

# City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.  
Valdez, AK 99686



## Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

**Economic Diversification Commission**

**WORK SESSION AGENDA - 6:00 pm**  
Joint Work Session Ports & Harbor/ED Commissions

**REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

**Present** 9 - Chair Amanda Bauer  
Chair Pro Tempore David Dengel  
Commission Member Mike Meadors  
Commission Member Scott Hicks  
Commission Member Keith Thomas  
Commission Member Rhonda Wade  
Sr. Office Assistant Keri Talbott  
Director of Community & Economic Development Lisa Von Bargaen  
Staff Contractor Lamar Cotten

**Excused** 1 - Commission Member Colleen Stephens

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2016.

**MOTION: Commission Member Meadors moved, seconded by Commission Member Thomas, to approve Regular Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2016. The motion carried by the following vote after the following discussion occurred.**

**Yays:** 6 - Chair Bauer, Chair Pro Tempore Dengel, Commission Member Meadors, Commission Member Hicks, Commission Member Thomas, and Commission Member Wade

**Excused:** 1 - Commission Member Stephens

2. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2016

**MOTION: Commission Member Thomas moved, seconded by Commission Member Hicks, to Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2016. The motion carried by the following vote after the following discussion occurred.**

**Yays:** 6 - Chair Bauer, Chair Pro Tempore Dengel, Commission Member Meadors, Commission Member Hicks, Commission Member Thomas, and Commission Member Wade

**Absent:** 1 - Commission Member Stephens

IV. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Americans with Disabilities Act Background Information

Mr. Cotten explained that Ms. Von Bargaen had given a quick overview at the last meeting on what the challenges are, and that the City is looking at hiring a designer to identify what the needs is to be ADA compliant. Capital Facilities Director Jason Miles stated that the plan is to go out to bid for a Request for Proposals to identify needs and increment work in phases. Mr. Cotten explained that there were two overarching goals: The community as a whole, with aging population, and retaining them.

The second portion was something Commissioner Stephens brought up on the economic aspect of it. She suggested there parts of the ADA package that can be sold as part of the message that Valdez is a great place to be. She thinks it will have an impact on people visiting an isolated Alaska town if ADA items are addressed.

Commissioner Meadors stated that this might be a good topic at one of the monthly business luncheons - educate the business community that they do have a responsibility in providing ADA compliant facilities. Ms. Von Bargaen stated that there are communities in Alaska who have adopted this and are seeing significant benefits. She explained that it would be nice to see if there is a representative who would come and talk about that. It would be a good thing.

Mr. Cotten explained he would put these people on the list to contact and have them give a presentation when it is convenient for them to come down. Mr. Cotten asked if there is a priority list the Commission wants him to follow or if he should schedule them whenever they were available. The Commissioners agreed whenever they are available would work.

## 2. Discussion Item: Strategic Initiatives

Mr. Cotten explained that the memo Ms. Houston put together was from information from the last meeting. Abatement issues have been brought up several times and this would be another great topic to discuss with the City Council. Commissioner Thomas questioned when they would be able to meet with the City Council. Ms. Von Bargaen stated she would inquire with the City Clerk. Commissioner Dengel stated that when they sent the memo to the City Council it should lay out what items they wanted to talk about.

Mr. Cotten stated that two of the items are housing and abatement. He inquired what other topics they should list. Ms. Von Bargaen stated they should tell the City Council that their recommendation is to hire a full time Economic Diversification person instead of a VHIA person as staff. Commissioner Dengel stated that they needed to get confirmation from the City Council that they are moving in the direction that the Council envisioned.

Mr. Cotten explained that he attached a copy of the Survey with the BRE information. It's called the Alaska Rural Retention Survey. Mr. Ethan Tyler gave an overview at the last meeting. Mr. Cotten explained his memo includes things that have been learned since the last meeting. The program provides interviews along with the compiling of the data and then a staff person works with businesses who did want to follow up and get benefits. Benefits like programs, or direction on where to receive assistance.

Mr. Cotten stated that he and Ms. Von Barga were getting ready to draft a letter for the mid-year budget to see if they could get funding to fund this program; halftime person for one year. They identify what the needs are and get assistance for the businesses.

Mr. Cotten explained that he and Ms. Houston had met with a representative from SBDC, Small Business Development Center. Ms. Houston explained they help with small business development. They had met with Isaac who is the executive director statewide. They are part of the UAA Business Center.

Ms. Houston explained that the program is part of the University system that provides assistance for small business development also. Talking with Isaac they had discussed about having a remote advisor. He explained that with any business advisor with the University has to make certain milestones. Those metrics are very hard to meet on time. Supporting those positions is very challenging. Ms. Houston explained that the best option for them is to have a meeting with Isaac and ask specific questions. There is an opportunity to get into a partnership.

Mr. Cotten explained that the August business meeting would be a good meeting to have Isaac attend and see if there is interest from the business community, and then meet again to see how to pursue this more. Isaac could talk about his program and possibly other programs. Commissioner Dengel stated it is important to gauge the interest of the community.

Mr. Cotten stated that Allie Ferko from the City Clerk's office had contacted him about having a lunch meeting with the Beautification Task Force on July 20th at noon. He stated he would send out the invitation to the Commission.

Mr. Cotten stated he wants to ask the Commission if the need is there to support some type of needs assessment for the New Boat Harbor and maintenance and repair. Commissioner Meadors stated yes.

Commissioner Hicks stated that their discussion could go on for days, but they needed to come up with a plan. Their role is to promote development. They should send a memo that there needs to be more strategy put into the development of the new boat harbor. Commissioner Dengel stated that the needs assessment is the approach to take. Director Miles stated that this is the ideal time to stop and take a closer look at a few of these things. He explained that it would be great to have the support of this Commission as well.

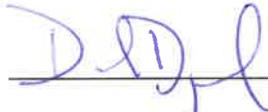
Mr. Cotten explained that Mr. Ragsdale, City Manager would be speaking at the July 13th business lunch meeting. Roads, Harbor, marketing, and possibly housing would be topics.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Bauer adjourned the meeting at 8:48 P.M.

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

  
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Commission Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Selah Bauer, Recording Secretary

Selah Bauer, Recording Secretary