

1. CALL TO ORDER

Session 23-02 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:00 p.m. on February 14, 2023 at the City Hall Conference Room located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, PITZMAN, CHEROK, AREVALO, GAMBLE, PEREZ

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER BROWN (excused)

CONSULTING: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PEARSON, MAYOR CASTNER

STAFF: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER ENGBRETSSEN, DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

2. AGENDA APPROVAL

PITZMAN/CHEROK MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

4. RECONSIDERATION

5. CONSENT AGENDA (Items listed below are considered routine and non-controversial by the Commission and are approved in one motion. If a separate discussion is desired on an item, a Commissioner may request that item be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda under New Business.)

- 5.A. EDC Meeting Minute Approval
Unapproved January 10, 2023 EDC Minutes

Deputy City Clerk Tussey read the Consent Agenda. Chair Marks requested a motion.

AREVALO/PITZMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS READ.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

6. VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

7. STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 7.A. EDC Staff Report
Agenda Item Report EDC 23-004

Economic Development Manager Engebretsen spoke to her written report and answered questions from the commission. She confirmed with commissioners that March 14th, which is during Spring Break, will still work for the next regular meeting.

7.B. Mayor's Report

Mayor Castner reported on his work with the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission on the harbor expansion project, efforts to seek out funding sources to pay for everything, and securing approval from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to conduct a general investigation study.

There was discussion on City revenue sources through sales tax and bed taxes, the Mayor's goals regarding planning and zoning code updates, and responses to questions from the commission.

7.C. Homer Marine Trades Association (HMTA) Report
HMTA Meeting Minutes 1/4/2023
HMTA Meeting Agenda 1/26/2023

Chair Marks noted the HMTA items in the packet and reiterated Economic Development Manager Engebretsen's efforts to get HMTA members to come to future meetings to give in-person reports.

8. PUBLIC HEARING

9. PENDING BUSINESS

9.A. Housing and Short Term Rentals
Agenda Item Report EDC 23-005

Chair Marks introduced the agenda item by reading the title. She reported on her involvement with a greater Homer housing event that is scheduled for March 25th at the Homer Community Christian Church. More details to come. It will be an opportunity for community stakeholders to come together and discuss solutions to the Homer housing issues.

Mayor Castner interjected to include additional housing issues, particularly related to worker housing, that the group should be addressing. He opined how a housing authority should be established.

There was discussion on the purpose of the event, what kind of aspects commissioners would like to see addressed, and how individuals or professionals can participate in the event.

Chair Marks explained how she will be attending other advisory body meetings to share the event information.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.A. Wayfinding and Streetscape: Banner Design
Agenda Item Report EDC 23-006

Chair Marks introduced the agenda item by reading the title and deferred to Economic Development Manager Engebretsen.

Ms. Engebretsen spoke to the banner design work from Corvus Design and invited commissioners to give feedback. Commissioners shared their opinions on the designs, their support for the direction of the artwork, and their suggestions for using other animals or various aspects of Homer.

10.B. Land Allocation Plan
Agenda Item Report EDC 23-007

Chair Marks introduced the agenda item by reading the title and deferred to Economic Development Manager Engebretsen.

Ms. Engebretsen explained the process for the EDC's annual review of the Land Allocation Plan. She gave an overview of staff's recommendations for removing Overslope Areas 2, 3, and 4 from Section A, land available for lease, and updating the descriptions for Lots 9A and 10A to reserve them for fisheries uses or short term leases. She facilitated discussion with the commission on the rationale for removing those overslope areas, or if there were ways to leave the areas on.

Chair Marks asked for a motion.

PITZMAN/CHEROK MOVED TO REMOVE OVERSLOPE AREAS 2, 3, AND 4 FROM SECTION A OF THE LAND ALLOCATION PLAN, AND RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

AREVALO/PITZMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THAT LOTS 9A AND 10A ON FISH DOCK ROAD BE DESIGNATED FOR FISHERY USE LEASES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

10.C. Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan Worksession
Agenda Item Report EDC 23-008

Chair Marks introduced the agenda item by reading the title. She noted the EDC Strategic Plan and the Homer Chamber of Commerce's Strategic Plan in the packet and explained the purpose behind the joint worksession will be to discuss their mutual economic development goals.

Economic Development Manager Engebretsen spoke to the structure of the worksession and that Adele Person will be facilitating the dialogue and asking the groups questions, so to come prepared.

10.D. EDC Mission Statement and Defining Positive Economic Development
Agenda Item Report EDC 23-009

Chair Marks introduced the agenda item by reading the title and deferred to Economic Development Manager Engebretsen and Commissioner Perez.

Ms. Engebretsen summarized the EDC wanting to work on a mission statement and some guiding principles for what the EDC does, and Commissioner Perez volunteered to work on that statement.

Commissioner Perez explained his work behind writing the draft EDC mission and vision statement, what characteristics it should include, the sources he pulled from to come up with the vision, and then using that to write out the mission statement. He expects to have a final draft for the next meeting.

There was discussion on the document, the overall support of Commissioner Perez's work, and the commission's consensus to hold off on making a motion to approve the statement until their next meeting. Chair Marks asked commissioners to submit their input to Ms. Engebretsen before the next agenda deadline and that they would have it on the March agenda.

11. INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- 11.A. Small Business Development Center Quarterly Report
SBDC Homer Quarterly Report 2022 Oct-Dec
- 11.B. Kachemak Bay Campus Job Fair
Job Fair Flier 3/3/2023
- 11.C. City of Homer Newsletter
February 2023 Issue
- 11.D. City Manager's Reports
CM Report for February 13, 2023 Council Meeting – Laydown
- 11.E. EDC Strategic Plan
2022-23 EDC Strategic Plan
- 11.F. EDC Meeting & City Council Report Calendar
EDC 2023 Calendar

Chair Marks noted the informational materials in the packet and facilitated comments and discussion on each item. Commissioners discussed which Council reports they would be able to volunteer for: Commissioner Pitzman – August, September; Commissioner Perez – April; Commissioner Cherok – May.

12. COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Scott Adams, city resident, commented on the banner designs for wayfinding and streetscape and how they tie into aspects of the community, and his experiences with the housing issues in Homer.

13. COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Tussey noted the polls for the Borough Mayor Special Election were still open for a few more minutes if any commissioners had not voted yet. She announced reappointment notices will be sent out at the end of the month/early March to Commissioners Marks and Perez, and to complete the reappointment application that will be with that notice if they're interested in serving for another 3-year term.

Economic Development Manager Engebretsen wished the commission a Happy Valentine's Day.

14. COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Arevalo reported there is a new partnership between the college's new agriculture program and the Natural Resources Conservation Service that offers "Know Your Land" talks at the

college and online. There are free workshops coming up for those interested. She announced the Alaska Food Hub is reopening for the season; there won't be much food offered yet but there will be items such as microgreens and locally made food products. She encouraged everyone to support local farms by buying through the food hub.

Commissioner Arevalo left the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Student Representative Pearson commented it was great to see the harbor expansion project design concepts; her mom owns a business out on the Spit so it would be good to see more traffic.

Commissioner Perez commented on the Kachemak Bay State Park has launched the new management plan and are rezoning for more recreational use among other things. He opined it's something the EDC should keep in the back of their head as far as development planning for that space that they could be promoting.

Commissioner Gamble wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day and thanked Mayor Castner for attending.

Commissioner Cherok noted it was a good meeting and apologized for having to keep his video off while he is in the middle of traveling.

Commissioner Pitzman voiced his appreciation for the warm welcome as a new commissioner. He commented on the EDC materials he was reviewing and how it struck him how lucky our community is to have these incredible economic development spring boards to start with, and the amount of work that has gone on by people with their hearts in the right place to secure our bright future. He appreciates being here.

Chair Marks commented on the upcoming joint worksession with the Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the Library Western Lot project that the Friends of the Homer Library secured grant funding for, and looking forward to the new Chamber Visitor Guides that are expected to incorporate more wayfinding. She thanked the commission.

Mayor Castner thanked the commission for their service and his hopes that they will focus on the business elements of all the plans that the City is working on. There are a lot of things happening, stuff in the works, and encouraged them to stick with it and ask questions.

15. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m. A Worksession is scheduled for Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Conference Room and via Zoom Webinar, and the next regular meeting is Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. and scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.



RACHEL TUSSEY, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: March 14, 2023