

# Economic Development Commission Minutes

## June 28, 2017

### Call to Order

- Jim Winters called the meeting to order at 10:10 am.

### Roll Call

- Present: Jim Winters, Fran Rossberg and Kuan Tikkun.  
Absent: Frank Logan and Paul Baca.  
Also present: City Manager Bob Skerry, Municipal Clerk Lisa Adair and City Treasurer Celina Benavidez.

### Approval & signing of minutes

- No minutes were available to approve at this meeting.

### 1. General Discussion

- Kuan Tikkun reported that a lot of employers are on the list to participate in the Mission: Graduate Valencia Workforce Readiness Summit on September 12. She said UNM Valencia campus has a lot of programs to prepare kids to be ready for a job and has developed relationships with employers in Valencia County. She said Keter is the latest one they've started to work with.
- Jim Winters said we need to utilize UNMVC more because a lot of their training programs are no attendance.
- Kuan Tikkun said employers say they want trained people and there are jobs that require training that no one seems to know about and we have a trained workforce who have to go out of state to get jobs.
- Jim Winters said college graduates are not necessarily in high demand in Valencia County but what is in demand is skilled labor.
- Fran Rossberg said UNM Valencia is perfect for that because a two-year program gets an associate degree and students can go on to something else.
- Kuan Tikkun said when Alice Lettney gave a presentation to the Council, she said there is a 78% employment rate with the technical programs.
- Jim Winters said it may be a good idea to contact Clarion. He said they've brought in new management and it may be good to extend an invitation to them.
- Kuan Tikkun said Aristech is part of Mission: Graduate and they have invited Clarion, Keter and Hydrocut.
- Jim Winters said he hopes someone makes sure to invite Mesa Oil.
- Fran Rossberg started a discussion on the Welcome Wagon. She said there would be one for the residents and one for the businesses. She also said she needs to know who will be on the committee and explained the information she got indicated that most Welcome Wagons are run by a community association. She said since we don't have one we will have to be a volunteer group.
- Jim Winters said when the word gets out, people will volunteer.
- Jim Winters said money for Welcome Wagon will come from donations.
- Fran Rossberg said EDC should fund the business Welcome Wagon.
- Fran Rossberg said we can find new residents by working with realtors, neighbors and churches. She said the most efficient way may be to develop a form that new residents can fill out to request a visit from the Welcome Wagon.
- Jim Winters said we need to put something about their mailing address in the packets we distribute.

- Fran Rossberg suggested we see if businesses in the city will give coupons or discounts to new residents to include in the packets. She said we will put our brochure in the packets and something from the fire stations, the auxiliary, the country club and Whitfield. She also mentioned including a short letter about how to get to the ordinances on the city website.
- Jim Winters suggested providing a computer at city hall for people to use who don't have one at home.
- Jim Winters said this item should be on the next meeting agenda. After some discussion, it was decided to discuss Welcome Wagon at the July 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Jim Winters distributed a list of things that EDC discussed from January to June 14 of this year. He said some of the things were discussed but not finished and he asked that everyone look through the list and mark the ones that are done enough so that we don't need to do anything else right now. He also said some things on the list may need to be revisited and asked everyone to list what needs to be brought up again.
- Kuan Tikkun said EDC goals needs further discussion and it would be helpful to have 1-5-year goals and LEDA would be a part of that. She said we should establish priorities.
- Jim Winters said LEDA should be dovetailed with the annexation and if annexation happens, we should move quickly to get it in place. He said we won't use LEDA for anything in the city limits now, but if we're lucky enough to annex the industrial park, we will need LEDA in place.
- Jim Winters explained the annexation process. He said it is very long and will probably be done by a committee of three or four people and we should be very careful with the information. He said our next step is with DFA. He said we're waiting for our intermediate budget to be approved so we can proceed.
- Jim Winters asked about further discussion on goals. After some discussion, it was decided to put goals on the agenda for the meeting of July 26.
- Jim Winters distributed a copy of a letter he received from ALDI. He said he filled out a form on-line just to see how it would look and accidentally submitted the form. He said he received a response the next day with a case number and an agreement that they will ask their analyst to review it. He also said ALDI's plan to open 700 stores in 2017-2018 does not include New Mexico.
- Jim Winters distributed a draft of a new business letter for review. He said a decision needs to be made on what we want to do and asked everyone to review the letter to see if it is satisfactory or if changes need to be made. He mentioned one thing that needs to be changed is the number of people within a fifteen-mile radius from 30,000 to 35,000 and population of "approximately 5,600".
- Jim Winters distributed a copy of two different formats for a letter to businesses – one script and one bullet points and asked which style is best. He said any time we're trying to sell to businesses, we need to mention Facebook, Keter and anything else beneficial to us.
- Fran Rossberg said businesses would like the bullet point version best but we need to add an introduction in the first paragraph like the script format.
- Jim Winters explained the municipality net taxable values history in the state of New Mexico. He said the information is useful because we can compare Rio Communities to all other cities in the state. He started a discussion on net taxable values and fluctuation in some cities. He noted that Rio Communities shows significant growth mainly because of the solar farm.
- Bob Skerry explained that Keter is a \$35,000,000 investment in the community but it's all from IRB's so there is no tax. He said the solar facility is a \$20,000,000 investment and it is taxed for property tax and no IRB's or tax payer money was used. He said before the solar facility was built, the property tax was not much because it was on the land only.

- Jim Winters said the tax we receive is between \$17,000 and \$18,000 per year on that one facility which makes Rio Communities the fastest growing city in Valencia County. He said this information should be added as a bullet point in our letter to potential business owners.
- Jim Winters said if we are lucky enough to annex the industrial park, the impact will be dramatic and we could see another 15% to 17% increase if not more.
- Bob Skerry said Ralph Mimms said we won't be able to get a grocery store or any other retail business until we can show building permits and growth in the number of rooftops. He said we could say that Rio Communities grew faster in the last three years than any other city in Valencia County, based on assessed valuation which implies rooftops.

## **2. Website updates – review last four slides**

- Jim Winters showed pictures Frank Logan took and began a discussion on the pictures that should scroll on the website. He said we still need a picture of a sunset to replace the one on the front page.
- Kuan Tikkun said she wrote a brief outline about what the Rio Communities Wellness Council does for the EDC website. She said it would be more interesting if we include one of the flyers from the health fairs. After some discussion, it was decided that sample flyers will be on the website where we talk about the wellness council and a statement should be added that says “see city website for current events”.

## **3. Grocery store update/strategy**

- Jim Winters distributed an excel spreadsheet listing information on various grocery stores and explained we should start compiling information.
- Fran Rossberg said she read an article about a small town that was falling apart and experiencing gang violence. She said they needed a grocery store, but couldn't find one because it was too dangerous. She said they were persistent and finally got a Save-a-Lot.
- Jim Winters said the webinar that he listened to indicated that Save-a-Lot was recommended for a city our size. He said the key is that we need an investor. He said we're going to try to get to Las Vegas next year because that is the place to find investors.
- Jim Winters said another good choice for a grocery store would be John Brooks because they have stores in small communities and started a discussion on other stores.

## **Adjourn**

- Kuan Tikkun moved to adjourn the meeting. Fran Rossberg seconded and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Pamela Johnson, Deputy Clerk  
(taken by Lisa Adair Municipal Clerk)

Approved:

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Jim Winters, Chairman

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Frank Logan, Vice-Chairman

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Fran Rossberg, Secretary

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Paul Baca

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Kuan Tikkun

Date: \_\_\_\_\_