

Economic Vitality Commission  
1-17-18

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Economic Vitality Commission  
SUMMARY MINUTES**

January 17, 2018

City Administrative Offices  
Pickering Room

1775 12th Avenue NW  
Issaquah, WA 98027

<p><b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b> Ethan Stiles, Chair Jeff Howlett, Vice Chair Therese Garcia Laura Millikan Karl Leigh Kathy McCorry Kristi Tripple</p>	<p><b>STAFF PRESENT</b> Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development Manager Tim Dutter, Economic Development Manager Christopher Wright, DSD, Permit Center Manager</p> <p><b>OTHERS PRESENT</b> Arjun Malhotra, Youth Council</p>
--	--

**CALL TO ORDER**

LEIGH convened the meeting at 5:38 PM. (STILES, Chair, joined the meeting at 5:40 PM.)

**Moratorium Update:** Davis Hayes said at its December 18 meeting, the Council extended the moratorium for another six months on development in the central Issaquah area only. The Council is satisfied with progress made on all other moratorium items except district visions and affordable housing, both of which will hopefully be done in the first quarter of 2018. So development everywhere but the central Issaquah area can move forward, she said. She and Wright answered Commissioner questions about what is meant by “affordable” housing. STILES asked if the work is done earlier than six months, could the moratorium on development be lifted. Wright replied yes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOVED BY HOWLETT, SECONDED BY LEIGH, that minutes of the EVC meeting on October 18, 2017 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED BY LEIGH, SECONDED BY GARCIA, that minutes of the EVC meeting on November 15, 2017 be approved as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**EVC Annual Report—Review and Approve:** Davis Hayes asked for any comments about the draft Economic Vitality Commission Annual Report included in the agenda package. TRIPPLE said it looks good to her. She suggested that the last paragraph, which refers to EVC’s interest in addressing transportation, could include some reasons why EVC is particularly interested in transportation, such as businesses routinely siting transportation in interviews as the top issue facing the City. She also suggested that the report could mention the lack of revenue that the City will likely experience as a result of the recent moratorium and continuing the moratorium in central Issaquah, so the City will continue to struggle with funding needed projects.

STILES said he and HOWLETT have already provided their comments on the draft report to staff via e-mail. There were no other comments. It was the consensus of Commissioners present to direct staff to incorporate the comments suggested by TRIPPLE into the draft for signature by the Chair and Vice Chair.

**2018 EVC Work Plan**

STILES referred to the discussion at the last meeting about developing a work plan for 2018, specifically focusing on one or two issues on which EVC members feel they can have the most impact. The top three issues that emerged in that discussion were (1) business retention and expansion; (2) City branding; and (3) business recruitment. Now with a larger group present than at the last meeting, he continued, he would like the EVC to revisit and discuss those top three.

Davis Hayes gave more information activities the City has committed to do on branding in 2018, including hiring a consultant to develop a strategic plan. So while the Commission can still address branding, she continued, the timing may be such that it would be best to place that item on hold while the City’s branding efforts go forward. The Commissioners agreed.

<p><b>FOCUSED WORK PLAN DISCUSSION</b></p> <p><b>What does selecting a topic mean?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will be EVC’s focus – but not only work – in 2018             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating Economic Vitality Strategic Plan</li> <li>Emerging topics</li> </ul> </li> <li>Commissioners can still volunteer on other existing economic development projects to lend expertise and assistance</li> <li>Consider <u>your</u> time commitment and connections</li> <li>All topics are important</li> </ul>	<p><b>TOP THREE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Business Retention &amp; Expansion (6 votes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist with visits/solutions.</li> <li>Support, communicate, connect.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>City Branding (6 votes) UPDATED INFORMATION: PROJECT ON HOLD</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serve on committee</li> <li>Assist with outreach/collaboration</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Business Recruitment (4 votes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend business networking events</li> <li>Research opportunities to pursue</li> <li>Provide personnel/expertise/tours</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>RETENTION &amp; EXPANSION: WHAT CAN YOU DO?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Map a targeted list:</b> Research and find Points of Contacts. Optional focus:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee count (biggest employers or small businesses)</li> <li>Sector focus (Sports Med and Healthcare, Tech)</li> <li>Regional area focus (Downtown, Highlands, Gilman, ELSP)</li> <li>Primary Employers (those doing 50% of sales or more out of region)</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Attend a BRE visit</b> (or multiple visits)</li> <li><b>Partner with the Chamber on Sector luncheons;</b> is there a way to incorporate these with the BREs or with BRE data?</li> <li><b>Create a “Response Team”,</b> a “map” of go-to personnel for assistance. (PSE, permit center, State rep, Federal rep, Mts to Sound, etc...)</li> <li><b>“Speedboarding” Event</b> (in collaboration with the Chamber and DIA, workforce center) This would be a direct response to BRE data.</li> </ol>	<p><b>RECRUITMENT: WHAT CAN YOU DO?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Attend regional networking events to represent Issaquah</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network at industry networking, workshop or training events to inform businesses about benefits of doing business in Issaquah</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Support efforts to rejuvenate Sports Medicine IPZ</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist staff in reforming steering committee, work planning, other tasks</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Brokers Forum 2.0</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve programming, reach out directly to brokers to invite, present at event</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p><b>OTHER PROJECTS: WHAT CAN YOU DO?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Job Fair 2.0</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help plan, recruit/promote, refine event, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Cost of Doing Business research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore other studies to determine focused questions</li> <li>Research other cities cost of doing business</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Small Business Week</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate existing efforts/encourage or create events to showcase Issaquah small businesses</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p><b>WHAT DO YOU NEED: TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE TOPICS SELECTED? TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN YOUR EFFORTS?</b></p>

Dutter continued staff’s presentation on retention and expansion, including recent BRE (business retention and expansion) interview visits. Commissioners discussed the ideas for how EVC can participate in these efforts. McCORRY suggested a Regional Roundtable and gave some suggestions for how it could work. Commissioners agreed to include that idea as number (4) in the “Retention & Expansion: What Can You Do?” slide, and to renumber the items that

Economic Vitality Commission  
1-17-18

follow. The Commissioners also had a generally positive response to the “Speedboarding Event” item.

Davis Hayes continued staff’s presentation on other ways and projects for EVC members to participate and assist the City in becoming more engaged with the business community. After some discussion, it was generally agreed that, while all the ideas have merit, the Commissioners feel the activities that are most likely to have the most significant outcomes are the first four items on the “Retention & Expansion” slide; supporting the Chamber of Commerce’s regional roundtable activities; and pursuing a speedboarding event.

In discussing the slide “Other Projects,” TRIPPLE added that the annual Job Fair at Pickering Barn is an important event for the business community, and the Commission briefly discussed ways it could be more effective. The Commission generally agreed that doing a lot of research now on “the cost of doing business in Issaquah” might not be well-timed because of the recent moratorium.

The Commission discussed how they could best target their energies and time. LEIGH suggested focusing on a single IPZ (innovation partnership zone), which would help members deepen their understanding over time of a sector important to the community as well as bring continuity to EVC’s activities from month to month. The other Commissioners agreed with that approach, and after some discussion, the Commissioners selected sports medicine as the first business sector on which to focus. Staff will e-mail links to Commissioners with more information about IPZ generally and the sports medicine industry specifically.

#### **Commissioner Recruitment**

Davis Hayes noted the process of recruiting for the City’s Boards and Commissions will be starting soon, and asked Commissioners to be thinking of good candidates for board positions, including EVC.

#### **AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 5:30 PM. With no additional business to conduct, STILES adjourned the meeting at 6:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe  
Recording Secretary

***These minutes are a brief summary of the Economic Vitality Commission meeting. For more information or clarification, please contact the Economic Development Department at 425-837-3444.***