

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

January 22, 2019

A regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission was held in the Mayors Salcha Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Borough Administration Center, 907 Terminal Street, Fairbanks, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m. by Mayor Bryce Ward.

A. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Ward, Fairbanks North Star Borough; Mayor Welch, North Pole Mayor; Paul Robinson, Russ Talvi and Fred Schlutt.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Andrew Gray and Abigail Riggs

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christopher Quist

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeff Stepp, FNSB Staff; Mike Meeks, Chief of Staff, City of Fairbanks; Christine Nelson, FNSB Department of Community Planning Director; Juliette Shepherd; Dick and Mary Bishop and Laura Melotte, FNSB Recording Clerk.

B. MESSAGES

1. Chairman's Comments

Mayor Ward addressed the Commission. He described to the Commission some of the changes that the Borough is implementing with regard to the Open Meetings Act and recording of the meetings.

Mr. Stepp added that the goal with having assigned recording clerks to each commission is to improve accuracy, consistency and uniformity among all Boards and Commission within the Borough.

2. Citizen's Comments

Mary Bishop, resident of Fairbanks, addressed the Commission. She stated that her purpose at this meeting today is to provide information regarding doing business with Indian tribes in Indian country.

Mrs. Bishop gave a brief recap of the information that she provided to Mr. Stepp to pass on to the Commission.

Mrs. Bishop concluded by stating that she feels that it is very important that municipalities and the State of Alaska understand this issue.

C. *MINUTES

The minutes of November 27, 2018 were presented for approval.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Consent Agenda passes all routine items indicated by asterisk (*) on agenda. Consent Agenda items are not considered separately unless any Economic Development Commission member or citizen so requests. In the event of such request, the item is returned to the general agenda.

MOTION: Moved by **Mayor Welch**, seconded by **Mr. Talvi** that the Agenda and Consent Agenda, including the minutes of November 27, 2018 be approved as presented.

VOTE: No objections

MEETING AGENDA AND CONSENT APPROVED WITHOUT OBJECTION

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Data Driven Success in the New Year: A recap of the International Economic Development Council webinar.

Mr. Stepp addressed the Commission with regard to this topic and stated that Ms. Riggs also attended this webinar.

Mr. Stepp gave a recap of the webinar and provided the Commission with the PowerPoint slides of the webinar to review.

Discussion ensued regarding refreshing the data in CEDS. It was stated that the data in the CEDS should be refreshed, according to regulations, annually. The CEDS was approved in April of 2016 and has not been refreshed since that time.

Ms. Nelson added that if the Borough were receiving other grant funding from EDA, they would be looking at the status of the Borough CEDS.

Mr. Stepp mentioned that when the Borough received the planning grant from EDA last year, the Borough did a simple narrative update.

Ms. Nelson queried where the five year updated fell in relation to the 2020 Census. **Mr. Stepp** replied "simultaneously".

Mr. Meeks stated that when he started looking at metrics for cities, he found it nearly impossible to measure one city against another.

Mayor Ward stated that he believes that standards should be set within your own organization or city or whatever and offered ideas of other standards that should be considered.

Mayor Welch added that meaningful data is necessary rather information from a Census report that is several years old. **Mr. Stepp** concurred.

Mr. Talvi queried if there was much tracking of the metrics in the previous CEDS. **Mr. Robinson** stated that he felt there was a greater effort to involve the community in the prior CEDS.

Mayor Ward commented that if the metrics can be better quantified as to what makes a better Borough, perhaps the ability to influence those things can be improved.

Further discussion ensued with regard to data and metrics. **Mr. Stepp** suggested another meeting of the CEDS Metrics Working Group. **Mr. Stepp** will facilitate this meeting.

F. OLD BUSINESS

1. Explore the feasibility of creating an Economic Development District

Mr. Stepp reported on this topic and the research that he has completed.

Ms. Nelson conveyed a similar situation that she was involved in with the Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation with regard to this topic.

Further discussion ensued with regard to this item.

2. Update on the Implementation Plan, EAFB Regional Growth Plan

Mr. Stepp stated that he had nothing to report.

3. Update on Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Metrics

Mr. Stepp stated that he had a failed attempt to get the group together in December. He will try again for February.

G. STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Stepp reported that this commission is technically down one member. Mayor Matherlys term has expired as of December 31, 2019. It was contemplated in the past to make Mr. Meeks a commissioner. This will be discussed further and Mr. Stepp will report back.

Mr. Stepp announced that there is an interesting presentation scheduled for January 23, 2019 in the Senate Finance Committee. The Governors new OMB Director is going to present on the Governors' budget. The presentation begins at 9:00 a.m.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Governors' proposed budget.

H. REPORT

1. 2018 CEDS Goals and Objectives

Mr. Stepp reported on this topic. He stated that it does seem as progress is being made on IGU.

Further discussion ensued regarding the present economy and various programs that are working to train workers in this field.

Ms. Nelson queried if “Work Force Development” goals in the present CEDS. **Mr. Stepp** responded affirmatively but they are not among the top three. **Ms. Nelson** suggested that this get looked at closer in either this update or the next update.

Mr. Stepp added that with regard to the AKL&G project and the anticipated gas line from the North Slope to the Borough, we will have to wait and see what the Dunleavy administration is going to do.

With regard to CEDS Goal #2, **Mr. Stepp** state that it was recently learned that the first 500 people affiliated with the F-35’s will arrive in November of this year.

It was clarified that the fiscal year for the military ends October 1st so those 500 people affiliated with the F-35’s will arrive before October 1st.

H. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Schlutt had no additional comments.

Mr. Talvi had no additional comments.

Mr. Robinson had no additional comments.

Mr. Meeks had no additional comments.

Ms. Shepherd commented that she was glad to hear the CEDS discussion which is coming up. She stated that she looks forward to working with this commission with regard to CEDS.

Mayor Ward stated that there are several items coming up on the Assembly agenda that he is monitoring. One is a resolution supporting utilizing compressed natural gas for the Borough bus fleet. He will report back on this topic as details become available. Another is the large tank that is being constructed at South Cushman.

Mayor Ward commended the commission for its continued work with helping to grow the economy within the Borough.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved to adjourn by **Mayor Welch**, seconded by **Fred Schlutt**.

The next meeting will be on February 26, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.