

Economic Development Commission Minutes
EDC Room South City Hall
360 Rio Communities Blvd.
January 24, 2018

Call to Order –

- Chairman Winters called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

Roll Call –

- Present: Jim Winters, Frank Logan, Kuan Tikkun and Fran Rossberg
- Absent: Paul Baca
- Also present: City Manager Bob Skerry and Deputy Clerk Pam Johnson

Approval & signing of minutes -

- Kuan Tikkun moved to approve the minutes of January 10, 2017 as submitted. Frank Logan seconded and the minutes were approved on 4-0 vote.

General Discussion -

- Fran Rossberg asked about Ron Gentry's request for annexation of his property into the city.
- Chairman Winters explained the problems associated with that annexation and said he has asked that all conversation about Gentry's request be postponed until after the annexation of the industrial park.
- Kuan Tikkun said she understands that two issues are the gravel pit and contaminated water that the city would have to clean up.
- Chairman Winters said there is also an economic impact.
- Frank Logan said the animals are also a problem.
- Chairman Winters said the city hasn't addressed the animal issue.
- Frank Logan said if we start to see committees take on five or six projects at one time, nothing gets done and the most important thing now is the industrial park annexation.

- Chairman Winters reported that plans to build sixty-four homes on Carmel at Highway 47 and Montano have been presented to the city, but the plans will need to be updated.
- Kuan Tikkun asked what can be done about low-income housing.
- Chairman Winters said there are a lot of low-income housing projects in the city now. He said he would like to see smaller buildings with lawns. He also said denser housing should be concentrated around city hall where businesses could be located. He said there are a lot of people in Rio Communities that want to downsize and have transportation available.

- Chairman Winters reported that the park survey is complete, and the public forum was held. He said P&Z will probably discuss the results once more and then it becomes the city manager's responsibility to find a planner. He said the consensus was that people want smaller parks. He said it has been suggested that we have a walking path from Hwy 47 to Horner to Suncrest which could be graded to create a walking and 4-wheeler paths. He said there is also discussion about grading several paths in the desert.
- Chairman Winters said the city has agreed to provide a dumpster here at city hall every month except December. He said there will also be a shredder here on a regular basis because it's cheaper to do that

than throwing limbs in the dumpsters. He said council is discussing solid waste and the recommendation from P&Z is that we have a single provider. He said the city has decided on a list of intersections that will be fixed next year so we'll try to get another grant from DOT.

- Kuan Tikkun gave an update on the Domenici Conference, Valencia Workforce and Mission: Graduate. She said the shadowing program at Belen High School has been discontinued because the one person that was running the program has retired. She said they are looking now at a tentative date of February 22 for a career day for employers, so we need to get as many employers to participate as we can.
- Chairman Winters suggested asking Clariant, Keter, Mesa Oil, Valencia Power and Hydrocut. He also said we should make sure we give them a city business card, so we can show as much presence as we can.
- Kuan Tikkun said there will also be career days in Los Lunas in mid- March and one in Belen on the 23rd of March.
- Chairman Winters said getting companies in the city involved will be a benefit because Workforce Solutions hasn't done a very good job of taking care of those companies. He said someone has to solve the problem and companies are willing to spend the money to do something.
- Kuan Tikkun said part of our job is knowing what the requirements are and promote that.
- Chairman Winters said we can get the companies to give us the requirements for the jobs that are available.

- Chairman Winters said the city newsletter is going out at the end of the week. He said we didn't have enough room to cover everything, so we tried to give the status of things going on in the city now. He said the next edition will go out in March and then on a quarterly basis. He suggested we include information on Welcome Neighbor and new businesses.

- Bob Skerry said Jim and Mark have met with most of the managers in the industrial park and one of the things we learned is that there are a lot of high paying research and development jobs available.
- Bob Skerry also said PNM is asking about adding another solar farm and businesses that like renewable energy will be attracted to that.
- Chairman Winters said we have a better chance of getting those companies than anyone else in the county.

- Frank Logan said he received flyers in the mail that were processed as bulk mail and show his address in Belen.
- Chairman Winters said someone pays to have the flyers printed. He suggested asking someone at the post office who puts the flyers out and see if they know if it can be traced. He said, since one of the flyers is from Lowe's grocery store, we might also check with them and see who their ad agency is.

- Chairman Winters said state representative McQueen will visit all state agencies and get them to register Rio Communities instead of Belen. He said when the legislators were here several months ago, we asked them to do that and Rep McQueen remembered we need their help.

Strategy for attracting target businesses to Rio Communities -

- Chairman Winters said Paul Baca has mentioned that if we want to attract businesses to the city, we have to show new rooftops. He said in the last two years we've had two, so it will help if we can get the sixty-four we're anticipating. He said we've sent letters to potential businesses in the past but maybe we should be talking about how to attract housing and, if we can show some movement in housing, we can do some marketing on our own.
- Fran Rossberg said we need landowners to be interested in building houses. She also said business owners should be promoting their business. She said we could ask them to put something on Next Door or Facebook to let people know they're here.
- Chairman Winters said we could ask businesses if we can help them write something and post it on Facebook. He said we need to find a buyer for vacant lots that may already have infrastructure. He said we're talking about advertising for business and our business is houses so we should think about how to move houses without getting involved in individual lots.
- Frank Logan said businesses will come in when there are new rooftops here. He said if housing here is stagnant, we're not creating excitement and if we have new rooftops and building permits, we have growth and additional people which means more customers and more traffic.

Place of high speed internet in economic development -

- Chairman Winters said two businesses in the industrial park have high speed internet from Century Link. He said he spoke with our representative at Plateau and their terminal is at the car wash, so getting high speed internet to the industrial park would require pulling a cable down Hwy 304. He said they're considering that and it would be helpful to have high speed internet in the industrial park. He said he will give the Plateau representative's contact information to the business owners. He said if the park is going to be ours, we have to help coordinate some things and it will add value to economic development.
- Bob Skerry said one big selling point is that we have good reception because of cell towers in the city limits.
- Chairman Winters said the next meeting will be on February 14 and discussion will be on strategy to attracting small builders and developers.

Adjourn

- Frank Logan moved to adjourn the meeting. Fran Rossberg seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m. on 4-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Johnson, Deputy Clerk

Approved

Jim Winters, Chairman

Paul Baca

Frank Logan, Vice Chairman

Kuan Tikkun

Fran Rossberg, Secretary

Date: _____