

Session 14-01 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Barth at 6:00 p.m. on January 14, 2014 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONER ARNO, BARTH, ROSS, WAGNER

ABSENT: SARNO (excused) KRISINTU (unexcused)

COUNCILMEMBER: ZAK

STAFF: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR KOESTER
DEPUTY CITY CLERK JACOBSEN

AGENDA APPROVAL

WAGNER/ARNO MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None

RECONSIDERATION

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. December 10, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes

WAGNER/ROSS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

VISITORS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS/ BOROUGH REPORT

Councilmember Zak commented that the January 27th Council agenda will include sales tax on non-prepared food that is tied to recreation. There is an upcoming Board of Fish hearing relating to the possible closure of Cook Inlet set net area 1 which Council took testimony and weigh in on with a resolution. It was interesting to hear about the impact the closure would mean to the community and local economy.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

A. Market to High Tech Entrepreneurs

The Commission worked on finalizing their survey. They noted the goal of the survey is to determine how many of the internet based or telecommuter businesses are in Homer. They discussed options for distribution including getting out to the entrepreneurs group that meets monthly, directing people to the survey through the media, encouraging people they know to complete it, asking the Chamber Director if it could go out to their membership, and asking the local internet providers if they would make it available to their subscribers. They agreed on a two week time frame to receive response.

In considering the specifics of the survey they made the following suggestions:

- Change title to Internet Based Entrepreneurs or something to that effect.
- Primary location of business, keep it as is.
- How much band width needed for their business, change to What speed of internet do you need for your business.
- Category of business, keep it as is.
- What is businesses target market, keep it as is.
- Net income of business, keep it as is.
- Number of people employed in Homer area would be a good question to add.
- How many years in business, keep and reword to add in the Homer area.
- What do you see as the greatest challenge to your business, keep question as is but change the answer government regulations to city regulations.
- What could City of Homer do to help your business, keep it as is.
- What attracted you to Homer, keep it as is.

Jim Lavrakas, Chamber Director, participated in conversation with the group about relocation information on the Chamber website and the city's website. Relocation incentives are something to explore further as a way to welcome people to the community in addition to the other relocation information.

They also briefly discussed the idea of a tech conference and the annual business and technology conference that's held at Land's End in November.

B. Expand Shoulder Season Sports

The Commission agreed to discuss this at a future meeting.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

Community and Economic Development Coordinator Koester let the Commission know she won't be at the February meeting and will work with the Chair to get the agenda set before she goes. She noted the KPEDD is hosting the Industry Outlook Forum that will be held in Kenai this year. She will email the Commissioners the information.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

Councilmember Zak commented that it might be beneficial to hear from some of the groups that are involved in the shoulder season sports, to see what kind of challenges they are facing. The Wooden Boat Society has the conference in conjunction with the native kayak event, so maybe the groups from current festivals could comment to the Commission.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Barth thanked everyone for being at the worksession and Councilmember Zak for being here. It is good to get moving forward on some of these things on our list of things to do.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Wagner thought it was a good meeting and he always likes talking about e-commerce. He thinks the worked out a lot of issues and things moved forward.

There were no other commission comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

MELISSA JACOBSEN, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Approved:_____