

Economic Development Commission Minutes
EDC Room South City Hall
360 Rio Communities Blvd.
July 12, 2017

Call to Order -

- Jim Winters called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Roll Call –

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

Approval & signing of minutes –

- Frank Logan moved to approve the minutes of the June 14 and June 28, 2017 meetings as submitted. The motion was seconded by Paul Baca and passed on 3-0 vote.

1. General Discussion – there was no general discussion at this meeting.

2. Website updates – Review last slides (sunset/sunrise) –

- Frank Logan said he hasn't been able to get a good picture of the sunset.
- Jim Winters distributed a copy of a statement he received from the Wellness Council that needs to be posted to the website. He said he didn't get a picture or a flyer but he thinks we should post the statement and move on. He said he created another tab for a calendar so dates of the health fairs are on the calendar and he added the information about the Wellness Council under a separate tab. He also said the statement refers to the city website for updates.
- Frank Logan suggested we set a time with Chris at UNMVC to show us how "Wix" website format works so we can make some of the changes to our website.
- Jim Winters said If we decide to go with a new website format, we should ask Bob if Lisa can go with us to see it and see how hard it will be to update. He said if we switch both the city's website and the EDC website over, Lisa will have to be able to use it.
- Frank Logan said Chris says it's easier to change than a word document.
- Jim Winters said Chris will do all the set up at no charge and the hosting fee is \$100/year.
- Frank Logan moved to approve the website update as discussed to include the addition of sunset picture. The motion was seconded by Paul Baca and passed on 3-0 vote.

3. Grocery store update/strategy –

- Jim Winters said there had been discussion on developing a statement about what we want to say about the city so we say the same thing when we're talking to grocery stores. He said this information can get expanded quickly to what we say to support the city in whatever we're doing. He distributed copies of key points for review and explained that at the last meeting it was decided to use the bullet point format rather than the script.

- Jim Winters said some interesting information is that we are one of only five counties in the state projected to grow over the next twenty-five years. He said that information is from a MRCOG study. He mentioned other interesting points on the list are the increase in the budget over the last four years and population figures.
- Paul Baca said the information about the industrial park sounds like Keter Plastic is the only business there and suggested we say, “with five core manufacturers including Keter” to show there is other employment there. He also said we should mention the distance to BNSF Railyard/Railrunner passenger station.
- Jim Winters asked about adding the distance to the Intermodal in Los Lunas.
- Bob Skerry said we should also mention distance to Facebook/Walmart Distribution Center and Niagara Bottling. He said the Sunport should be mentioned when we talk about passenger service and air freight.
- Jim Winters said he will make the changes discussed and bring the revised list to next meeting.
- Jim Winters distributed a copy of “Municipality Net Taxable Values History”. He said Los Lunas had a 1.1% growth over the last three years and Rio Communities had better growth during that time.
- Bob Skerry said Ralph Mimms told us that people in the retail business are looking for growth in the city and number one is roof tops and building permits. He said we can say we had real estate sales and the housing market here has gone from homes being on the market for four to five months to a week or two. He said we can say assessed value is up and the number of real estate transactions is up. He also said we’ve had “flippers” come in and buy foreclosed and abandoned homes so that inventory has dropped considerably.
- Jim Winters started a discussion on updates to the list of grocery stores. He said he received an answer from ALDI and they said they will have their analysts look at our information but expansion in this area is not on the short-term list. He said Save a Lot is headquartered in St Louis and has 14,000 to 16,000 square foot stores. He said there may not be a building big enough to buy here so they’ll have to build but they’re investor owned.
- Paul Baca mentioned El Mezquite market. He said they have a meat market, fresh vegetables and some staple items and target the Mexican population. He said they could expand that type of market here.
- Jim Winters said he will research El Mezquite for the next meeting.
- Jim Winters continued the discussion on potential grocery stores. He said IGA has potential but the biggest problem is that it is privately owned so they need an investor. He said there are three or four family-owned stores located in the Portales/Clovis area. He said it would be worth contacting them because their demographics for that type of store would fit here. He said Whole Foods has just been bought by Amazon so they probably won’t open new stores and Sprouts is located only in large cities.
- Paul Baca said we should still notify Sprouts.
- Jim Winters said we probably won’t get Albertsons here because their store in Los Lunas is too close but Safeway is their lower end store. He said Safeway is not the cheapest place to buy groceries but the stores are good clean stores with a lot of general merchandise. He said they are company-owned and have stores in Grants and Gallup and have opened a store in Aztec.
- Jim Winters said he is still waiting for a response from Trader Joes and thinks we should notify them again after a respectful amount of time.

- Jim Winters said our best bet is either John Brooks or Silver Street Market. He said he, Mark Gwinn and Bob Skerry visited Silver Street Market and talked to the owner about opening a store in Rio Communities.
- Bob Skerry said it is a very nice store, with fresh ground coffee, a bakery, a butcher shop, an organic food section and a deli. He said the owner said his father-in-law owns John Brooks grocery store. He said they have 10,000 square feet on the floor level and might need more space for the butcher shop and the deli. He said they have a mixed-use building with two stories of lofts above the store.
- Jim Winters said they also visited the John Brooks store in Albuquerque and it is a very clean store.
- Paul Baca said we have to be able to talk to someone. He said the information is great but it needs to be in hands of the right person so it's best to talk face to face.

4. Goals discussion –

- Jim Winters started a review of the list of things that have been discussed by EDC from the first of January through the middle of June of this year. He said #1 is complete and we can't do much with #3 without knowing what we'll do about a non-profit organization. He said we're waiting for a response from Trader Joe's so we've completed #12.
- Jim Winters said Kuan is working on #13 and we've done as much of the marketing as we can. He said he is going to the meeting and it will be a good opportunity for us to try to sell the community. He said Aristech has invited Keter, Hydro-cut and Clarion and he told them they need to make sure they invite Mesa Oil.
- Jim Winters said the other items are things we think we may want to work on.
- Frank Logan said #6 and #7 can be combined and both those are out of our hands.
- Paul Baca asked if we want to say that Rio Communities is still a viable site for medical facility.
- Bob Skerry said there is money in the budget this year for a medical facility study.
- Paul Baca said we need to look at the results of the study and see that we're targeting the right market. He said people in Rio Communities move to Albuquerque to be closer to health care facilities.

Adjourn –

- Frank Logan moved to adjourn. Paul Baca seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Johnson, Deputy Clerk

Approved

Jim Winters, Chairman

Paul Baca

Frank Logan, Vice Chairman

Kuan Tikkun

Fran Rossberg, Secretary

Date _____