

Economic Development Commission Minutes  
EDC Room South City Hall  
360 Rio Communities Blvd.  
July 26, 2017

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

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

Approval & signing of minutes

- Frank Logan moved to approve the July 12, 2017 minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Fran Rossberg and passed on 4-0 vote.

**1. General Discussion –**

- Kuan Tikkun said she reported on the Mission: Graduate program at the Council meeting. She said the Council has moved their workshop meeting so now it falls on the same day as the Valencia County Workforce Summit. She said Mission: Graduate includes four counties and now Belen and Los Lunas school superintendents are on board with the program and helping to grow a workforce in terms of education in Valencia County.
- Jim Winters suggested a presentation be made to the Belen and Los Lunas school boards. He said they furnish the money and decide which programs get accepted and they have a responsibility for drop-out rate.
- Fran Rossberg said we need to encourage potential drop-outs to find alternative education.
- Kuan Tikkun said one of the goals is to reach the non-traditional student. She said only 25% of adults in Valencia County have associates degrees or above.
- Paul Baca said we did that to ourselves by saying everyone needs to attend college and putting people on that track. He said that created a stigma with technical vocational schools.
- Jim Winters said Rio Communities has a very high percentage of people who have graduated from high school and for people who have some college.
- Kuan Tikkun said Rio Communities is a feeder for the Belen District but the education level here is higher than in the rest of the county.
- Frank Logan said the same situation exists with crime statistics. He said Rio Communities gets lumped into Belen, Valencia County and the state but if we could be separated out, the numbers would change.
  
- Frank Logan said he doesn't have any information on the website but he and Lisa are going to see Chris at UNMVC and Chris will show Lisa the "Wix" website platform. He said if she's comfortable with it we can go to Council and see about getting EDC, P&Z and the City websites under that platform and do our own updates and revisions.
- Frank Logan said he is still trying to get good sunset pictures for the website. We said we can add the picture later and the website will always need updates.

- Kuan Tikkun said we didn't include a railroad map on the website. She said Henry Rau had a map of all railroads.
- Paul Baca said there was a map in the flyer Horizon had on the industrial park.
- Frank Logan said those maps will be outdated because of the Intermodal in Los Lunas. He said he can look at Henry's presentation and see what the source is.
- Jim Winters suggested BNSF may have a map.

## **2. Welcome Wagon/Business Open House –**

- Fran Rossberg said the business part of the Welcome Wagon belongs to EDC and we'll try to get that organized. She said people have been interested and have volunteered to work on the resident side. She said she will call them and set up a meeting. She said she has \$250 and is not sure how to divide it but that will be discussed at the meeting.
- Jim Winters suggested they could also discuss welcoming a new business.

## **3. Valencia County Fair –**

- Jim Winters said the set-up date for the Valencia Co. fair is August 23 and 24 and we need to decide what we're going to have there and who will do it.
- Fran Rossberg asked about being in the Fair Parade in Belen.
- Jim Winters said that may be a good opportunity but the problem will be to decide what we're going to have and who's going to do it. He said the next EDC meeting is on the August 9 so we can finalize it then.
- Jim Winters said the easiest thing is to do is have a table but he's not against being in the parade.
- Frank Logan said we're a month away from the date of the parade and we need to consider what we will get out of it.
- Jim Winters said we have a table reserved. He said they can tell us when peak times are but they're usually in the evening. He said they get a lot of people after the parade and the parade is on Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Paul Baca said the busiest times are Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
- Jim Winters said we can pass out brochures and pens. He said having the booth there is a good opportunity to hustle business.
- Fran Rossberg suggested enlarging a picture to put in the background.
- Kuan Tikkun asked about having a computer there with our website up and have some pictures rolling.
- Jim Winters said it may be hard to get reception.
- Frank Logan said having the security on the screen and laptop would be biggest concern.
- Jim Winters said we can figure out a schedule at the next meeting. He said we need to get there early to get a good table selection.
- Jim Winters said we have a banner we can use and he will invite the councilors to be there.
- Paul Baca said the golf course should have something we can give people to let them know we have a golf course.

## **4. Grocery store update/strategy –**

- Jim Winters distributed updated information on potential grocery stores. He said he did some research on El Mezquite and they have several stores and are owned by one person.
- Paul Baca said he got the owner's name off the County website and sent them a flyer on the building.

- Paul Baca said he went to Silver St Market and it would be a fantastic store for Rio Communities. He said it is clean, not too big and not too small and pricing is amazing. He said he dropped off a packet but the owner wasn't there and the store was extremely busy.
- Kuan Tikkun said their market is the apartments around them and that may be what makes them successful.
- Paul Baca said they should do extremely well here because of convenience to the community.
- Jim Winters said the people who own John Brooks also own Silver St and it is different because the market there is different. He said their other stores are traditional and located in neighborhoods like it would be here. He said the store they visited in Albuquerque is in an old neighborhood but the aisles are wide and the store is very clean.
- Kuan Tikkun said Ralph Mims has a petition going to get Sprouts to Los Lunas.
- Jim Winters said Sprouts doesn't have stores in smaller communities but Ralph is selling himself as being part of the Albuquerque Metroplex.
- Jim Winters said he is suggesting that we also become part of the Metroplex. He said we're part of the greater Los Lunas Metropolitan Traffic Plan and Los Lunas is its own entity but they play a part in the administration throughout the Albuquerque Metropolitan area so we're part of both.
- Paul Baca said that can be justified because Rio del Oro is closer in proximity to Los Lunas and is part of the Los Lunas long range plan.
- Jim Winters said Ralph Mims will help us get a grocery store in exchange for information we get as to who their suppliers are. He said Ralph wants a distribution point in Los Lunas and if that happened, it would be to our benefit.
- Jim Winters distributed copies of Ralph Mims's business card which was done by UNMVC and a revised copy of the list of statements about the city to include in the business brochure. He said Ralph told us not to forget the Sunport and Walmart Distribution Center and had some suggestions about how to word the statement about the rail yard in Belen.
- Paul Baca suggested adding a statement about agriculture such as "we're surrounded by a rich history of local farming and ranching"
- Jim Winters said Ralph also suggested under the "Who are we" list that we expand ourselves and say, "a city of 5,500 people with over 900,000 people within 45 minutes and projected to grow to 1.3 million by 2040". He said that data comes from MRCOG's "Futures 40" plan. He said that gets people's attention and shows potential business people that we have opportunity to grow.
- Paul Baca suggested we choose the high points on our list to incorporate into a brochure and use the same format as Los Lunas.
- Frank Logan said he will ask Chris at UNMVC if they have a template we could use for a business brochure.
- Jim Winters asked everyone to think about pictures we want to use in the brochure and he will put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

## 5. Goals discussion –

- Jim Winters said we've been busy doing things that had to get done, but now it's time to think about where we're going.
- Paul Baca said we should focus on our association with Albuquerque Economic Development and the New Mexico Environment Dept. He said we should make those people aware that we are here. He said if we have a full membership in AE, we'll be invited to functions and be able to talk about our community. He also said we need a presence at the state level so we can get referrals for businesses.

- Jim Winters said he talked to Bob Skerry about joining AED and the Chamber of Commerce.
- Paul Baca said the Chamber in Los Lunas is not viable but Belen has an extremely strong Chamber. He said there aren't a lot of locally owned businesses in Los Lunas and the outsiders aren't part of the community.
- Kuan Tikkun said we need someone to do a community newsletter.
- Jim Winters said we've budgeted money for that. He said the city can't publish a newsletter that says anything more than what the news is. He said a 501c3 corporation could advertise and promote businesses in the city but a 501c3 is a long-term goal.
- Paul Baca said if the newsletter is contracted we'll have unbiased news - not opinions.

**Adjourn –**

- Kuan Tikkun moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Frank Logan and the meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Pam Johnson, Deputy Clerk

Approved

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Jim Winters, Chairman

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Paul Baca

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Frank Logan, Vice Chairman

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Kuan Tikkun

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Fran Rossberg, Secretary

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