39 skills to grow the business and its occupancy rate. Arthur Borowski said they are not looking to restructure;  
40 they would like to grow the food and beverage side of the hotel's business.

41 \* Patricia Cymbala arrived at 5:50 p.m.

42 Jim Wolfe asked about their tax status since the Emerald Foundation is listed as a 501 (c)(3); Mr. Gerish and  
43 Mr. Borowski said the Foundation (operated by Mr. Gerish and his wife) is a separate entity from Emerald  
44 Hospitality Associates. The company that will own the hotel is a for-profit business.

45 Chair Mirra thanked the two gentlemen for their presentation and explained that the EDC had several  
46 options: 1) The EDC could vote to support the tax incentive program originally created for that zone ; 2) the  
47 EDC could support allowing Emerald Hospitality to “finish” the last three years of the tax incentive program  
48 granted to Winston Hospitality by the Town Council; or the EDC could vote not to support any tax incentive  
49 program. **Mark Gingras made a motion to support Emerald Hospitality Association request to be  
50 granted the remaining three years of the tax abatement benefit given to Winston Hospitality by the  
51 Town Council, with the contingencies that Emerald Hospitality Association remain the owners and  
52 that the hotel remain a Hilton Garden Inn for those three years; Jim Wolfe seconded the motion. By  
53 unanimous vote, the motion carried.**  
54

55 2. **Discussion and Possible Action on Regular Meeting Minutes dated May 6, 2019** – Jim Wolfe thanked  
56 Mark Gingras for acting as Chair at last month’s meeting, in Joe Mirra’s and his absences. **Gary Fappiano  
57 made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted; Jim Wolfe seconded the motion. By a unanimous  
58 vote, the motion carried.**  
59

60 3. **Review of Monthly Expenditure Report** – There were no questions.  
61

#### 62 4. **Committee Reports**

##### 63 • **Marketing** –

64 ➤ **Update on May 30 meeting:** Mark Gingras asked members to review the minutes of the  
65 Committee meeting as attached to the agenda packet. *Mark asked staff to email the draft talking  
66 points the Committee has been developing* and requested feedback from the EDC. Mark plans to  
67 use these talking points when he speaks at an upcoming Rotary meeting; the points will be  
68 refined based on how well they work for this first speaking engagement. Joe Mirra asked  
69 members to consider volunteering to speak at other community events. Mark also mentioned that  
70 plans for the Arts Initiative are moving quickly; this agenda item will remain on the Committee’s  
71 agenda until the initiative is established.

72 • **Next meeting:** none scheduled.

##### 73 • **P&Z Liaison** –

74 ➤ **Update on Committee activities:** Jim Wolfe said the recent POCD meeting went well; he feels  
75 PZC will be responsive to expanding the footprints in the IX and I-5 zones. This will help provide  
76 additional expansion opportunities for current companies.

77 ➤ **Next meeting** – None scheduled.

##### 78 • **Retention/Incentives** –

79 ➤ **Update on Committee activities:** Gary Fappiano said the company visits in May went well. The  
80 members briefly discussed aspects of each visit.

81 ➤ **Next meeting** – None scheduled.  
82

83 **5. Chair’s remarks** – Joe Mirra mentioned that another manufacturing pipeline group (about 14) recently  
 84 graduated and he should know within the next two weeks how many of the group were hired. The next  
 85 manufacturing pipeline will be held in the fall (trying to schedule them twice a year). Gary Fappiano asked  
 86 what happened to the Veterans Pipeline. Joe said there was a conflict; one vet did participate in the  
 87 manufacturing pipeline. A pipeline for the hospital industry is being worked on as well.

88  
 89 **6. Staff reports/regional matters** – Tim Ryan reviewed the May 2019 Activities report. Some of the highlights  
 90 include: the former BMS building demolition has begun (Calare Properties has honored its promise to adhere  
 91 to the very detailed expectations to ensure the safety of the wetlands on that site); plans for a hotel at 1175  
 92 Barnes Road, next to the Hilton Garden Inn, were approved; Quest Diagnostics sold 3 Sterling Drive but will  
 93 continue to lease 15,000 sf of that building; the seating in the Town Council Chambers will be updated,  
 94 thanks to stadium seating from Calare; and Amazon, who needs to hire 1,800 full-time employees for their  
 95 North Haven facility, plans to hold a job fair in Wallingford at the Public Library in July. Seasoned staff from  
 96 the Wallingford facility will supplement the workforce and Wallingford jobs will be backfilled.

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 98 **7. Dates to Remember** – No questions.

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 100 **8. Other Community Business** – None.

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 102 **There being no further business, Mark Gingras made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m.;**  
 103 **Anthony Bracale seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

104  
 105 Sincerely,

106  
 107  
 108  
 109 Lynn M. Wolff, Secretary

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 111 Attachment