

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-06 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:01 p.m. on June 11, 2024 at the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, AREVALO, BRENNAN, BROWN & YOUNG

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER HASCHE (EXCUSED) & STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PEARSON

STAFF: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ENGBRETSSEN & DEPUTY CITY CLERK PETTIT

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks read the supplemental items into the agenda: **Under New Business Item B. Comprehensive Plan Surveys, the 2024 Business Survey and the Homer Visitor Survey: Summer 2024 were added.** She requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as amended.

BRENNAN/BROWN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS UPON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Unapproved Meeting Minutes for May 14, 2024

BROWN/BRENNAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2024.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. EDC Staff Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen delivered the EDC Staff Report, noting the following:

- The budget was passed by City Council at their regular meeting this past Monday. There's some shifting of staffing and dollars, but the changes were all agreed upon by City Staff. Some of the updates included:
 - Part-time Planner → Full-time Planner
 - Full-time Parks & Trails Planner → Half-time administrative and extra help

- The Joint Worksession between City Council and the EDC for June 17th has been cancelled so that Council can proceed with the City Manager hiring process.
- Food truck licensing – 12 individual vendors licensed so far this year.

B. Chamber Director Report

Brad Anderson, Executive Director of the Homer Chamber of Commerce, delivered the Chamber Director Report. He covered the following:

- Chamber of Commerce's 75th Anniversary
 - Anniversary raffle featuring high-end adventures
- Summer season
- Culinary scene in Homer
- Upcoming Events:
 - June 20th – Summer Solstice Festival
 - 4th of July Parade
 - 5th year of the Peony Celebration
- Cruise ships
- Fall Events:
 - Election year candidate forums
 - Pioneer Avenue Trick-or-Treat
 - Fall Festival at the Chamber
 - Shop Local Bingo
- Local developments:
 - New microsite focused on local services in Homer
 - Bay Welding's 50th Anniversary

C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

D. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

Chair Marks reported that the next quarterly meeting is next week, and that Commissioners should expect an update during the EDC's regular meeting in August.

E. Port Expansion

F. Guiding Homer's Growth Group

Chair Marks noted that this group has gone into a hiatus with people gone for the summer season. She encouraged Commissioners to fill the vacancy within the group if they felt inclined to do so.

G. HERC Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen reported that the City did not receive the \$1 million EPA grant to deal with the HERC. She added that the City will be working with the State in hopes of leveraging state funding to better position the City for an EPA application either later this year or next year.

H. Housing Update

Chair Marks reported that the MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) housing for the assessment needs survey has been extended through September.

I. Planning Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen reported that there will be a vacancy on the Planning Commission in the near future.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Business Licenses

Community Development Director Engebretsen provided a brief summary of Resolution 24-039(A) that was recently adopted by City Council, which provides direction to the EDC regarding the creation of a business license. She requested each Commissioner to pick a task that they would like to work on for the purpose of discussing the potential for a business license at the EDC's August work session.

Tasks were assigned to Commissioners as follows:

- **Task #2:** Potential costs of licensure for business – **Commissioner Young**
- **Task #5:** How can the City engage with the State of Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing and not duplicate the services available and information collected by that entity – **Commissioner Brown**
- **Task #7:** Consideration of a “no cost program” for data collection purposes only – **Commissioner Young**
- **Task #8:** Challenges and benefits of local business licensing programs in other Alaska communities – **Chamber Director Anderson**
- **Task #10:** What are the other existing licenses required in City limits and how will those licenses be affected, changed, streamlined, or overlap – **Commissioner Brennan**

NEW BUSINESS

A. Cruise Ships

Community Development Director Engebretsen noted that City Council adopted Resolution 24-048, which requests the EDC to develop an understanding of City/Municipal cruise ship policies from other communities. Discussion topics included:

- Cruise ship tourism and policies in Juneau, Alaska
- Friday, June 28th cruise ship landing
- Distinguishing the difference between large and small cruise ships
- Potential expansion of the Port and Harbor

B. Comprehensive Plan Surveys

The Commission reviewed the draft business and visitor surveys for the Comprehensive Plan, suggesting edits throughout the surveys that might make them more effective and easier to answer.

C. Review of Existing Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 7 Economic Vitality

The Commission reviewed Chapter 7 Economic Vitality from the City's existing Comprehensive Plan. Discussion topics included:

- Workforce shortage and workforce development
- Housing and cost of living
- Organic community growth
- City facilities

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. City Manager's Report for June 10, 2024 Council Meeting

B. EDC Annual Calendar 2024

C. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings

Chair Marks noted the informational materials and shared that City Council is eliminating their last meeting in June.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Pettit noted that he learned a great deal of information at conference the week prior. He added that it was a good meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Arevalo thanked Mr. Anderson for attending the meeting.

Commissioner Brown thanked Mr. Anderson for attending the meeting, and added that she hopes to see him at the EDC's meetings more often.

Commissioner Brennan thanked Mr. Anderson for attending the meeting, and congratulated Deputy City Clerk Pettit on reaching his one-year milestone working for the City of Homer.

Chair Marks noted that it was an exceptional meeting and shared that she's hopeful for someone to fill the vacancies on the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:32 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.

ZACH PETTIT, DEPUTY CITY CLERK I

Approved: _____