

Session 22-03 a Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Commission was called to order by Chair Karin Marks at 6:03 p.m. on March 8, 2022 at the Cowles Council Chambers, City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska and via Zoom Webinar, and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Student Representative Pearson was appointed February 14, 2022.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS MARKS, BROWN, GAMBLE, AREVALO, CHEROK, AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PEARSON

ABSENT: COMMISSIONERS SPEAKMAN (excused) AND PERSON (unexcused)

STAFF: DEPUTY CITY PLANNER AND SPECIAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR ENGBRETSSEN
DEPUTY CITY CLERK TUSSEY
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR KEISER

AGENDA APPROVAL

BROWN/AREVALO MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON MATTERS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

RECONSIDERATION

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.)

A. February 8, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chair Marks read the Consent Agenda and requested a motion.

GAMBLE/BROWN MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA.

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 and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen spoke to her written report. Staff activities included her work on the public input phase of the HERC conceptual drawings and plans,

gathering feedback from other commissions/board on the mobile food and special event permit changes, and asking for their priorities on the Wayfinding and Streetscape Plan. She provided an update on how the other advisory bodies and City Council weighed in on implementing the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan and that they commended the EDC for all their work.

B. Homer Chamber of Commerce Report

Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen noted that the Chamber of Commerce's new Homer Visitor Guide has been published and is now circulating in the community.

C. Public Works Director Report

Public Works Director Keiser reported on the following items:

- Public Works requests for mid-year budget adjustments
- Update on how the "Semester by the Bay" intern program is going
- Notable Public Works projects that are scheduled for construction this summer or for approval by City Council, some of which coincide with EDC's strategic plan and goals

D. Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District Report

Chair Marks reported there was a meeting on February 17th. KPEDD and other state groups similar to it came together to apply for a maritime cluster type of business grant, and their group was one of 60 selected nationwide to receive a sub-award that allows them to submit an actual application for up to \$50 million with the idea of making the mariculture business in Alaska viable. She provided updates on the Resiliency Program, how KPEDD is supporting the Pratt Museum's renovation projects, new resource videos available on the KPEDD's YouTube channel, and Homer will be hosting next year's Outlook Forum.

E. Homer Marine Trades Association Report

Chair Marks noted the HMTA meeting minutes provided.

Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen reported on HMTA activities she learned from attending the Port and Harbor Advisory Commission meeting, specifically their efforts to establish a local welding certification program in partnership with the local college.

Chair Marks commented that a quarterly or biannual report from a member of HMTA would be beneficial.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Pioneer Gateway Revitalization Project Discussion (HERC) (15 minute time limit)
- i. HERC Conceptual Drawings & Plans Flier

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading the title and gave a brief update on the ongoing public meetings and exhibits regarding the Multi-Purpose Community Center conceptual drawings and plans.

Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen reported on how the public events are going, the status on the conceptual plans and where the City currently is in the process, and noted we are years away from building so this is all still in the stage of gathering input. She did a visual walk-through of the components and floor plans of the proposed new community center grounds, and requested feedback from the commission.

At Commissioner Brown's request, Ms. Engebretsen shared some of the feedback she has received so far from the public events. Chair Marks requested that as commissioners are talking to people about the project that they remind them it is still very much conceptual; there were many comments from community members thinking this was it and that it was being voted on, which is not the case. Ms. Engebretsen noted the online feedback form that is available.

Commissioner Arevalo commented on room logistics for events such as conferences or trade shows. Commissioner Brown provided feedback and suggested there be a narrative included with the visuals that explain what the various spaces can be used for.

B. Housing Education Discussion (20 minute time limit)

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading the title and deferred to Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen.

Ms. Engebretsen noted that City Council will be holding a visioning working event soon and one of the subjects expected to come up is the housing issue in Homer. She advised the commission to limit their discussion tonight until they have more details from that visioning event and know what direction Council is wishing to take.

Ms. Engebretsen facilitated discussion with the commissioners who provided their comments on the housing issues in the community. Discussion points will provide the basis for this agenda topic on future EDC meeting agendas.

C. Balance of Quality of Life, Change, & Community Growth Discussion (15 minute time limit)

Chair Marks introduced the item by reading the title and deferred to Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen.

Ms. Engebretsen requested commissioners share three things or aspects of Homer that contribute the most to their quality of life. She initiated the discussion by sharing her choices as examples. Commissioners and Student Representative Pearson provided their selections, ranging from the natural/wild beauty and resources, how it's comprised of small businesses/small business opportunities, the coastal/maritime culture and living, and Homer's small town/eclectic feel.

In response to Chair Marks' inquiries on funding for implementation of the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan, Public Works Director Keiser explained how the funding request is part of a mid-year budget adjustment that will be going through City Council in March or April.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Memo 22-022 EDC Student Representative Appointment of Hazel Pearson
- B. Resolution 22-016 Approval of the Wayfinding-Streetscape Plan
- C. EDC 2021-2022 Strategic Plan/Goals

- D. City Manager's Report for February 14, 2022
- E. City Manager's Report for February 28, 2022
- F. EDC 2022 Calendar

Chair Marks noted that Commissioner Gamble will be giving the EDC report at the next Council meeting and thanked staff for the additional informational items.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Clerk Tussey welcomed the new Student Representative Pearson. She reported term expiration notices and reappointment applications were sent out to Commissioners Cherok and Brown and reminded them she will need a response back no later than Friday, March 18th. She reminded the commission there is a 5:00 p.m. worksession scheduled before the next regular meeting in April for commissioner training facilitated by the City Clerk's Office.

Deputy City Planner and Special Projects Coordinator Engebretsen thanked everyone for a productive meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Brown thanked Deputy City Planner Engebretsen for all her work and welcomed Student Representative Pearson.

Commissioner Arevalo commended Deputy City Planner Engebretsen for the structural elements she put into this meeting, how the homework she asked them to do benefitted their work as commissioners, and for finding ways for them to understand each other's' perspectives. She welcomed Student Representative Pearson and gave an update on the Alaska Food Policy Council's Statewide Food Festival and Conference which takes place next weekend.

Student Representative Pearson commented that she is excited to become part of this group.

Commissioner Gamble welcomed Student Representative Pearson, noting he was also fairly new to the commission and that it's good to have a student voice and perspective. He thanked Deputy City Planner Engebretsen for all her hard work and clarified that he's to reach out to her for talking points for the EDC report.

Commissioner Cherok welcomed Student Representative Pearson and commented that he is excited to start solving the housing issue.

Chair Marks welcomed Student Representative Pearson and that it is a pleasure in all aspects to have the commission be moving forward because they almost weren't. She clarified with Deputy City Planner Engebretsen that the next meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to address the commission and comment on the West Pioneer Gateway Development plan.


ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Marks adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Their next regular meeting is Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. and a Worksession at 5:00

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p.m. All meetings are scheduled to be held in the City Hall Cowles Council Chambers and via Zoom Webinar.



RACHEL TUSSEY, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK II

Approved: April 12, 2022