

Session 21-04 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:00 p.m. on April 13, 2021 at the Cowles Council Chambers, City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioners Jeffrey Johnson and William Richardson did not seek reappointment. Commissioner Johnson's seat was filled by Commissioner Adele Person. One seat remains vacant.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, BROWN, SPEAKMAN, AREVALO, CHEROK, PERSON

STAFF: DEPUTY CITY PLANNER ENGBRETSSEN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY

The Economic Development Advisory Commission met in a Worksession from 5:30 p.m. to 5:55 p.m. prior to the meeting. The worksession was facilitated by City Clerk Jacobsen regarding advisory body training.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks called for a motion to approve the agenda.

SPEAKMAN/AREVALO 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. March 9, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chair Marks called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

BROWN/SPEAKMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. EDC Staff Report

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen welcomed new commissioner Adele Person and spoke to her written report, noting the following:

- City Council awarded the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan contract to Corvus Designs; she will be contacting them tomorrow to start laying out meeting/project timeframe.
- Planning Commission is making progress on the Community Design Manual rewrite.
- Attendance at the March Chamber of Commerce board meeting.
- Participation in the joint City of Homer/South Peninsula Hospital mass COVID vaccination events; those are starting to wind down as vaccinations moves more towards SPH-driven pop-up events and clinic walk-ins.
- Met with Commissioner Arevalo to make improvements to the EDC webpage.
- Was not able schedule a presentation with Robert Green, Small Businesses Administration; will try to have a speaker at a future meeting.
- Upcoming agenda items in May: would like to look at the 5-year Comprehensive Plan and review of the Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Commissioner Arevalo commented on the EDC webpage updates/improvements. There was brief discussion on the types of web links and resources the commissioners and staff found helpful.

B. Chamber Director Report

Chair Marks noted that Brad Anderson will not be in attendance; the Winter King Salmon Tournament is this weekend.

C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

D. Pioneer Avenue Task Force Report

Chair Marks reported that they are working on the upcoming peony celebration. Their next meeting is April 20th at 5:30 p.m. and is open to the public.

Commissioner Person inquired if this report should be renamed based on the actual work that is being done by the task force since its primary objective has evolved. Discussion ensued between the commission and Deputy City Clerk Tussey on amending the name. Chair Marks agreed to work with staff on updating the report section for the next meeting.

E. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

Chair Marks noted Deputy City Planner Engebretsen's verbal recap during her staff report. Ms. Marks commented that she is looking forward to a timeframe being set.

Commissioner Arevalo inquired on the Sothern Kenai Peninsula/Homer's response to the CEDS survey. There was discussion on the positive/strong response and when it would be appropriate to have the draft results of those surveys posted.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review of Strategic Plan & Business Recruitment & Retention Plan (BR&E)
- i. EDC 2020-2021 Strategic Plan/Goals
 - ii. BR&E Executive Summary Excerpt

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading the title and deferred to Deputy City Planner Engebretsen to initiate discussion.

Ms. Engebretsen spoke to her memo, working down the list of goals that are in the EDC's strategic plan and referenced in the Business Recruitment & Retention Plan (BR&E) executive summary. She requested feedback from the commission on if there's anything in their goals that they'd like to focus on for their spring/summer meetings.

There was discussion on the following areas:

- Assisting Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District (KPEDD) with public outreach for development of the Kenai Peninsula regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); more to come once KPEDD published the new CEDS.
- If COVID funding would be available for the City to facilitate assistance programs again like they did last year; not likely according to staff.
- Interest in future programs to help businesses, such as storefront improvement assistance.
- Preference to focus on the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan project for now.
- Possibly not holding a July meeting if there aren't any actionable items, and then come back in the fall with a new project to focus on.

- B. Election of EDC Officers

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading the title and requested the commission to determine how they would like to vote since unanimous consent is not allowed for elections.

AREVALO/BROWN MOVED TO USE A SHOW OF HANDS TO CONDUCT ELECTIONS.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Marks requested nominations for Vice Chair. Commissioner Person volunteered to serve in either the Vice Chair or Chair role. She commented that it would be easier to hold discussion on both roles rather than separately. Chair Marks noted they are voting for each seat separately and would agree to be Chair again if nominated.

BROWN/CHEROK NOMINATED COMMISSIONER ADELE PERSON FOR VICE CHAIR.

There was brief discussion on the “raise hand” feature in Zoom.

VOTE: YES: MARKS, BROWN, SPEAKMAN, AREVALO, CHEROK, PERSON

Motion carried.

Chair Marks asked the commission if they preferred she hand the gavel over to the Vice Chair to conduct Chair elections, or if they were fine with her continuing. No commissioners objected. Chair Marks said she would serve again if nominated.

BROWN/SPEAKMAN NOMINATED COMMISSIONER KARIN MARKS FOR CHAIR.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: YES: MARKS, BROWN, SPEAKMAN, AREVALO, CHEROK, PERSON

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Resolution 21-026 Awarding Contract for Development of Homer Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan
- B. EDC Reappointment Letter & Certificate for Nicole Arevalo
- C. City Manager’s Report for March 22, 2021
- D. City Manager’s Report for April 12, 2021
- E. EDC 2021 Calendar
- F. Memo 21-057 EDC Appointment of Adele Person w/ Backup Items

Chair Marks thanked Commissioner Arevalo for serving on the EDC for another term. There was discussion on providing the EDC report at the next City Council meeting, with Ms. Marks agreeing to be present at the April 26th meeting. In response to Chair Marks’ comments, Deputy City Clerk Tussey noted Commissioner Person’s appointment information was provided in the supplemental items online.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Tussey welcomed Commissioner Person and commented that it was a good meeting.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen noted that once the EDC is well into the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan project, it would be a great time to keep City Council and the public apprised of how the project is going. They had mixed feelings about the project so having good representation from the EDC to Council will be important. She commented that it was a great meeting and thanked the commission for their time.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Chair Marks thanked Commissioners Arevalo and Person again for serving and noted that leaves one seat vacant, which needs to be filled by a city resident. She commented on the value of having a full commission due to quorum issues, and advertising meetings in advance even if they have to cancel.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Arevalo welcomed Commissioner Person to the team.

Commissioner Cherok welcomed Commissioner Person and noted it was good to see everyone again.

Commissioner Person commented that it was great to be there and looks forward to working on the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan project.

Commissioner Speakman welcomed Commissioner Person and opined that it's going to be a busy summer; there's going to be lots of work for them to do.

Commissioner Brown thanked Deputy City Planner Engebretsen for her work on the EDC strategic plan and voiced her excitement to have Commissioners Arevalo and Person on the commission.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m. The next Regular Meeting is Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. All meetings scheduled to be held via Zoom Webinar in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.



RACHEL TUSSEY, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: May 11, 2021