

CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Economic Vitality Commission

5:30 PM
 April 17, 2019

MINUTES

Pickering Room
 1775 12th Ave. NW

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commissioners Present:

Therese Garcia, Vice Chair
 Amit Bhardwaj
 Karl Leigh
 Kathy McCorry
 Ashwin Muthuvenkataraman
 Saikat Sen
 Kristi Tripple

Administration/Staff/Others:

Christopher Wright, Economic Dev. Mgr.
 Keith Niven, Econ. Dev. & Dev. Svcs. Dir.
 Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor
 Sage Khanuja, Youth Advisory Board

Commissioners Not Present:

Christopher Beaudoin
 Samantha Breider

CALL TO ORDER

GARCIA, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

AGENDA ITEMS

a. Mayor Thank You to Commission (I)

Presented by:

Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor

Mary Lou Pauly, Mayor, briefly addressed the Economic Vitality Commissioners. She gave an update on the status of boards and commissions in the City, including the most recent recruitment efforts. She said a social event is being planned for this summer for the volunteers who serve on the City's boards and commissions. She continued her remarks by thanking the EVC members for their service on behalf of the community.

b. ED Strategic Plan Worksheets (R)

Presented by: Keith Niven, Economic Development & Development Services Director, and Economic Development Staff

Wright noted the Commission began working on the Economic Development (ED) Strategic Plan Worksheets at its February 20, 2019 meeting, and will continue that work tonight, beginning with page 16 of 23. Niven made some remarks about the purpose of reviewing the ED Strategic Plan, specifically as an opportunity for the City to assess what action items should go forward in the next three-year cycle of the plan. He said after identifying which items should go forward and adding any new ones, the Council will then deliberate what measures should be included in the 2019-2021 iteration of the plan. Wright suggested reviewing EVC's work from the last meeting as well as tonight, and identifying any missing items, at the next meeting.

Niven went through the items beginning with Goal 2. As a result of the Commission's discussion on the proposed actions in the worksheets, the following items were retained and/or ideas were suggested [*suggestions in italics*]:

Goal 2: Promote Value Proposition

Diversified Economy [*Suggestion: Coordinate wording with wording in the City's Strategic Plan to ensure consistency*]

- Attract and retain businesses that provide stability for the City's economy. [*Suggestion: TRIPPLE suggested having more data about the revenue generated by existing businesses, and what it might mean for the City if one of its high-generating employers left the City.*]
- Attract higher-skilled, quality jobs.

Generate New Private Investment via Development and Redevelopment

- Manage development agreements to achieve the City's vision. [*Suggestion: Add specific information about the achievements.*]
- Market redevelopment opportunities within Central Issaquah.

Goal 3: Workforce Development & Education

Higher education institutions, job training programs and businesses aligned with regional workforce needs.

- Host an annual Job Fair [*several Commissioners including MUTHUVENKATARAMAN and SEN expressed interest in future job fairs; McCORRY noted the Chamber maintains data from its participation in the Job Fair.*]
- Identify strategies, policies and programs that would sustain a branch campus (Bellevue College).
- Facilitate connection of workforce development providers and businesses.

Local education institutions connected to the business community. [*Suggestion: Retain the three items on this list but seek to consolidate and/or combine them with other items.*]

- Partner with the District to connect businesses and classrooms.
- Promote educational excellence to the business community.
- Coordinate with schools to increase internship opportunities.

Opportunity for all employees to live within the community.

- Implement workforce housing plan (2018 Housing Strategy Work Plan).
- Work to expand workforce housing opportunities (Strategic Plan Objective 2).

Goal 4: Vibrant community. [*Suggestion: Consider moving this section out of the Strategic Plan. Also consider pursuing a designation as a Science District (SEN) and seeking participation with employers such as Amazon.*]

Robust arts and culture opportunities.

- Attract new art/music venues, primarily in Olde Town, and apply for "Creative District" designation.
- Continue to assist Issaquah History Museum with capacity building.
- [*Suggestion: Consider eliminating and/or directing item "Explore housing opportunities in Olde Town for artists, particularly for Village Theatre performers" to Arts Commission.*]

Awareness and access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

- Increase recreation and business opportunities at Lake Sammamish State Park, including a Development Agreement for the State Park.
- Improve access and usability of outdoor recreational and natural amenities, including completing the Wayfinding Plan work.
- Promote and attract outdoor recreation businesses; host an Outdoor Recreation Forum for recreational businesses in 2019 [*McCORRY expressed interest in pursuing this item.*]

Outstanding entertainment, dining, and shopping experiences.

- Support Implementation of Tourism Business Plan by supporting the DMO.

- Facilitate and continue to support partnerships for entertainment, dining and cultural activities.
- Include more multi-generational and multi-cultural activities and entertainment opportunities; highlight diversity of businesses on City's ED web page (*MUTHUVENKATARAMAN and TRIPLETT made specific suggestion for the web page; GARCIA and SEN commented on emphasizing diversity rather than specifically referring to minority businesses*) and support new cultural events.
- Improve wayfinding [*Suggestion: Combine with other references to wayfinding*].

The Commissioners had a general discussion about the need for more housing options in the City for a wide range of income levels, more entertainment opportunities, the need for more mid-sized commercial space, and current housing projects now under way in the City.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was the consensus of all EVC members present that the minutes of February 20, 2019 be approved as presented.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Transportation Advisory Board:** Wright gave more details about the upcoming Transportation Advisory Board meeting to be held Monday, April 22 at 6:00 PM at the Senior Center. All Economic Vitality Commissioners are welcome to attend.
- **Commission Member Update:** Interviews have been held for the upcoming membership term. Two new members will be joining the EVC to replace HOWLETT and LEIGH. The new members will start in May. Election of officers will take place at the May meeting.
- **Incubator Tour Summary:** Wright gave a brief report of the business incubator tour held on April 2, 2019 in Auburn.
- **Regional Business Summit:** Wright referred to the upcoming Regional Business Summit to be held Thursday, April 25 in Snoqualmie. McCORRY gave additional details about the speakers and program.
- **Reach Your Peak event:** Wright referred to the "Reach Your Peak" event scheduled for Saturday, July 13 at Lake Sammamish State Park and organized by Issaquah Sports Medicine Combine.
- **Next Meeting:** The next EVC meeting will be held Wednesday, May 15 at 5:30 PM. The agenda will include an opportunity to review and refine the action items in the ED Strategic Plan that the Commissioners have discussed at their last two meetings, including adding any new items.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commissioners and staff thanked LEIGH for his many years of work with the EVC. With no further business to conduct, GARCIA adjourned the meeting at 7:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary

