

CITY OF ISSAQUAH
Economic Vitality Commission

6:00 PM
 September 20, 2023

MINUTES

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.
 NW, Issaquah

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commissioners:

Chris Reichley, Chair
 Ashwin Muthuvenkataraman, Vice Chair –
 excused absence
 Thomas Brown – excused absence
 Jennifer Larson
 Joan Probala
 Kymberly Lee
 AJ Taylor – excused absence
 Christy Garrard
 Landon Halverson

Administration/Staff:

Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development
 Manager
 Farel Otieno, Economic Development
 Coordinator
 Juliana da Cruz, Economic Development
 Coordinator

Art Freas, Alternate
 Nicoleta Mocanu, Alternate- excused absence
 Anuradha Tadepalli, Alternate

CALL TO ORDER

REICHLEY called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) The minutes of August 16, 2023 were approved. Motioned by Commissioner Garrard seconded by Commissioner Halverson.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

AGENDA ITEMS

- a) **Comprehensive Plan Follow-Up (A)**

Presented by:

Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

Planning Manager Padua provided an overview of the Comprehensive Plan and the long-range nature of the plan as opposed to a departmental functional plan. He provided an update on the edits to the Economic Development goals and policies section of the Comprehensive Plan that were discussed at the August 16th meeting.

The Commission discussed a new proposed policy goal of in the Economic Development element in the Comprehensive Plan that recognized the economic impacts of the City's decision-making process.

- b) **Economic Development Action Plan (D)**

Presented by:

*Cassie Byerly, Planning Analyst, CAI
Economic Development Staff*

Planning Analyst Cassie Byerly provided an overview of stakeholder engagement, data profile, and a high-level overview of the plan's strategies and goals. The Engagement Subgroup gave an update on the stakeholder engagement report to ensure that the full Economic Vitality Commission understood the report. The Engagement subgroup reported on three major themes in engagement: a desire for a **thriving community** and the infrastructure to support it; a need for **affordability** in workforce, livability, and workplace environments; and a need for **business supports** including events, guidelines on doing business, networking, marketing, permitting assistance, and connection. The Data Subgroup gave an update on the data report to ensure that the full Economic Vitality Commission understood the report. The Commission flagged a need to define "services" as it pertains to Issaquah's jobs being 80% of jobs being retail and services. The Data Subgroup reported on key themes including employment and housing. The largest sections of employment are services and retail, but additional analysis is needed on the wages in these sectors. The subgroup reported a need for additional data around tourism and outdoor recreation as a business identity. The vision and mission statement in the plan remain in progress.

The Commission reviewed the three draft themes for the Economic Development Action Plan and reacted to the draft goals. They provided input on the language and intent of the goals.

REPORTS

Industry Trends, Business Openings & Closures (D)

Presented by:

All Commissioners

The Commission discussed a few new business openings including Pickles Playland and Crumbl Cookies. A new salon in the Highlands is making progress.

Reports - City Council, Commission Committees (I)

Presented by:

All Commissioners & Staff

Economic Development Manager Davis Hayes provided a report on projects being considered by the City Council regarding affordable housing and pioneer projects in the urban core. She also presented on her work to determine how to spend affordable housing dollars, including a proposal to invest in a strategic affordable housing fund.

The Commission was reminded of the Business Leadership Forum next week on September 27th at SanMar. The forum will hear from Mayor Pauly, an update on transportation, the Economic Development Action Plan, and networking.

2023 Schedule (I)

Presented by:

Chris Reichley, Chair

The Commission reviewed the schedule including a potential extra meeting on October 26th as a joint meeting with the Planning Policy Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Lee reported out on Lakeside Industries' open house that was held for a potential development in the Highlands above the Lakeside quarry. The development will be mixed use with a priority on small and local businesses in the retail spaces.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m. The next meeting is currently scheduled for October 18, 2024.

INQUIRIES

Please contact Jen Davis Hayes at (425) 837-3414 or jenh@issaquahwa.gov.

Note: Times listed for meetings topics are approximate and items are subject to change.

(A) Action, (D) Discussion, (I) Information