



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 16, 2024

This meeting was conducted in-person at Snoqualmie City Hall.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Kristina Hudson called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m.

Commissioners: Adrian Webb, Paula Shively, and Joelle Gibson (remote).

Rob McDonald, Nichole Pas, and Vasudha Sharma were absent.

Councilmember Wotton was in attendance.

Kelly Coughlin for the SnoValley Chamber of Commerce was in attendance.

VIPs Rene Price Campbell from Snoqualmie Valley School District (remote), and Dorie Ross from the Downtown Business Association were in attendance.

City Staff: Mike Chambless, City Administrator; Emily Arteche, Community Development Director; Jeff Hamlin, Parks & Public Works Director; Nicole Wiebe, Community Liaison; Gretchen Garrett, Deputy City Clerk; and Andrew Jongkrye, IT Services.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

1. The minutes of February 21, June 18, and September 18, 2024 were unanimously approved.

AGENDA APPROVAL

The agenda was unanimously approved as presented.

LIAISON REPORTS

Councilmember Wotton had a couple of things to report:

- Council approved the 2025-2026 biennium budget. There is a 5% vacancy in staff assumption in the budget. This assumption enabled the City to fund three additional firefighter/EMT positions.
- Council is setting legislative priorities for 2025 and the Economic Development Commission's input is encouraged. Council wants input on how to make the City sustainable, and how to make tourism a component of the revenue needed for services. The Commission's insight will bring a business perspective to the table and create a well-rounded vision for the future.

- Council approved the Development Agreement for the Model Train Museum on the King Street lot. Anticipate 70,000 to 100,000 visitors per year. The Model Train Museum will be a huge boom to the town and a compliment to the existing railroad.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

2. Snoqualmie Valley Rural Tourism Support Program.

Presentation by Kelly Coughlin from the SnoValley Chamber of Commerce. Discussion points:

- SnoValley Chamber of Commerce established a Tourism Improvement District (TID). The TID focuses on community identity and community pride by promoting local culture, history, and outdoor activities. The TID invests in advertising, events, and infrastructure. The TID includes the City of North Bend and the City of Snoqualmie today but will eventually include the entire Snoqualmie Valley because expansion will create more opportunities for economic growth.
- SnoValley Chamber of Commerce secured two key grants:
 1. Washington Rural Tourism Support (RTS). RTS funds will be used to create a destination marketing organization.
 2. Port of Seattle Pilot Program. Port of Seattle Pilot Program funds will be used to create a strategy.
- SnoValley Chamber of Commerce asked the City to support a feasibility study and suggested the City consider a tax on soda to achieve a more sustainable source of funding for tourism infrastructure and marketing campaigns.

Questions and discussion followed.

ITEMS OF COMMISSIONER INTEREST

3. Rivertrail Status Update.

Parks & Public Works Director Jeff Hamlin presented an overview and status update of the Rivertrail project. The Rivertrail will be a large network of trails in the town center. The City is currently working on phase one of the trail which is the section located NW of Sandy Cove. It is across from the railroad yard at the train spur and the abandoned train trestle is across the river. The spur will become a viewing platform with bridges on both sides. The trail will travel towards downtown, past where the old white house used to be. The old white house has been demolished and replaced with a green lawn. Currently the project is in permit review and construction is expected to begin next summer.

4. Tourism Website and Troll Update.

Community Liaison Nicole Wiebe presented an update about bringing a troll to Snoqualmie. Trolls are sustainable art installations. The first decision is where to put the troll. If a location can be agreed upon, the City will need funding to proceed. The Economic Development Commission offered to work on funding options to help the City obtain the iconic tourist attraction.

The City received grant funding from the Port of Seattle to create a “Visit Snoqualmie” website. Visit Snoqualmie can be accessed directly, or from the City’s website. Unique branding was created for Visit Snoqualmie. The site was launched at the end of August but the City is still building content. The City also established Visit Snoqualmie Instagram.

An update from the Arts Commission - a local artist created new pole banners around the City.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

5. Draft 2024 Work Program.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

Minutes by Gretchen Garrett, Deputy City Clerk.

Recorded meeting audio is available on the City website after the meeting.

Minutes approved at the January 15, 2025, Economic Development Commission Meeting.