

Session 19-08 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:02 p.m. on September 10, 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, AREVALO, MINK, AND JOHNSON

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS BROWN, RICHARDSON, AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BROWN
(all excused)

STAFF: SPECIAL PROJECTS & COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR CARROLL
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks welcomed Commissioner Mink to the EDC and called for a motion to approve the agenda.

AREVALO/MINK MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. EDC Regular Meeting Minutes for August 13, 2019

Chair Marks asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 6th meeting.

JOHNSON/AREVALO MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Commissioner Johnson complimented Deputy City Clerk Tussey on the well-written minutes.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Special Projects & Communications Coordinator Staff Report

- i. Special Projects Coordinator Staff Report for August 2019
- ii. New Alaska Title 4 Regulation Definition
- iii. HMTA Ad in RAVN Air Magazine

Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll provided her staff report and facilitated discussion with the commissioners on the following topics:

- Changes to State of Alaska Title 4 Regulations regarding allowable activities at breweries and distilleries, and how the EDC as a whole (or as individual members of the public) can voice their concerns to City Council and/or State legislators before public comment closes on October 4th.
- Small Business Association's upcoming Roundtable discussion about the business challenges in rural Alaska on September 17th.
- Action taken by the Planning Commission and City Council that is relevant to the commission, specifically regarding the Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan.

B. Chamber Director Report

C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

- i. HMTA Meeting Minutes for July 10, 2019
- ii. HMTA Agenda for August 14, 2019

D. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report

Chair Marks reported on the last meeting held by the Pioneer Avenue Task Force. The group met with Matt Steffy, Parks Maintenance Coordinator, to discuss the gardens along Pioneer Avenue and collaborate efforts to maintain the existing gardens/parks. She further shared that not much else can be done until ADOT&PF have completed the road reconstruction of Pioneer Avenue. The task force has done much work but is winding down, which is why the last meeting was so important since it established a direction moving forward without the PATF.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PENDING BUSINESS

A. BR&E Action Item - Zoning

- i. Memo from Special Projects Coordinator Re: Action Item from the BR&E: Zoning

Chair Marks introduced the zoning topic, noting staff's memo and the Planning Commission minutes provided, and explained how the Planning Commission and City Council have been moving forward with various zoning issues. She opened the floor for discussion on whether or not this EDC agenda item is closed for now.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he had no further input on zoning, and that he is willing to focus on other topics. Commissioner Arevalo concurred; she noted that the commission can be kept in the loop and address zoning concerns when they arise. Commissioner Mink voiced his agreement for moving on and appreciated the information provided.

The commission mutually agreed to remove the zoning action item from EDC's agenda. Staff supported the decision and agreed to bring any planning and zoning issues to the commission as they come up.

- B. Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan
 - i. Memo from Special Projects Coordinator Re: Wayfinding & Streetscape Plan: Next Steps
 - ii. Planning Commission July 17, 2019 Minutes Excerpt
 - iii. City Planner Staff Report 19-63

Chair Marks initiated discussion on the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan by providing an overview of the Planning Commission's action to remove the plan from being included in the next Transportation Plan.

The commission shared their opinions on how the initial strategy did not work out and how they could proceed with moving the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan forward. The commission fully agreed that a worksession would be the better course of action, and to invite additional members of the community and the other commissions that could contribute to the conversation. Commissioners and staff deliberated what the subject of the agenda would be, what EDC is looking to accomplish with a joint worksession, who should be in attendance, and what kind of plan would be presented to Council.

The commission requested staff to look into scheduling a joint worksession with the Planning Commission and PARCAC, potentially for the Planning Commission's already-scheduled worksession on October 16th at 5:30 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. EDC Next Action Item
 - i. Memo from Special Projects Coordinator Re: Selecting Next Action Item

Chair Marks opened the floor for suggestions on what the EDC should work on next.

Commissioner Arevalo suggested that EDC should review the City's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy next. She explained that many of the commissioners are fairly new and do not understand the CEDS, their bylaws require them to review the CEDS annually, and that it feels like it's time to bring them up for review. Commissioners Mink and Johnson agreed and shared their opinions on the CEDS.

Chair Marks recommended the commission review the CEDS at the next meeting, and then can plan their CEDS strategy when they discuss the 2020 calendar at the November meeting. She asked for a motion to work on the CEDS and it be on the October meeting agenda.

AREVALO/MINK MOVED TO REVIEW THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY BEFORE THE NEXT MEETING AND TO HAVE IT ON THE OCTOBER MEETING AGENDA.

Commissioner Arevalo asked that if there were any other supporting documents relevant to the CEDS, if Special Projects Coordinator Carroll could distribute them to the commissioners in advance before they review the CEDS. Ms. Carroll described where commissioners can find information online.

Chair Marks suggested that a component of the agenda item should be to address rewriting/updating the CEDS. Mr. Mink wished to emphasize that the EDC would be writing the CEDS update to be viable for the next 10 years or more, and to keep in mind future commissioners and readers. Ms. Carroll asked the commissioners to contact her if they think of items that will help make their discussion more effective so she can include them in the packet.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Johnson brought up the remote workforce recruitment project that the Chamber of Commerce has been working on and shared his thoughts that there's work the EDC could do there. He wanted to make sure the subject stayed on the EDC's plate. Ms. Carroll provided additional details in response to Mr. Mink's questions, explaining the presentation done by Economist Alyssa Rodriguez and the Chamber's marketing campaign to attract remote workers mainly in digital fields to move to Homer. Ms. Arevalo shared her thoughts on the subject and her support for having a remote working office space that can benefit locals who are already here and work from home. Discussion ensued on the concept/logistics of Homer being a destination for remote workers.

Chair Marks recognized the commission's mutual interest in pursuing this subject and asked if any of the commissioners would be interested in going out and gathering information to spearhead this project.

MINK/JOHNSON MOVED TO HAVE THE REMOTE WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT PROJECT ON THE OCTOBER MEETING AGENDA.

Chair Marks suggested the Chamber Director be contacted to be included in that discussion. Mr. Johnson volunteered to contact Chamber Director Speakman and explain EDC's idea and invite her to provide input at their next meeting. At the suggestion of Chair Marks, Mr. Mink offered to compile information on the needs/practices of remote work offices.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Appointment Letter & Certificate for John Mink
- B. City Manager's Report for August 12, 2019
- C. City Manager's Report for August 21, 2019
- D. EDC 2019 Meeting Calendar
- E. Commissioner Attendance at 2019 City Council Meetings

Chair marks reviewed each item informational item with the commission, specifically noting the regular inclusion of the EDC's calendar and confirming which commissioners can attend the upcoming City Council meetings. Staff and commissioners briefly discussed the process of reporting to Council and where commissioners can seek talking points.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

Special Projects and Communications Coordinator Carroll thanked the commission for making quorum and welcomed Commissioner Mink to the EDC.

Deputy City Clerk Tussey said that she will not be at the October meeting due to FEMA training.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Marks shared her excitement to see commissioners engaged and projects moving forward.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Arevalo commented on and directed questions to staff regarding the legislative's work on changing code for breweries and holding events.

Commissioner Johnson agreed with Ms. Arevalo's comments and shared his support for speaking against the title changes.

Commissioner Mink commented on the Title 4 issue and encouraged everyone to contact their elected officials. He also shared his experience watching the launching of a 75' catamaran today using the new large vessel haul-out crane at Homer Enterprise Boatyard.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 8, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

RACHEL TUSSEY, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____