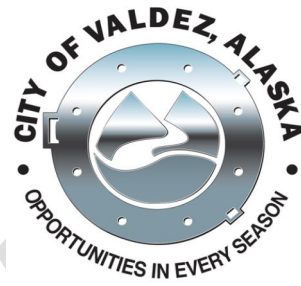


City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

7:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Civic Center Conference Room

Economic Diversification Commission

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Colleen Stephens called the meeting to order at 7:03pm in the Civic Center Conference Room.

II. ROLL CALL

Present 4 - Commission Member Rhonda Wade
Commission Member Colleen Stephens
Commission Member Meredith Noble
Commission Member Katharine Adams
Excused 2 - Commission Member Jamie Berg
Commission Member Brandon Reid
Absent 1 - Commission Member Jim Shirrell
Also Present 2 - Economic Development Director Martha Barberio
Executive Assistant Brianne Skilbred

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Economic Diversification Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2021

MOTION: Commissioner Noble moved, seconded by Commissioner Wade, to approve Economic Diversification Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2021. The motion carried by the following vote.

VOTE ON MOTION

Yays: 4 - Commission Member Wade, Commission Member Stephens,
Commission Member Noble, and Commission Member Adams
Excused: 2 - Commission Member Berg, and Commission Member Reid
Absent: 1 - Commission Member Shirrell

IV. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

No public business from the floor was presented at this time.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Travel Incentive Program

Economic Development Director, Martha Barberio, introduced the topic of the Travel Incentive Program. She stated that she was informing the commission that the program has begun and that there have been over 4,000 vouchers download. Ms. Barberio goes on to say that the ability to download vouchers is on pause until the Council meeting after the 4th of July weekend where Council could approve more funding for more vouchers to be downloaded. She reported that over 500 of the vouchers have been

submitted and processed for reimbursement at this time and about 43 businesses participating in the program. She further reported that businesses are to turn in receipts once a week but that some have requested a biweekly schedule of whom were approved for this schedule. The first round of checks went out last Friday. It was reported that rounding up to the full \$50 regardless of what was spent was requested by a business but was denied. Ms. Barberio stated that she reached out to businesses for testimonies for reporting on the program and she received some constructive criticism and mostly positive remarks from about 10 businesses. She reported that businesses are very pleased with the program.

Commissioner Meredith Noble asked if there was a distinction between locals and visitors as far as who is submitting and using the vouchers. Ms. Barberio stated that locals are using the vouchers but that there is no distinction other than personally knowing someone on the list. She reported the people who are abusing the system and downloaded multiple vouchers. She stated that she reached out to these people to tell them not to use their vouchers, as well as letting participating businesses being aware of the “naughty” list of offenders. Commissioner Noble requested that should the vouchers reopen putting a zip code on the vouchers to know where people are from. Ms. Barberio stated that this could be added and that the person’s city was going to be added to the vouchers. She reported that there is also survey of which about 500 people have taken the survey. Within this survey, it asks where a person is from and if this is the first time in Valdez. Commissioner Noble requested a zip code instead of a city because it would be easier to input. She then congratulated Ms. Barberio on the success of the program.

VI. REPORTS

1. Mayor’s Task Force update on projects

Ms. Barberio reported that this was just an update for commissioners and asked for any questions from the commissioners. Commissioner Stephens requested questions from the commissioners. There were no questions at this time.

2. Branding Report

Commissioner Stephens introduced the branding project and Jesse and Abby from Spawn Ideas who presented the current status of the branding project. Jesse presented a PowerPoint to show the progress of the project. He then reached out for any questions. Commissioner Noble thanked Spawn for their worked and stated that she will need some processing time before presenting any comments or questions. Commissioner Stephens and Ms. Barberio stated that questions and comments can be submitted at brandvaldez.com, as well as channel any questions through Ms. Barberio can also be done. Commissioner Stephens requested any other questions. There were no other questions at this time. Commissioner Stephens thanked Spawn for their time. Jesse made a final statement that the copywriter is currently coming up with taglines and what was presented are not taglines.

3. Senior Housing

Ms. Barberio reported that the project is ongoing and wanted to keep commissioners involved. Commissioner Rhonda Wade asked if this project was moving forward and asked if this was the area by Black Gold. Ms. Barberio corrected Commissioner Wade

in that this is about the Senior Housing over by the Senior Center and not the other housing project. She stated that Council has already approved this to move forward and that the senior housing is a higher need and that the regular housing will hopefully come in after that. Commissioner Wade asked if these are the same people who did SoundView apartments. Ms. Barberio confirmed this question. Commissioner Wade asked for clarification that these two projects are completely separate. Ms. Barberio confirmed that the senior housing and the other housing project are separate projects and reports.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

No commission business from the floor was presented at this time.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments, Commissioner Stephens adjourned the meeting at 8:06pm.

Colleen Stephens, Chairperson

Brianne Skilbred, Executive Assistant