

Session 18-04 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:00 p.m. on August 14, 2018 at the Cowles Council Chambers, City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, BROWN, AREVALO, EVANS (excused at 7:03 p.m.)  
GUSTAFSON (arrived at 6:56 p.m.)  
COUNCILMEMBER SMITH

STAFF: SPECIAL PROJECTS AND COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR CARROLL  
CITY CLERK JACOBSEN  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

### **AGENDA APPROVAL**

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the agenda as written.

EVANS/AREVALO MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

### **RECONSIDERATION**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Regular Meeting Minutes for April 10, 2018

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the minutes as written.

AREVALO/BROWN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 10, 2018.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **VISITORS**

A. Update on Pioneer Avenue Beautification Projects – Matt Steffy, City of Homer Parks Maintenance

Chair Marks introduced Matt Steffy, head of Homer Parks Maintenance. She added that the purpose of having him at the meeting is because the Pioneer Avenue Revitalization Task Force is under the auspices of the Economic Development Advisory Commission, and much of Mr. Steffy's presentation relates to the beautification of Pioneer Avenue.

Mr. Steffy provided his PowerPoint presentation on Pioneer Avenue, Homer beautification in general, and the concept of wayfinding. Sections covered included:

- Highlighting the Central Town Loop – Pioneer Avenue, Sterling Hwy., and thoroughfares including Greatland Street.
- Defining Beautification – An aspect that includes plants, benches, public art, trash cans, pet stations, and custodial (litter control and maintenance).
- Working with Local Businesses and Non-Profits – City's Right of Way is 10 feet from road edge; considering the public vs private responsibilities for maintenance, and learning/re-establishing partnerships.
- Finding a Strategy for Plants and Flowers – Three different ways to approach beautification community-wide would be Freestyle, Basic, or Standards.
- Covering Where the City Flowers Come From, and Where they Potentially Should – The City selects/grows the flowers and then gives them out to businesses to plant, who then make a donation of some kind to the City. New strategies: contract to local vendors provides better quality, but partnering with the High School encourages stewardship with local youth.
- Explaining Wayfinding and Wayshowing – All of the means of orienting people in a physical space to provide direction, advertise available resources, and do so with aesthetic prowess.
- Importance of Signage and Maps – Comprehensive signage: directional vs locational, and exploring the use of Geo Apps.

The commissioners shared their comments in response to the presentation. The question of this information's relevancy to the commission was brought up; Chair Marks reiterated her comments regarding the Pioneer Avenue Task Force, that's under the EDC, and what kind of work its doing. Her explanation touched on the City working with the task force, the increase in opportunity to focus on Pioneer Avenue and the downtown area, and establishing parameters that the City Parks department can work from.

The commission discussed details on donated benches and potential funding for benches. Chair Marks reiterated the importance of parameters and design concerns of eclectic vs. hodge-podge. It was agreed overall that consultation between Mr. Steffy and the Pioneer Avenue Task Force is a good thing and the beginning of a conversation.

There was no further discussion.

## **REPORTS**

- A. Marine Trades Association Report
- B. Chamber Director Report
- C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report
- D. Staff Report – Jennifer Carroll, Special Projects & Communications Coordinator
  - 1. Area Sector Analysis Process Survey

Special Projects & Communications Coordinator Carroll provided her report, highlighting the Soldotna Rotary Community Forum that she and Chair Marks attended on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. She explained it's a grassroots effort to launch an Area Sector Analysis Process (ASAP) using a program developed by planners; the leading person being a western regional planner named Don Albrecht.

Mrs. Carroll detailed out how the ASAP model works to help keep economies in small, rural communities vital. She further explained the survey process and the level of involvement of the Homer Chamber of Commerce and the City; part of Mrs. Carroll's proposal is asking Economic Development Commissioners to help distribute the postcards needed for the survey, on a personal/informal basis. She wanted the commissioners to be aware of this economic development effort happening on the Kenai Peninsula, and to encourage involvement.

Chair Marks added that the program created by Don Albrecht uses a numerical code that translates all of the business' survey data into actual numerical statistics; in her opinion this method has more merit than just a survey of personal-feeling comments to read through.

The commission further discussed the process of the ASAP model and how the data can be broken down. Chair Marks offered to take postcards for distribution.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

## **PENDING BUSINESS**

- A. Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan Proposal
  - 1. Letter of Support from Homer Chamber of Commerce
  - 2. Email from Library Director re: Wayfinding and Streetscape
  - 3. Letter of Support from Pratt Museum
  - 4. Wayfinding Project Examples

Chair Marks referenced the information provided in the packet.

MARKS/EVANS MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH DEVELOPING A WAYFINDING-STREETScape PLAN PROPOSAL TO PRESENT TO CITY COUNCIL FOR FUNDING CONSIDERATION. THE LONG-TERM GOALS OF THE PLAN ARE:

1) A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN CORRIDOR THAT CAN BETTER SUPPORT COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES; AND

2) STRATEGIC CITY UTILIZATION OF LANDMARKS, CITY SIGNAGE, PATHWAYS AND STREETScape ELEMENTS TO HELP VISITORS AND RESIDENTS MORE EASILY NAVIGATE AND MORE FULLY EXPERIENCE HOMER.

Chair Marks opens the floor for discussion. All commissioners shared their comments, including: support for this wayfinding plan, voicing a need for better signage, concerns over study costs, ways to cut costs, and clarification on the motion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Marks added more details on the wayfinding plan moving forward, later posing the question: what can be at the next meeting? Mrs. Carroll clarified that the emphasized plan items listed in her memo are fairly inclusive and can be added to by the commissioners to help set the scope of work, suggesting it could be at the next meeting. She further explained the various steps in creating the building blocks for this plan.

There was further discussion on:

- The wayfinding plan and how it can be tailored to Homer's needs
- What other needs should be added to the list for the plan's scope of work
- Clarification on State of Alaska TAP grants not a good fit for beautification-related projects; more for shovel-ready DOT projects
- Possibility of the Pioneer Avenue being considered an "urban trail"

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### A. Election of Vice Chair

Chair Marks referenced the non-renewal notice from Commissioner Sansom.

Given no commissioners volunteered or showed an interest in becoming the new vice chair, it was unanimously agreed by the commission that the topic shall be tabled until additional members are appointed.

### B. EDC Meeting Schedule for Remainder of 2018

Chair Marks explained meeting scheduling concerns due to the two vacancies and possible lack of quorum; she inquired for a general idea of meeting attendance from the commissioners. Commissioner Evans may be absent at the September meeting and Chair Marks from the October Meeting.

There was clarification on scheduling for the December meeting; it was originally voted on by the commission to not have a July/December meeting, but it was agreed to re-schedule it.

BROWN/EVANS MOVED TO RESCHEDULE THE DECEMBER 11, 2018 MEETING.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Marks encouraged all commissioners to help find city residents willing to volunteer on the Economic Development Advisory Commission.

### C. 2019-2024 CIP Review and Selection of Legislative Priority Project Recommendations

1. DRAFT 2019-2024 CIP

Chair Marks began the discussion with a recap on the CIP process.

Commissioner Gustafson arrived and joined the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

A lengthy discussion continued, with added feedback by Special Projects & Communications Coordinator Carroll on CIP process and project determination. All commissioners provided their input, listing their top priority selections, followed by extensive deliberation, questions, and answers on the reasoning/justifications for their picks.

Commissioner Evan's selections were: Homer Large Vessel Port Expansion, Barge Mooring and Large Vessel Haul out Repair Facility, and Main Street Reconstruction project.

Commissioner Brown's selections were: Barge Mooring and Large Vessel Haul out Repair Facility, Homer Large Vessel Port Expansion, and Storm Water Master Plan.

Commissioner Evans left the meeting at 7:03 p.m. Since Mr. Gustafson had arrived earlier, the commission was able to maintain a quorum.

Commissioner Gustafson's selections were: Homer Large Vessel Port Expansion, Barge Mooring and Large Vessel Haul out Repair Facility, and Multi-use Community Center.

Commissioner Arevalo's selections were: Barge Mooring and Large Vessel Haul out Repair Facility, Multi-use Community Center, and Main Street Reconstruction/Kachemak Drive Rehabilitation.

Chair Marks' selections were: Homer Large Vessel Port Expansion, Barge Mooring and Large Vessel Haul out Repair Facility, and Multi-use Community Center.

Although Mrs. Carroll reiterated the need for only two top priority picks, she stated many commissions choose a third selection. There was extensive conversation on having a multi-use community center/facility on the project list with added comments by Councilmember Smith. The commission continued their deliberations, including discussion on the overall top five CIP projects, while determining their final selections.

Consensus of group:

- 1 – Barge Mooring and Large Vessel Haul out Repair Facility
- 2 – Homer Large Vessel Port Expansion
- 3 – Multi-Use Community Center Phase I

There was no further discussion.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. Commissioner Sansom Message to EDC Re: Seat Non-Renewal
- B. City Manager's Report for July 23 & August 13, 2018
- C. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings

Chair Marks reviewed the Council meeting schedule. Councilmember Smith offered to provide the commission's input during the meeting, but Chair Marks and Commissioner Arevalo offered to attend.

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

**COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF**

City staff had no comments.

**COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER**

Councilmember Smith recapped on wayfinding and finding the full spectrum of the scope of work, plus breaking it down into more achievable budget goals. He noted that he will not be at the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, and future participation is in question depending on the October Council election results. He offered the commission motivating words and encouragement.

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Marks thanked the commission for ensuring the quorum of the meeting and to help find more members.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Gustafson and Brown had no additional comments.

Commissioner Arevalo complimented the group on a good and prompt meeting.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m. The **NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.** at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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RACHEL TUSSEY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

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