

Session 16-08 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:03 p.m. on November 8, 2016 at the City Hall Upstairs Conference Room located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS GUSTAFSON, KEISEL, RICHARDSON, MARKS

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS SANSOM AND PETERSON

STAFF: SPECIAL PROJECTS AND COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR CARROLL  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK KRAUSE

#### AGENDA APPROVAL

RICHARDSON/GUSTAFSON - MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

#### RECONSIDERATION

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 13, 2016 Special Meeting Minutes

GUSTAFSON/RICHARDSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

#### VISITORS

A. Tim Dillion, Executive Director, Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District – Update on the Organization

Mr. Dillion provided an outline on the organization and his background experience as City Manager for Seldovia. He touched on the following points for the commission:

- the size of the Kenai Peninsula is large and more than Soldotna/Kenai area
- they are a 501c4 corporation

- Funding comes from three outside sources – Kenai Peninsula Borough, State of Alaska and the US Department of Commerce however they did not receive funding from the State for the upcoming year.
- They own the building they are in outright which includes approximately 20 offices that they lease out as well as 6000 sf of warehouse space and 12+ acres fenced with pad and additional acreage for a total of 20+ this represents the main funding source for their programs
- They assist and work with startup companies and even work with those companies if they run into financial difficulties
- Manage and Administer the Kenai Peninsula Opportunities Program which also includes the Kenai Peninsula Construction Academy
- Who is on the Board of KPEDD, including 4 members from the southern peninsula areas
- Distributed a comprehensive plan for the next 5 years that they will be using and is available in their website
- Six Goals of KPEDD – Regional Partnerships; Infrastructure & Technology; Workforce & Human Capital; Business Climate & Entrepreneurship; Quality of Place; Knowledge Creation & Dissemination
- Industry Outlook Forum January 11, 2017 Kenai Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center – encouraged the Commissioners to attend
- Encouraged the Commission to access the assistance that the KPEDD can offer them
- Has spoken with many business owners in the area and Homer and a major concern is signage
- KPEDD has loan programs available – Micro Loan Program and Grant Assistance

Mr. Dillion provided clarification on why they were a 501c4 entity in response to a question from the commission. The KPEDD can provide information that would be able to assist the commission in their work and he has visited local businesses, people are getting frustrated and there are many people that are losing their jobs or think they may be losing their jobs so they can assist those people in determining the direction that is needed.

Chair Marks thanked Mr. Dillon for coming to the meeting and speaking with them.

B. Bryan Zak, Associate State Director, Small Business Development Center – Small Business Development Programs

Mr. Zak commented that Mr. Dillon called the Governor's office regarding some information and within 10 minutes the Governor's office was calling him. Mr. Zak then informed the commission that about two weeks ago they received a visit from the State regarding how to stop recidivism and repeat offenders and what could the city support or do to assist them in that goal.

Mr. Zak spoke on the following items:

- Small for-profit businesses and how they can get started and what they can provide assistance with
- Marijuana Industry and Federal Regulations
- Small Business Administration Loan programs and requirements
- Vital new businesses needed are senior care businesses, child care
- Not just new start-ups but existing businesses as well through the field of new Federal requirements
- Optimism on the outlook for the area regarding the economic outlook
- Marine Trades gaining momentum

Ms. Carroll requested the ISER report if Mr. Zak could share that report. Mr. Zak will forward that report to her. Chair Marks commented on the positive feel around town and that there is so much going on, being built and was wondering if he knew what was creating this positive energy. Mr. Zak responded that he believed it was the Quality of Place and the quality of life that the area offers and that most people are making a living and they are really plugged into the community.

## REPORTS

### A. Marine Trades Association Report

Chair Marks questioned the invoices that were submitted and where that budget was or money coming from to pay those invoices. Ms. Carroll responded that the EDC Budget within the City budget and where they can locate that line item budget for the Marine Trades, the Chamber and her position as well.

### B. Chamber Director Report

Karen Zak, Chamber Director reported on the following:

- the Chamber has two arms encourage commerce and visitor center and only 2% of the State's Chambers play dual roles
- they are currently a polling place
- She noted that they are reaching out and keeping relevant with the community
- attended the recent State Chamber of Commerce meeting in Kenai
- upcoming is the Shop Local during the Holiday season and currently \$63 out of \$100 spent in the community stays in the community
- rolling out a new mobile compliant website, will contain information regarding the Boathouse and SPARC projects
- Sent out 600 relocation packages and Ms. Carroll updated the package and it will be available on the website
- Obtained the domain names and logo for [cityofpeonies.com](http://cityofpeonies.com) and [cityofpeonies.org](http://cityofpeonies.org); [Homerpeonies.com](http://Homerpeonies.com)
- Pioneer Avenue Task Force has been busy there is the mural project, planted over 2000 peony plants and looking forward to the next phase of the Pioneer Avenue Revitalization Project
- City of Homer is on the front page of Harbors Magazine – the city is going to be a featured and is wonderful advertising op-ed
- City of Homer is being featured in Alaska Airlines magazine in January 2017
- Over the summer they had the Winnebago, Chicago Tribune, Travel Channel, Go West Forum, Adventure World Wide
- Social Media has created a buzz about Homer around the world. They now have a Chamber Facebook page and a Visit Homer Facebook page
- Presentation for December in the works
- WE R ON THE MAP!

C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report

Chair Marks that this was taken care of very well by the Chamber report however the stencil for the peonies that will be painted on the sidewalks is almost complete and if the weather cooperates they will be able to get that started.

D. Staff Report

Special Projects & Communications Coordinator Carroll provided a summary of her report included in the packet and expounded on Senate Bill 99 which has the intent to convert Public Convenience Licenses into seasonal only and sticking to the population control access guidelines. This would affect several establishments within the city of Homer and the Alaska Beverage Control Board's chief complaint was the administrative burden on the Board. This would affect just about every aspect of economic development and there is a movement that it be placed under local control.

The commission should consider the implications if this is passed and how it would affect Homer and Ms. Carroll will notify the commission if it looks like anything will come about this issue.

Ms. Carroll announced the Training that will be conducted tomorrow evening and believed it would be beneficial to the commissioners. The time is 5:00-6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Market to Internet Based Entrepreneurs: Final Review of Survey

Chair Marks announced that Commissioner Gustafson and Commission Richardson are also on this committee that is seeking input from the local businesses. Instead of having a meeting next week they will meet to draft a letter that will contain some information that was shared today that they would be able to gather a group. This letter will be sent to local business community would like to see the Commission work on.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Commissioner Gustafson nominated Commissioner Marks. There was no additional nominations.

The commission elected Commissioner Marks to continue as chair. Chair Marks accepted.

Chair Marks nominated Commissioner Sansom to continue as Vice Chair.  
Commissioner Sansom was unanimously elected to continue as Vice Chair.

B. Memorandum from City Clerk Re: Approval of the 2017 Economic Development Advisory Commission Regular Meeting Schedule

Chair Marks commented on the various commissions appeared to not meet during various times of the month during the year and was curious as to the reason. Deputy City Clerk Krause responded that the Council requested the commission to reduce meetings in order to provide savings to staff overtime for the budget.

Chair Marks then advocated for the commission to cancel the December meeting since it did not appear that they would have anything of importance to work on at that meeting.

RICHARDSON/GUSTAFSON MOVE TO CANCE THE DECEMBR MEETING

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Marks then focused on the 2017 meeting schedule and remarked that she did not want to cancel the December 2017 meeting at this time. Ms. Carroll explained for the commission how if they desired now was a chance to cancel meetings in the future if the commission desired. The commissioners were hesitant to pre-cancel any meetings but were willing to cancel meetings as necessary.

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the 2017 regular meeting schedule as presented.

GUSTAFSON/RICHARDSON – SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings

The commission entertained a brief discussion on attending the next Council meetings. Commissioner Gustafson stated that he would try to attend one of the two remaining meetings. Commissioner Richardson will consult her schedule so was not sure.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Marks commented on it was a good meeting and encouraged everyone to try to recruit another commissioner.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Gustafson questioned if anyone ever looked into building a convention center in Homer. A brief discussion ensued on previous attempts and staff will provide the information from that attempt and other similar venues. Commissioner Gustafson explained that he has been approached by a few people in Anchorage who are interested in building a convention center. Staff commented on ideas to use existing infrastructure such as the college. He further noted that the recent attempt for a new police station was shot down and he had frequently heard that people wanted a recreation center or convention center not a police station.

Commissioner Richardson and Commissioner Keisel had no comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_