

Session 19-04 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:00 p.m. on April 9, 2019 at the Cowles Council Chambers, City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, EVANS, AREVALO, JOHNSON, RICHARDSON, & STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE HOLMES (left at 6:50 p.m.)

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

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Marks requested a motion to approve the agenda.

EVANS/JOHNSON SO MOVED.

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 March 12, 2019

Chair Marks called for a motion to approve the March 12, 2019 regular meeting minutes.

EVANS/RICHARDSON SO MOVED.

Special Projects and Communication Coordinator Carroll noted that clarification was needed on page three, third paragraph, to state that the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan is being included in a memo to the Planning Commission to see if it will be in a Request for Proposals, not that an RFP is being written.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

### **STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

- B. Chamber Director Report
- C. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report
- D. Staff Report – Jennifer Carroll, Special Projects & Communications Coordinator

Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll provided her staff report. She clarified that the presentation to the Planning Commission is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. not 6:30 p.m., and her deadline for the commissioners to submit presentation materials to her. Chair Marks gave a brief description of what that presentation will be on (Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan).

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **PENDING BUSINESS**

- A. EDC Bylaw Amendments
  - i. DRAFT EDC Bylaw Amendments

Chair Marks deferred to Deputy City Clerk Tussey, who provided an overview of what amendments the commission made/approved at the last meeting and explained the next steps in the process. Chair Marks asked Ms. Tussey for clarification on some of the proposed amendments since she had been absent at the last meeting and wanted to make sure she understood them. Commissioners Evans inquired if there were limitations on excused absences and what other City bodies do; it was confirmed that bylaws for other commissions only limit the number of unexcused absences and the number of meetings a commissioner can participate in telephonically.

There was brief discussion on the definition of a committee and how they report to the commission. Ms. Tussey noted that, for the next meeting, she will provide the commission additional information clarifying what constitutes a formal committee.

EVANS/RICHARDSON MOVED TO ADOPT THE EDC BYLAW AMENDMENTS.

There was no further discussion.

VOTE: YES: AREVALO, EVANS, MARKS, JOHNSON, RICHARDSON

Motion carried.

Chair Marks confirmed with Ms. Tussey that the approved bylaws will go to City Council for final approval at their April 22, 2019 meeting, when they would take effect, and how they will be distributed.

- B. Sign Ordinance Review
  - i. Letter from Commissioner Richardson Re: Sign Code

Chair Marks gave a brief introduction on the agenda item and Commissioner Richardson's memorandum included in the report, noting the recommendation provided to begin discussions.

RICHARDSON/MARKS MOVED TO DRAFT A LETTER TO THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION REGARDING DEFICIENCIES IN THE EXISTING SIGN CODE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSING LARGER MULTI-USE BUILDINGS AND OFFER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS TO AMEND THE EXISTING CODE FOR DELIBERATION AND ACTION; AND DIRECT SPECIAL PROJECTS AND COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR CARROLL TO WRITE THE LETTER.

Commissioner Arevalo directed questions to Mr. Richardson on how he came to his conclusions regarding sign ordinance issues. Mr. Richardson provided explanation on his findings, primarily that the demographic not properly represented are the business owners occupying a larger building, not the building owners. He explained how the current code works well up to larger buildings that house four or more businesses, which is where the deficiency starts.

The commission discussed Mr. Richardson's findings and his recommendations to address the issue, which were outlined into three suggested methods on sign ordinance allowances:

- 1) Calculating by secondary and tertiary entrances on public right of way;
- 2) Split level buildings and buildings two or more businesses deep; and
- 3) Guaranteed signage.

There was discussion on what the letter to the Planning Commission would entail, and direction was given to Special Projects and Communication Coordinator Carroll on verbiage/points they would like for her to include.

VOTE: YES: EVANS, MARKS, JOHNSON, RICHARDSON, AREVALO

Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. EDC Elections**

Chair Marks requested a motion to hold elections for EDC's Chair and Vice Chair at the next regular meeting in May.

EVANS/JOHNSON SO MOVED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Evans suggested that commissioners consider who they would like to be Chair/Vice Chair, so as to be prepared to make nominations at the next meeting.

### **B. EDC Strategic Plan/Goals**

- i. DRAFT 2019 EDC Strategic Plan/Goals
- ii. 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan: Chapter 7 Economic Vitality

- iii. Business Retention & Expansion Survey Report: EDC Proposed Action Items
- iv. 2011 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Implementation Plan

Chair Marks voiced her opinion/agreement with the EDC having a Strategic Plan/Goals document, and how there was enough information available to them to formulate a concise plan. She deferred to Ms. Carroll to explain timing for updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Ms. Carroll pointed out the “Economic Vitality” chapter in the 2018 Homer Comprehensive Plan as being more practical to the commission. Her recommendation is the cost benefit to updating/expanding the CEDS isn’t really there: the value of having the CEDS may not be more than digging into the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Arevalo suggested that the commission hold off on a stratified listing of their goals until everyone has had more time to read the documents, review the goals, and form a better idea of what to prioritize. Commissioner Evans agreed. Commissioner Johnson inquired on how to interpret the changes that happen to the plans over time. Ms. Carroll gave a brief explanation of who oversaw the updates to these documents.

Student Representative Holmes left at 6:50 p.m.

Chair Marks summarized the commission’s thoughts on having more time for review, and the mutual agreement of having it on the May agenda. Ms. Carroll suggested that when the commission is reviewing all the information, to be sure to focus on what EDC is responsible for (outlined by Ms. Tussey in the draft Strategic Plan/Goals that was provided in their packet).

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. Letter to HHA Re: EDC’s Recommendation dated March 14, 2019
- B. Letter & Certificate of Recognition for Commissioners Gustafson & Brown
- C. City Manager’s Report for March 11, 2019
- D. City Manager’s Report for March 26, 2019
- E. Commissioner Attendance at 2019 City Council Meetings

Chair Marks noted the Homer Hockey Association letter and thanked Ms. Carroll for writing and mailing it. She also inquired on the status of the orientation packet; Ms. Carroll and Ms. Tussey clarified that it is a staff task, they are working on it, and will be sharing it with the commission as a courtesy at the May meeting.

#### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

#### **COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF**

Special Projects and Communication Coordinator Carroll thanked Commissioner Richardson for his work on the sign ordinance agenda item. She also noted of a KPEDD entrepreneur event coming up.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey had no comments.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Richardson noted an upcoming event regarding an Army Corps of Engineers environmental impact review/public commenting period related to the Pebble Partnership, and encouraged the commissioners to attend.

Commissioner Johnson thanked Mr. Richardson for his work on Sign Ordinance issues and Deputy City Clerk Tussey for the Strategic Plan/Goals information.

Commissioner Arevalo reiterated the thanks given to Mr. Richardson and Ms. Tussey. She also gave a brief report on her attendance at the City Council's Land Allocation Plan worksession.

Commissioner Evans had no comments.

**COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER**

Councilmember Smith publicly thanked Anders Gustafson and Debora Brown for their service to EDC, as well as all the commissioners for their work. He shared his opinion on the Pebble Partnership, Russia's up-and-coming LNG projects, and the impact it would have on our state. He also encouraged the commissioners to attend the public comment forum event.

Commissioner Evans directed a question to Mr. Smith on the Governor's budget cuts and its impact on the City's budget. Mr. Smith summarized how the cuts affect the City and the area overall, and held brief discussion with the commission on the negative impacts to the community.

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Marks publicly thanked Anders Gustafson and Debora Brown for their work, shared her appreciation for the commissioners stepping up to do the leg work on the EDC's projects, and thanked Commissioner Evans for chairing the last meeting. She asked commissioners to look for new members since there are two commission vacancies. She and Ms. Carroll spoke to their work with the Consensus Count Committee, noting the importance of having accurate numbers in relation to how federal dollars are appropriated based on the census data, reaching out to more rural areas and the problems they face, and how people can participate in the census.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, 2019 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: \_\_\_\_\_