



State & Commerce Committee - Board of Representatives

Lindsey Miller, Chair

Robert Roqueta, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Monday, January 29, 2018

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor, Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard, Stamford, CT

The State & Commerce Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Miller, Vice Chair Roqueta and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Graziosi. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps. Liebson, Mahoney and McGarry. Also present were Reps. Matherne and Patterson; Thomas Madden, Director of Economic Development; and Maureen Boylan.

Chair Miller began the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. SC30.006	REVIEW; City of Stamford's Legislative Priorities. 01/03/18 – Submitted by Rep. Miller	HELD

The Committee first took up Item No. 6.

¹ 6. SC30.007	RESOLUTION; Sense of the Board Commending the Decision of the Registrars of Voters to provide "I Voted" Stickers. 01/03/18 – Submitted by Mayor Martin	Failed 1-2-1
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Committee members discussed whether item this needed a resolution. A motion to approve this resolution was made, seconded and failed by a vote of 1-2-1 (Rep. Adams in favor; Reps. Graziosi and Roqueta opposed and Rep. Miller abstaining).

² 2. SC30.004	REVIEW; Overview of Economic Development Department with Thomas Madden, Director of Economic Development. 01/02/18 – Submitted by President Quinones	Report Made
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Mr. Madden reviewed the following with the Committee:

¹ Video Time Stamp 00:01:15

² Video Time Stamp 00:03:00

- the [Stamford Business Portal](#) on the City website with members of the Committee, including the [Food Truck Guide](#), which walks individuals on how to start a food truck business in the City.
 - The City receives 1 to 2 inquiries a week through the Portal
- The [ChooseStamford.com](#) website, which focuses on economic development in the City and is targeted at HR Directors, Real Estate agents, businesses, etc. to communicate information about Stamford
 - The State is using this site on recruiting trips into NYC
 - This is a useful site for companies moving to Stamford
 - It lists the various employment sectors in Stamford
 - The Research & Data section is a useful tool for promoting the City and is used by OPM with bonding companies
- The Office also prepares a [quarterly report](#) which is distributed with materials about the City
 - This was prepared by High School students
 - No other City in CT is doing this
- He produced several videos about Stamford in connection with the Amazon application
- The Department reports directly to the Mayor
- He is in charge of the Economic Development Commission (the same members are also on the Urban Redevelopment Commission)
- The Economic Development Commission will begin to give reports to the Board of Representatives
- His office now has an Economic Development Analyst as well as the URC Staff
- They are working with WestCOG to see if they are eligible for federal development funds
- The Arts & Culture Commission is also under his office; they meet monthly
 - Stamford owns a great deal of art
 - The first project was to create a community calendar
- Economic Development also sits on other Boards

³. [SC30.001](#) REVIEW; Enterprise Zone
12/06/17 – Submitted by Rep. Miller

Report Made

Mr. Madden reviewed the attached [handout](#) with the Committee as follows:

- The Enterprise Zone was expanded to include media and financial companies
- The Urban Jobs and Entertainment District programs have similar requirements, but are citywide
- The benefits are an 80% reduction of property taxes on new and expanded properties and corporate taxes
- The Enterprise Zone was designed by expires at the end of this year; the City is updating that information to see if they still qualify
- The zone currently includes the industrial zones in the South End
- The State reimburses the City for the taxes it is not getting (the reimbursement amount varies from year to year); the State reimbursement is shown in the budget
- Many small companies take advantage of this program (BLT has not participated in this program)

³ Video Time Stamp 00:51:00

- Companies need to request a letter from him in order to get a conveyance tax exemption
- The City is currently putting together an Enterprise Zone report, which will hopefully be finished in the next 2 months

⁴4. [SC30.002](#) REVIEW; Innovation District **Report Made**
12/06/17 – Submitted by Rep. Miller

Mr. Madden reviewed the attached [handout](#) with the Committee:

- The State looked at innovation within CT to make the State more competitive and created CTInnovation, and its offshoot CTNEXT to provide grants for innovation districts, each of which receives \$2,000,000 for year at a 1:1 match
- The funds come from the capital budget
- They are using interns from UConn Stamford
- This is a guaranteed 2 year grant

⁵5. [SC30.003](#) REVIEW; Branding Project **Report Made**
12/06/17 – Submitted by Rep. Miller

Mr. Madden reviewed the attached [handout](#) with the Committee:

- They reached out to Greenwich, Norwalk, Fairfield and Westport (which are on the train line and have significant office space), to work with them on marketing collectively
- They presented a “5 Reasons Fairfield County” presentation in NYC

He is on a Transportation Committee with Senator Murphy. One of the things they are working on is a high speed ferry out of Stamford.

The real estate vacancy rate is artificially high because of 2 vacant buildings

Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lindsey Miller, Chair

This meeting is on video ([Pt. 1](#) & [Pt. 2](#))

⁴ Video Time Stamp 01:09:57

⁵ Video Time Stamp 01:27:00