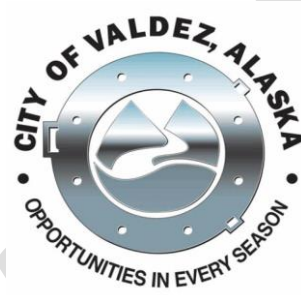


City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

Economic Diversification Commission

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Rhonda Wade, Commission Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, in Valdez City Council Chambers.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: 5 – Commission Chair – Rhonda Wade
Commissioner – Richard Long
Commissioner – Jamie Berg
Commissioner – Brandon Reid
Commissioner – Katharine Adams via Phone

Excused: 2 – Commissioner – Keith Thomas
Commissioner – Colleen Stephens

Also Present – City Manager – Mark Detter
Economic Development Director, Martha Barberio
Executive Assistant, Debra Roberts

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Economic Diversification Regular Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2019

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes 17 July 2019 Draft](#)

MOTION: Commissioner Wade called for a vote to Approve. The motion carried by the following vote.

VOTE ON THE MOTION

Yeas: 4 – Commissioner Wade, Commissioner Long, Commissioner Reid, Commissioner Berg.

Excused: 2 – Commissioner Thomas and Commissioner Stephens.

IV. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

1. Public Appearance: Selah Bauer, Copper Valley Telecom

James Dunn made the presentation in place of Selah Bauer. He discussed the Broadband that Copper Valley has to lure knowledge workers and professionals to the area. Making a video was discussed to promote winter and summer activities. The Gigabits speeds can be used to bring people to the area. Commissioner Long asked

how they were going to market it, were they going to get a marketing firm. Mr. Dunn stated they are not Economic Development or marketing but were looking for a grant or ways to promote the gigabit speeds and market it. Mr. Dunn gave examples of uses for individuals and businesses to use the broadband. He also explained Smart Rural Community, but Copper Valley Telecom has not done anything with it yet. He continued to give examples of uses. Commissioner Wade asked about the range of this product. Mr. Dunn explained the range for 4G but the broadband gigabits would only be available within the City Limits and anywhere fiber is connected. Discussion continued.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. New Business: Incentive Package

This was a carryover from the last meeting, already taken care of.

2. Discussion Item: Topics for the Lunch and Learn series

Commissioner Wade suggested that the meetings be quarterly due to everyone's busy schedules. Economic Director Martha Barberio discussed the last two luncheons and how well received they were from the business community. The last one had about 70 business owners attend. Some topics suggested for the luncheons were Small Business Administration, a Tax Specialist for businesses, or a business mentor for a startup business. Discussion continued. Commissioner Reid asked how the last luncheon went since he wasn't able to attend. Economic Director Martha Barberio discussed the feedback from the businesses related to Cruise ships and said the formal report would be included at the next meeting. Commissioner Adams discussed the last luncheon also and suggested a grant writer for small businesses would also be a good topic. A local Chamber of Commerce was brought up again. Discussion continued on ideas for topics. Commissioner Long reiterated the goals of Diversification should be assisting existing businesses and promoting new industry for growth. When you promote new jobs/new industry then the rest falls into place, housing, and economic growth. The other area we need to address is the high cost of energy. Discussion continued on cost of energy and doing business in the winter. Commissioner Wade brought up the railroad that was trying to come into Valdez, and asked the status. Discussion continued on this topic.

VI. REPORTS

1. *Report: Housing Survey*

Attachments: [Valdez Housing Survey 12_30](#)

Economic Director Martha Barberio explained that the survey had started, this is a phone survey only. We encourage people to participate, then if someone was not contacted and wants to participate we will do an additional contact. Results will also be given to the Comprehensive Plan for inclusion. Discussion continued on this topic. City Manager Mark Detter then discussed the Comprehensive Plan and how it ties in with the Parks & Recreation Master Plan and the Waterfront Master Plan and how we will be moving forward with these. Discussion continued and included incentives to offer contractors.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Commissioner Long brought up the Chamber of Commerce or a business association and said that it should be resurrected and maybe a good topic for the Luncheon. Discussion continued on this topic as to how to make it move forward.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wade adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM.