

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Commission Members
Present:

Chair Amanda Bauer
Chair Pro-Tempore David Dengel
Commission Member Mike Meadors
Commission Member Scott Hicks
Commission Member Rhonda Wade
Commission Member Colleen Stephens (Delayed)

Commission Members
Absent:

Commission Member Keith Thomas

Also Present:

ED Staff Contractor Lamar Cotten
Sr. Office Assistant Keri Talbott

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1. Meeting Minutes from June 1st will be available at the July 6th meeting.**

IV. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

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1. Ethan Tyler, Manager Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Ethan Tyler, Manager of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development with the State of Alaska, gave a presentation on what his office does and how they are set up. They have funds to help small businesses and entrepreneurs that would not qualify for traditional loans. In his side of the department they primarily work on emerging industries and foster growth within in the economies through research, promotion and policy. Their purpose is to help business promotion, retention and expansion.

Commissioner Stephens arrived at 7:22 P.M.

V. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Lee Hart explained that Levitation 49 does consider itself an economic diversification engine. She stated that they are not just about the events that they do. This season has been a successful season all around. Community businesses have been supporting them. They have a work session with the City Council on the evening of July 5th.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Strategic Initiatives

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Mr. Cotten explained that in every meeting he's attended in this community the housing issue has come up. He knows the City Council, City Manager and staff are aware of the significance. The housing needs assessment has been put on the back burner. The City cannot solve the housing issue alone, but there are things to look at. Are they going to help with land? Policies? The City should be there to help the private sector, not competing.

Commissioner Dengel stated that is something that they hear every day. They could talk about it daily, but until they solve it, or come up with a plan, it does nothing to help. It might be time to take a harder line with the City and the City Administration and find out from the City Council what they want the Commission to do. There seems to be a disconnect with the City Council, particularly on this.

Commissioner Wade stated that people say they want to build all the time, but where? The City should focus on finding land where people can build. If it needs to be developed land, start that process.

Commissioner Stephens stated that at the next meeting they should lay out a clear process, where there is a resolution or letter of recommendation to the City Manager and Council for action on this issue. The Commission wants to see the assessment move forward.

Commissioner Dengel stated that Commissioner Wade's suggestion was correct in identifying what lands are available. Commissioner Stephens stated that would be part of the assessment. It would be given to the City Council as a resolution, that way it would be an actionable item, and it would move on to City Council.

Mr. Cotten stated that a letter instead of a resolution that describes some of the issues and why they were suggesting this policy would be better. He would put it together.

Commissioner Dengel stated that while they go through the strategic initiatives, there might be more items identified that they should have a work session with City Council to go over with. Not just housing.

Mr. Cotten stated that they should invite the City Manager to their next meeting. It would be good for the City Manager to know what the Commissions are doing. Commissioner Hicks explained that the City Manager is the one who initiated this Commission. He explained it was the old City manager, but it would be good to know what this City Manager's expectations are.

Mr. Cotten explained the Beautification Committee asked Economic Diversification Commission to have a joint lunch meeting on July 20th. He questioned if they would have another meeting that evening or have an extended lunch?

Commission Stephens stated that the goal is to meet with the Harbor and Port staff. She explained that she could discuss with the Ports and Harbors Commission if they would be able to attend the next meeting.

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Mr. Cotten explained that he had spoken to Mr. O'Conner about the college. It is still important to get a program. They are undergoing a lot of staffing changes.

Mr. Cotten explained he had spoken to Alaska Housing Authority. He was still hopeful that they could be brought into town. Ms. Houston explained that on the timeline they were hoping to meet with these corporations in mid-July. Mr. Cotten explained that it was only three weeks away, and he would check on their availability for July 6th.

Mr. Cotten explained that the business luncheon seemed to go ok. Commissioner Dengel explained that Ms. Sheinberg had some great information and data to share. People seemed genuinely interested. Mr. Cotten explained it was suggested that maybe every year depending on price that the data base be updated. Ms. Houston explained that the luncheon took place on the second Wednesday in June, and if they were to do another one it would be on July 13th. Mr. Cotten explained that in the memo there are 11 ideas listed out as topics that could be potentially discussed at future business luncheons.

Commissioner Dengel stated he was disappointed that no one from City Administration could be there. One of the reasons they put this together was to have the City talk to the Businesses on what the City was up to. City Hall should be on for the next meeting. Commissioner Stephens stated that an update on current projects would be beneficial. The request should go to the City Manager and he would direct his staff on who needs to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Dengel stated that the power point that Ms. Steinberg provided at the luncheon should be given to the City Council. Or even a hard copy. Commissioner Stephens explained that Council had been given the presentation before. Ms. Houston explained that her suggestion was to have snapshots of the projects going on, but future luncheons to go into depth on specific projects. Commission Dengel agreed because a couple of the projects could take hours to talk about alone.

Ms. Houston questioned if they were still waiting on the Year Round Mountain Study. Mr. Cotten stated that McDowell Group would be in town next week giving a presentation on the three projects.

Mr. Cotten explained that the visitors study is scheduled to be completed this fall. They have scheduled it to hopefully be presented to the community in a luncheon in September or October.

IX. REPORTS

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X. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Commissioner Wade stated that Mr. Cotten explained he was going to be talking to the Cold Climate Research organization. She knows that Alaska Craftsman Home Program ACHP Alaska does all kind of free classes out of Anchorage like the Cold Climate Building practices, which all residential contractors are required to take. This might be something that at one of the business luncheons that can be discussed. They talk about new construction and retrofits for businesses and private individuals. It is amazing the stuff that can be done to reduce energy costs.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Chair Bauer adjourned the meeting at 9:08 P.M.