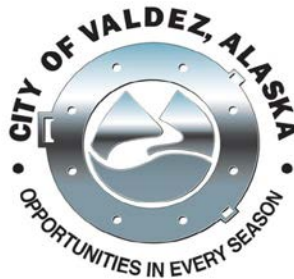


City of Valdez

212 Chenega Ave.
Valdez, AK 99686



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

6:00 PM

Work Session (Kimley-Horn) & Regular Meeting

Council Chambers

Economic Diversification Commission

WORK SESSION AGENDA - 6:00 pm

Work Session: Kimley-Horn Revisioning Project

Minutes not transcribed for work sessions. Audio available online or by request.

REGULAR AGENDA - 7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Pro Tempore Wade called the meeting the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

II. ROLL CALL

Present 6 - Commission Member Rhonda Wade
Commission Member Colleen Stephens
Commission Member Grant Uren
Commission Member Scott Hicks
Commission Member Lee Hart (By teleconference)
Commission Member Susan Love (By teleconference)

Excused 1 - Commission Member Keith Thomas

Also Present 2 - Sr. Office Assistant Marjorie Pleiss
Economic Development Director Martha Barberio

III. PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Election of Commission Chair and Chair Pro Tempore

Chair Pro Tempore Wade accepted nominations for commission chair and chair pro tempore.

MOTION: Commissioner Hart moved, seconded by Commissioner Hicks to approve election of Commissioner Wade as Chairperson of Economic Diversification Commission.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Commission Member Wade, Commission Member Stephens, Commission Member Uren, Commission Member Hicks, Commission Member Hart, and Commission Member Love

Excused: 1 - Commission Member Thomas

MOTION: Commissioner Hicks moved, seconded by Commissioner Wade to approve election of Commissioner Hart as Chair Pro Tempore of Economic Diversification Commission.

VOTE ON THE MOTION:

Yays: 6 - Commission Member Wade, Commission Member Stephens, Commission Member Uren, Commission Member Hicks, Commission Member Hart, and Commission Member Love

Excused: 1 - Commission Member Thomas

V. COMMISSION BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Chairman Rhonda Wade expressed frustration regarding the redundancy of information collected during City sponsored surveys over the years. She expressed hope that the data collected in the Kimley-Horn surveys would be converted into actual action. Commissioner Scott Hicks concurred with Chairman Wade's concerns.

Commissioner Grant Uren asked if goals had been set as part of the Kimley-Horn project. Commissioner Hicks explained City Council established clear project goals with the project team prior to the contract being awarded.

Commissioner Colleen Stephens commented that Kimley-Horn's presentation at the evening's earlier work session did not include all facets of the overall project. Additional components, such as business retention and development, included in the stages of the project need to be better outlined and explained during future presentations.

Ms. Martha Barberio, City Economic Development Director, explained there is a link to the most recent project report on the City's website which may answer some of the Commission's question. Ms. Barberio explained she is working with other City staff to put together long term departmental projects based upon Kimley-Horn's current data.

Commissioner Uren stated there are many economic development opportunities the City and community could take advantage of now. He expressed concerns with the potential of waiting to take any action until Kimley-Horn completed their project. Ms. Barberio explained City staff are not necessarily waiting until Kimley-Horn completed their work before starting projects.

Mr. Jeremy Talbot, City Ports & Harbors Director, expressed concerns with a post-project action plan. He stated the process is a long one and he hopes the City will be capable of following through with any action plan developed.

Commissioner Hicks explained one of the deliverables of the overall Kimley-Horn project is action plan. Without an action plan, the project contract will be considered unsuccessful.

Chairman Wade asked if there had been any additional information received regarding the Canada to Alaska railroad project. Ms. Sheri Pierce, City Clerk, stated the A2A organization presented on the topic during the previous night's City Council meeting. This organization is different from the G7G organization who previously presented railroad concepts to City Council. Ms. Barberio explained the proposed railway links Canada to Delta or Glenallen, with goods then being trucked south to Valdez. Mr. Uren stated there may be competition between trucking south to Valdez and shipping north to Fairbanks and then shipping south via railway to the Port of Alaska in Anchorage. Ms. Sheri Pierce, Valdez resident, stated the City does not necessarily need an outside entity to "save" the community. The City has resources to "save" itself. She expressed concerns with the aesthetic condition of the main street in Valdez and the fact there is not a central business or shopping district. She discussed a few ideas from communities she

recently visited. Chairman Wade expressed support of a central business district where local businesses could exist and be supported. She stated she had reservations with central business district comprised of businesses owned by outsiders who would close shop outside of tourist season.

Commissioner Uren stated after moving to Valdez recently, he noticed two main concerns. Egan Drive, the City's main road, had multiple businesses which were either permanently closed or in need of aesthetic repair. He stated his second observation is almost all of the waterfront district consists of industrial development. He explained most coastal communities embrace use of waterfront real estate for tourist type businesses or at the very least a more aesthetically pleasing view shed. Chairman Wade stated she hoped any future development in these areas included not only new business development, but also support of currently established businesses.

Chairman Wade briefly described the Geeks in the Woods business which started up in Valdez over last winter. The owners of the business are originally from Washington State and involved in software development and technology. She explained their overall goal is to create an opportunity for work-life balance in a remote Alaskan community. Their work can be completed as long as they have access to computers and the internet. Geeks in the Woods appear to be interested in developing land, business workspaces, and housing on property near Robe Lake. Chairman Wade explained the City and community should be supporting these types of start-ups and making it easier for them to build their business. Mr. Talbot explained he is very familiar with this particular business and has not observed any roadblocks put in place by City or City staff. Commissioner Lee Hart suggested instead of speculating what the owners intend to do, the Commission should invite Geeks in the Woods to a Commission meeting to discuss their plans.

Commissioner Hart stated she is very optimistic with recent changes in City staff and fresh ideas those personnel are bringing to the table. She stated that optimism extends to all facets of City operations, not just business development.

Commissioners discussed film industry activities in Valdez and how likely it would be that the industry could be courted back to Valdez. Commissioner Stephens stated the entire film industry appears to be moving outside Alaska as a whole. With the loss of the state film production credit, it does not make things conducive to their business industry. If Valdez wanted to court the film industry back to the area, it would need to be done directly with individual companies.

Ms. Barberio provided the Commission with an update to the EDC goals and vision document.

Ms. Sheri Pierce, City Clerk, explained the City Clerks Office would be holding boards and commissions training over dinner during the first part of February. Topics will include but are not limited to how to run a successful meeting, parliamentary procedure, and the Alaska open meetings act. Ms. Pierce also briefly discussed options for teleconferencing during commission meetings under the current policy. She explained commissioners must make a certain level of commitment to meeting attendance when applying for the position, but she also wanted to balance travel and other needs. She stated she would explore what other communities' commission policies allowed around the state.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Wade adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

CITY OF VALDEZ, ALASKA

Rhonda Wade, Commission Chair

ATTEST:

Marjorie Pleiss, Recording Secretary