



Employment Opportunities

February 27, 2013 – 7:00 PM - **Minutes**
City Council Chamber, Room 214, Municipal Building

**** View Agenda ****

MEETING: COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2013

TIME: 7:08 P.M.

PLACE: CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROOM 214, MUNICIPAL BUILDING

PRESENT: COUNCILLORS JAMES OLIVEIRA, CHAIRMAN; BRUCE DUARTE, JR., VICE-CHAIRMAN; DAVIED ALVES; BRIAN GOMES (7:28); STEVEN MARTINS

ABSENT: NO ONE

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Councillor Oliveira called the Committee on Employment Opportunities Meeting to order and took attendance. Councillor Gomes called in to say that he was running a bit late due to attending a wake for a family friend, but would arrive immediately after.

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Councillor Oliveira made opening remarks about the Committee on Employment Opportunities being newly created by Council President Bruce Duarte, Jr. and that its key role is to focus on creating more employment opportunities for the residents of New Bedford through economic development.

Councillor Oliveira informed the Committee that he planned on taking items one (1) and two (2) into one discussion.

Matt Morrissey, Executive Director of NBEDC stated that he and the EDC stand ready to assist this Committee and keep its members informed of progress and other happenings in Economic Development and job opportunities in the City of New Bedford and the region. He stressed that there is no “one cure” for the economic situation that New Bedford is facing, but stated that the Off Shore Wind Project which he will be discussing this evening is certainly cause for optimism.

He explained that his office has been in contact and is working with the City of Cuxhaven, Germany in order to learn about the progress and economic benefits they have seen and experienced in the 15 years that they have been developing and continuing their work with off shore wind. He presented a 15 minute documentary-type of film produced by Cuxhaven about the ongoing effects that off shore wind has had on the economic growth of the city and region. Mr. Morrissey also stated that their City Council of Cuxhaven had voted to establish a “Sister City” partnership with New Bedford, and the administration will be asking the New Bedford City Council to endorse that at this upcoming City Council Meeting. Once that partnership is ratified, Mr. Morrissey said the next step would be to have Cuxhaven Officials to New Bedford this coming summer to share success stories, setbacks, and other details about the process.

Mr. Morrissey then presented a slide show about the expected economic growth benefits resulting from the project moving forward. He explained that the EDC is meeting with the WIB, Voc-Tech, BCC and other agencies in order to define curriculum and training that will prepare New Bedford residents for the jobs that

would result. He expressed that there is a tremendous level of support for this project, not only from the state, but also from key consultants like Global Wind Network and Suzaki – one of the world’s best land planning firms. The fact that these two high level consultants find this project so promising speaks volumes about the realistic potential that lies in wait for Economic growth in New Bedford, according to Mr. Morrissey.

There was discussion about the importance of New Bedford residents having real opportunity to access the jobs that will arise in constructions, etc. Concern was brought up that the Building Trade Unions do not always seem to be as open to new apprenticeships as some would like them to be. However, Councillor Alves stated, the Trades’ issue is not that they do not want to bring in new apprenticeships, because they do. It is, in reality, due to the fact that the positions are simply not available due to the lack of actual jobs. With this project, Councillor Alves stated, that will not be the case and the Building Trades will be more than happy to bring in new apprentices.

When asked about a rough time frame for everything, Matt Morrissey stated the following: The City Council will vote this week (Thursday) on approving the land transfer to the state and the sister city relationship with Cuxhaven. The EPA and State will meet on Friday (the very next day) to discuss the land. Two weeks after that, the lowest qualified bidder will be announced by the state. A real (not ceremonial) groundbreaking, will then take place in early April. Monthly Public meetings will be held in the main branch of the library on the first Tuesday of each month so that everyone is updated throughout the process. In 19 months from then, construction on the terminal will begin.

Mr. Morrissey did say that there is a question about who would end up actually owning the property on which the terminal is built; and that it will most likely not be the city due to the huge investment of \$100,000,000 being made by the state. Additionally, in negotiations, the Mayor insisted on the city receiving impact fees.

The Committee Members thanked Matt Morrissey and the EDC for their work on this and for the updates.

On motion by Councillor Alves and seconded by Councillor Martins, the Committee VOTED: To receive and place on file the information provided to the Committee from the Economic Development Council. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Martins made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Alves.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:32 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Committees