

CALL TO ORDER

Session 24-07 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 5:59 p.m. on August 13, 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, YOUNG & ZUBEK

ABSENT: COMMISSIONER BROWN

STAFF: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ENGBRETSSEN & DEPUTY CITY CLERK PETTIT

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marks read the supplemental items into the agenda: **Under Visitors/Presentations Item A. Patty Relay, Executive Director Pratt Museum – Roof Replacement Project.** She requested a motion and second to approve the agenda as amended.

AREVALO/BRENNAN 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 June 11, 2024

BRENNAN/YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 11, 2024.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Patty Relay, Executive Director Pratt Museum

Roof System Replacement Project

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading of the title and relinquished the floor to Patty Relay. Ms. Relay stated that she was there to urge the Commission to support the roof replacement project, as it's currently a nominated project within the City's Capital Improvement Plan list. Topics covered included:

- Economic vitality and how the museum and roof project fit into that
- Deterioration of the existing roof system
- Potential solutions for the problem and funds associated with those solutions

Questions were fielded by City Staff and Ms. Relay regarding the following topics:

- Capital Improvement Plan process
- Tentative start date for the project and expected length to reach completion
- Future of the Pratt Museum if the roof repair project doesn't receive funding

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. EDC Staff Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen delivered her report, noting the following:

- She has been designated Acting City Manager for instances when City Manager Jacobsen is out of the office
- The budget will be on the agenda for the September meeting
- Grant for ~\$1.5 million in partnership with a research reserve to acquire property in the Bridge Creek Watershed Protection District
- Plans to apply for more EPA Brownfield money to address the HERC building this fall

B. Chamber Director Report

Community Development Director Engebretsen provided the Chamber Director Report, covering the following:

- Fall luncheons will kick off soon
- **September:** Panel discussions pertaining to cruise ships and the World Arts Festival
- **October:** Tourism recap
- **November:** State of the City update

C. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

D. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

Chair Marks noted that she wasn't able to review the meetings for the two months prior, but added that she would be attending the meeting this upcoming Thursday. She stated that she would provide an update in September.

Community Development Director informed the Commission about KPEDD hosting a movie about aquaculture at Salmon Sisters on the Spit.

E. Port Expansion

F. Guiding Homer's Growth Group

Chair Marks noted that the Commission lost its representative for the Guiding Growth Group, and invited any of the Commissioners to fill the void left by ex-Commissioner Kim.

G. HERC Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen noted that the City of Homer is an awardee of some State of Alaska Brownfield funding. She added that the Parks Art Recreation & Culture Advisory Commission has been tasked to see what can be done about cleaning up the two buildings on-site at the HERC.

H. Housing Update

Chair Marks noted that she should have an update to provide at the next meeting. She added that the group met on August 6th, but that the subcommittee didn't meet.

I. Planning Update

Community Development Director Engebretsen stated that the Comprehensive Plan is moving forward. She noted that all the Commissions will have a synopsis of the community survey results in the near future. She encouraged Commissioners and members of the public to participate in both the business and visitor surveys. She concluded her update by informing the Commission that Agnew::Beck will visit in October for Community Visit #3 and presentation of future growth scenarios.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Business Licenses

Memorandum EDC-24-011 from Community Development Director as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen recalled the tasks that were divvied up among Commissioners and City Staff to investigate pertaining to business licenses at the previous meeting. Together, the Commission and Ms. Engebretsen reviewed the tasks, reporting on each of their assigned items, including:

- Potential cost of licensure for businesses
- Potential cost for the City to administer a program
- Outreach to the Chamber of Commerce and the business community
- How the City of Homer can engage with the State of Alaska
- Potential for a no cost business licensing program
- Challenges and benefits of implementing a business licensing program
- Specialty licenses and permits
- Pros and cons of a business licensing program

Ms. Engebretsen volunteered to summarize a list of pro and cons regarding business licensing from the EDC in a memo to Council. She stated that she would bring it back to the next meeting for any edits that the Commission wishes to make to the memo.

AREVALO/YOUNG MOVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL INVESTIGATE HARBOR SPECIFIC OPTIONS TO ACCOMPLISH THE GOALS OF SOLVING PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED REGARDING NON-HOMER BUSINESS OPERATING OUT OF THE HOMER HARBOR INSTEAD OF PURSUING A GENERAL BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICABLE TO ALL BUSINESSES.

There was no further discussion.

Chair Marks requested that the Clerk perform a roll-call vote.

VOTE: YES: AREVALO, BRENNAN, MARKS, YOUNG & ZUBEK

Motion carried.

B. EDC Bylaws

Memorandum from Community Development Director as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen noted that this was the second time that the Bylaw revisions were in front of the Commission, adding that Bylaw amendments must be seen twice by the Commission before being forwarded to City Council for approval. She reviewed the changes that had been made, and Chair Marks subsequently requested a motion and second.

YOUNG/BRENNAN MOVED TO FORWARD THE AMENDED EDC BYLAWS TO CITY COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

C. Cruise Ships

Memorandum EDC-24-012 from Community Development Director as backup

Community Development Director Engebretsen recalled that the EDC had been assigned two tasks regarding cruise ships: develop and understand municipal cruise ship policies from other municipalities, and engage in a conversation with the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders about the effects of the cruise ship industry on the local businesses and the community to help inform any potential City policy development.

The Commission agreed to hold a worksession regarding cruise ships to start at 4:30 p.m. on September 10th, prior to the start of the regular meeting.

AREVALO/YOUNG MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ALLOW PATTY RELAY TO SPEAK.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Ms. Relay referenced her time in Valdez, where the community created a phased approach to cruise ships. She noted that she wasn't advocating for increased cruise ship activity, recalling her recent trip to Ketchikan where there were eight ships simultaneously in the community. To conclude, she stated that cruise ships are an opportunity, but they also present a challenge to the community.

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

Memorandum EDC-24-008 from Community Development Director as backup

NEW BUSINESS

A. Capital Improvement Plan

Memorandum EDC-24-013 from Special Projects & Communication Coordinator as backup

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading of the title and deferred to Community Development Director Engebretsen, who provided the Commission with a brief summary of how projects move through the Capital Improvement Plan.

YOUNG/BRENNAN MOVED THAT THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS TO CITY COUNCIL FOR INCLUSION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY SECTION OF THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

1. MULTI-USE COMMUNITY CENTER
2. SLOPE STABILITY AND EROSION MITIGATION
3. HERC HAZMAT CLEANUP
4. HOMER SPIT EROSION
5. COMPREHENSIVE DRAINAGE MANAGEMENT

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

AREVALO/YOUNG MOVED THAT THE CITY OF HOMER INCLUDE THE PRATT MUSEUM'S ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT ON THEIR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON-OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

A. City Manager's Report for August 12, 2024

B. EDC Annual Calendar 2024

Chair Marks noted the informational materials, and Commissioner Young volunteered to deliver the report to City Council on August 26th.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Patty Relay thanked the Commission for listening the Pratt Museum’s project needs and making a motion to include in on the City’s CIP. She encouraged Commissioners to come by on a rainy day to see how bad it truly is. She added that she would love to be a part of future cruise ship discussions.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Pettit welcomed Commissioner Zubek, and noted that it was a good meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL MEMBER (If Present)

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Brennan stated that it was a great meeting, and congratulated Ms. Engebretsen on her Acting City Manager designation.

Commissioner Young welcomed Ms. Zubek to the Commission. He noted that Homer has had a really cool last two weeks, with Kristen Faulkner representing Homer at the Olympics and another resident of Homer winning the lottery.

Commissioner Arevalo welcomed Ms. Zubek to the Commission. She noted the piles of options in the Capital Improvement Project list.

Commissioner Zubek thanked the Commission for welcoming her.

Chair Marks welcomed Ms. Zubek to the Commission. She reiterated that there is still a vacancy on the Commission. She echoed Ms. Arevalo’s comments pertaining to the CIP, and spoke briefly regarding cruise ships.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m. The next regular meeting is Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. A worksession is scheduled for 4:30 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:_____