

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH**  
**Economic Vitality Commission**

6:00 PM  
 May 21, 2025

**MINUTES**

Tibbetts Manor, 750 17th Ave.  
 NW, Issaquah

**COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Commissioners:*

Chris Reichley, Chair  
 Kym Lee, Vice Chair (Excused)  
 Robert Lerch  
 Jake Magill  
 Jennifer Larson  
 Anuradha Tadepalli (Virtual)  
 Shalini Bansal  
 Barb Pexa  
 Kelly Richardson

*Administration/Staff:*

Jen Davis Hayes, Economic Development  
 Manager  
 Jack Pedlow, Economic Development  
 Coordinator

Don Crowe, Alternate  
 Maciej Stanski, Alternate

**CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR REICHLEY called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Minutes of April 16, 2025  
 Minutes from previous meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from members of the public.

**AGENDA ITEMS**

- a) **Welcome & Introductions: New Commissioners & Staff (I)**  
*Presented by:*  
*All*  
 Brief introductions by each council member, council member, alongside the City of Issaquah staff.
- b) **EVC Overview & Commissioner Duties (D)**  
*Presented by:*  
*Jen Davis Hayes, Economic & Housing Development Manager*

Comments and concerns about the economic landscape of the region included:

- Concerns around the business tax climate
- Concerns around the unfriendly business permit process
- Need for more trade schools/job training programs
- Desire for a job fair, possibly in person

- Desire for the city to continue to support businesses and create an outward welcoming and proactive environment
- Workforce shortage
- Surprise around lack of applications for small businesses, large businesses are finding lots of applications and less business turnover

Overview of the duties and responsibilities of the commissioners. There is interest in the committee being tapped more to discuss input for land use codes. Some examples include a letter of support to city council with policy statements to guide future discussions. The group would like to be asked directly by city council about any ideas, feedback, or advice.

As housing policy starts to see their first projects, they can now see how the implementation of the permitting on projects so that adjustments can be made where issues arise.

Questions around the 2026 World Cup arose and will be addressed in a future meeting with Visit Issaquah in July.

It is likely that June's meeting will be a joint meeting.

## REPORTS

### a) **Industry Trends, Business Openings & Closures (D)**

*Presented by:*

*All Commissioners*

- Arena Sports wants to expand to include pickleball but needed an application, spent money, and was then denied.
- Zoning and permitting processes are prohibiting new business operations from taking place.
- Permitting issues are also impacting utilities, a fiber project in Issaquah was permitted months later than in Redmond and Kirkland.

### b) **Economic Development Action Plan Update (I)**

*Presented by:*

*Economic Development Staff*

*Jen shared the EVC Overview and Commissioner Duty presentation. The purpose of this presentation is to go over the Economic Vitality Commission and the current workplan along with the responsibilities of the commissioners. Some highlights include:*

- *City growth targets (3,500 housing units & 7,950 jobs)*
- *Success measures (job growth & total business revenue)*
- *2024-2027 action plan (Access to Opportunity, Convene & Catalyze, Leveraging Issaquah's Assets)*

### c) **City Council Report Out (I)**

*Presented by:*

*Jen Davis Hayes, Economic & Housing Development Manager*

*Information provided in attached motion sheet.*

- d) **2025 Schedule (I)**  
*Presented by:*  
*Chris Reichley, Chair*

The 2025 schedule was reviewed and discussed. The next meeting will be a joint meeting with Human Services.

**OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There was no other business or announcements

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 PM.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for June 18, 2025.