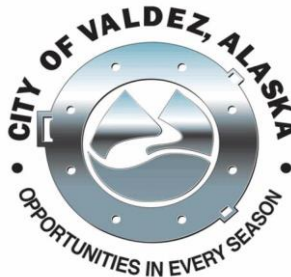


City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 15, 2018

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting - NO AUDIO RECORDING AVAILABLE DUE TO
TECHNICAL ISSUES
Council Chambers

Economic Diversification Commission

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Wade called the meeting to order 7:05 PM in the Council Chambers.

II. ROLL CALL

Present – 4 – Commission Chair Rhonda Wade
Commission Member Grant Uren
Commission Member Susan Love
Commission Member Keith Thomas

Excused – 2 – Commission Member Lee Hart
Commission Member Colleen Stevens

Also Present – 2 – Economic Development Director Martha Barberio
Executive Assistant Debbie Roberts
Members in the Audience

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of Minutes - January 18, 2018 and February 21, 2018 (Item Forwarded from May 16th Regular Meeting)

MOTION: Commissioner Uren moved to Approve, Second by Commissioner Thomas to approve minutes for January 18th and February 21, 2018. The motion carried by the following Vote.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yeas: 4 – Commissioner Uren, Commissioner Thomas, Commissioner Love and Commissioner Wade.

Excused: 2- Commissioner Hart and Commissioner Stevens

IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion Item: Subdivision Signs & Way-Finding

Economic Director, Barberio stated that the Signage with Kelsey Dock is on your I-Pads, they are going up in the New Harbor and Ferry Terminal. Then she turned the meeting over to Port Director, Jeremy Talbott to go into further details. Director Talbott stated that Exhibit A is Stan Stephens Plaza, if you look it is color coded Red, Yellow and Blue. Neighborhood explorer- true frame of things to do, go to bottom of template. Discussion continued with Director Barberio showing the Signage proposed and new signage, Beautification Task Force is working on other signage around town, if you have input as to where you want signs or suggestions and comments let me know and I will pass it on to them. Commissioner Wade said she'd like to see new subdivision signs and smaller signs on various corners for Key points in town. Like where the grocery store is located, Public restrooms as example for key locations areas.

Commissioner Thomas agreed, he was approached at South Central and a guy asked him where the grocery store was. Commissioner Wade continued with discussion regarding small signs to give directions to tourist by the Harbor, Kelsey Dock area and various parts of town like City Hall, Boat Harbor and the Post Office to name a few. Director Barberio asked what kind of sign design did they want, Fish, shaped metal, need to have consistency in the signage. Commissioner Uren stated that they have signs out at the Container Dock and they could be used as a test. They are 3 ½ foot long salmon cut outs. Director Talbott said the Wrap incorporated the signs/map stanchions, graphics they had maps with stars stating Library and various locations. When he traveled to different areas like Ketchikan their wayfinding is easier, he'd like that for Valdez. Commissioner Wade stated that Waterfront signs would make it easier. Director Talbott said we need to watch what we put on the Kiosk space, we want people to leave and go out into the community not stand there and read signs, and we want them to be dual purpose. Discussion continued with Director Barberio, Commissioner Uren, Commissioner Thomas, Commissioner Wade, Commissioner Love, Director Talbott and Community Events Coordinator Laurine Regan discussing signage. RV's need to give people directions like: go to corner and it will point out items of interest and directions. It was suggested by Commissioner Uren to bring back the maps like they have displayed at FU KUNG and pass out to people as another avenue. It was strongly suggested to not have signs on the main Roads due to tourists stopping in the middle of the road to look at or take pictures. Tankers cannot stop on a dime and there have been issues lately of people stopping to take pictures of the arch. The shape of the signs was discussed possibly fish, bears, moose, rabbits and have local arts do the work. What should be on the signs was also discussed and that they should be uniform with information, an example of Valdez App with Stars and uniform generic symbols was shown. Director Barberio said she would take the information back to the Beautification Task Force since they are working on Animals and large art projects so the theme could be carried out to the signs. It was brought up that we still want people to ask questions if needed and not just have signs to give information. Maybe have

signs to tell them to go to Harbor, Library, City Hall or Post Office if they needed more information, keep the signs simple. Commissioner Love also wanted to make sure they covered trails.

Commissioner Wade asked if anyone had any other new business.

There was a discussion about Cruise ships and the need to have something for the people to do and talk about so others would come here too. Director Talbott stated that the most requested item were the tours across the bay at Alyeska. He had been discussing this with Scott Hicks and others but at this time they are not receptive to the idea. Director Talbott stated he even asked if a bus that has been cleared thru security, and the people stay on the bus would be permitted on Terminal, but the answer was still no. Commissioner Uren asked what is the benefit for Alyeska and Commissioner Wade stated Public Relations. Director Talbott went on to say at this time we have the statue at Kelsey Dock and some interpretive signs will be added at a later date. Commissioner Wade stated we need to give tourist something to do like they do in Seward with the Sea Life Center, they should have something besides the museum to do. Director Talbott stated we will have 13-14 cruise ships coming into Valdez. The possibility of doing a boat tour that would explain the Alyeska terminal was proposed and maybe a Segway to getting access in the future. SERVS tours was also discussed or the possibility of tugs doing water shows. SERVS has some very impressive equipment when they set up could they include a public display. Everyone thought that if we are going to have Cruise ships coming we need to make sure they continue to come here and give them something to do. It was suggested to develop Mineral Creek Area as an outdoor adventure tour, with ATV's, a zip line, walking tours or even hikes to Stamp Mill or gold panning. It was also suggested that maybe tours of the Fish Hatchery, the Canneries, Hydro plant, rafting in the canyon and Glaciers. There was even talk about getting an Earthquake survivor documentation that people could watch or actors to act out and tell the story of the 64 quake. The possibility of a "Shake House" that shows how it feels to be in an Earthquake. Could that be something the City can purchase or would that be private company? Director Barberio was working with the Museum to get better signage out at the Old Town site and maybe that could be an area that could be developed better.

Commissioner Thomas asked if the Beautification Task Force was doing anything about the dilapidated buildings in the center of town. Since the Cruise ships were coming is there anything we could do to make it look better. Director Barberio explained the foreclosure process and discussion continued as to how we could "dress up" with fencing or something. There was discussion about the Nuisance Abatement position versus code revisions. It was decided that we are up against a time line and that this probably won't happen before the Cruise ships are here.

Outhouses were the next topic of discussion. Robe Lake and the Canyon were two areas that out houses are needed. If we want people to go to the areas and stay and not leave toilet paper and other things in public we should supply outhouses. Out at the Canyon the cave has become a giant toilet. Who do we talk to? Can something be put out there? It was discussed that portable toilets would be vandalized and maybe it would be better to have a concrete Forest Service type of Bathroom. Questions were brought up about whose land it was, how do we find out and who would maintain and service? Should it be monitored with cameras?

VI. REPORTS

1. Report: Update Regarding Kelsey Dock Upland Improvements Phase 1

Director Barberio and Director Talbott gave an update on the progress at Kelsey Dock.

2. Report: Business Climate Survey

Director Barberio stated that one was done 3 years ago and will be updated.

3. Report: University Alaska Business

Director Barberio said that the classes were not well attended, conference rooms were not free and travel expenses were paid out. Classes were cancelled due to weather. Only 82 people attended the 10 – 12 classes that were offered. There was discussion that the idea for this was a good one just how we can get more businesses involved. Discussion then turned to luncheons and what type of constructive groups we could bring in. Should it be done monthly or quarterly? How can we help/train businesses in relation to tourism? If we familiarize them with the itinerary of tourism 2hr tour versus a 4hr tour as an example of what is needed. Business do not have the contacts or knowledge to give to tourists. Some things discussed were commission rates, blocks of rooms, ATV tours, how to handle a group of 20 people and the needs related to that. Trade Industry providers, IPW is an example to sell Valdez to them and they send people to you. It would benefit all businesses. If we did this quarterly then we could have an annual event. We should start small and grow or you could bring a person in to figure out how to get everyone involved.... Like Vitalize Alaska conference, they gave example of how to develop small businesses. Discussion continued with pros and cons. Theater conference was brought up as an example, Trade Fair or Builders fair were other examples.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Commissioner Love stated that the Cruise Ship season is short term, we need to make arrangements to meet with them and find out what they want and how it is done. Maybe a lunch meeting? Director Talbott stated that he was already talking with the Cruise lines. Director Barberio said that we need to educate the businesses on what is wanted from the Cruise lines. She then went on to discuss the ideas of expos for brewery, transportation expo or something to plant the seed so we can grow businesses.

Commissioner Wade made a suggestion to have digital signs like the College. If we have one on a street area we could update events. Discussion continued on this topic. The topic then switched to Conferences and how to get them to Valdez. Director Talbott stated he would be attending a Cruise ship conference, it usually takes 18 months to get a conference. 1 year to put it together and then 6 months to promote it. Commissioner Uren wanted to know how we could set the goals and move forward with one. Director Barberio said they are working on moving forward. Commissioner Uren wanted to know if we could have a transportation conference next summer. Dutch Harbor has problems getting ships in and out, we could bring large steam ships here and pull from other areas. Increasing the labor force and make some upgrades to Kelsey Dock. It could also increase Longshoremen jobs. We could change from a spoke to a Hub in Valdez. Wharfage fees would be generated as one example. APL and Samson are some examples of Companies we could draw in. The Oilfield market is already here, we need to push for a Hub for seafood, add pontoons to existing docks. Commissioner Love stated we need a timeline and budget so we can rally and push it to Council. Commissioner Thomas thought that he heard that Edison Chouest was planning to build a ship yard with a travel lift. Director Talbott said it was part of the Water front Masterplan to have an Industrial Park. Discussion then returned to Conferences and how would we transport the attendees. Would Valdez U Drive hustle them, would we have artists to promote or show off wares? Director Barberio then stated that they were working on ideas for a Dolly/Trolley for events, having markets at the Kelsey dock when Cruise ships came in. Looking into Bands and Dances so the Community would also have something to do. Director Talbott then stated the Kelsey Dock will have heaters, covered space larger than what the Pringle had to offer, and lit up. Power for vendors. Phase 2 would be the Yellow Building which is going to Council meeting in September.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wade then stated since there is no more business we are adjourned at 9:10 PM.