

MINUTES
CITY OF CARSON
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Carson City Hall
701 E. Carson Street
Carson, CA 90745

May 5, 2022 – 8:00 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER Chairperson Aldridge called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL Economic Development Commissioners Present: Aldridge, Apodaca, Harris, Embry, Jimenez, Sparrow, Wallace

Economic Development Commissioners Absent: Childers, Cordova, Kelley, Pandolfo, Watar

Staff Present: John Raymond, Assistant City Manager of Economic Development; Saied Naaseh, Director of Community Development; LaToya Butler, Business and Employment Development Assistant

Let the record show there was one person from the public in attendance.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

Chairperson Aldridge pointed out a discrepancy in Commissioner Childer's attendance. Vice-Chairperson Wallace moved to approve the March 3, 2022, regular minutes, seconded by Commissioner Sparrow, and unanimously carried with the attendance correction.

Vice-Chairperson Wallace moved to approve the April 7, 2022, regular minutes, seconded by Commissioner Sparrow and unanimously carried.

IV. INTRODUCTIONS/PRESNTATIONS

None

V. PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATIONS ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Façade Improvement Program

Director of Community Development Saied Naaseh reported Council would like to start a Façade Improvement Program. The current program, funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), has limited areas for which the money can be used. The CDBG program also has a lot of strings attached because it is federally funded. The new program will be City-wide and target bigger shopping centers to help revitalize them instead of single buildings. When the owner is remodeling the exterior of the shopping, the City would set aside some amount of money to assist the owner.

Assistant City Manager of Economic Development John Raymond reported he has worked on façade programs in several other cities and they generally work on a reimbursement basis to the property owner. There is façade improvement grant agreement in the beginning where the City will reimburse up to 25% to 50% of the cost of the facade. The owner has to do the entire improvement and then submit a detailed invoice with the costs.

Commissioners asked questions pertaining to potential seed money and a streamlined permit process.

Carson Chamber President Barry Waite stated the Chamber would like to assist with the program.

Discussion ensued.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Small Business Grant Funds

Assistant City Manager of Economic Development John Raymond reported staff sent questions to the Commissioners for feedback. The same questions will be put in a staff report for the Council at the May 17, 2022 meeting. Some of the questions are the size of the grants, requirements for receiving the grants, and financial status. The loan program was not as impactful in terms of the economy of the City, so staff is trying to be more thoughtful and not plunge into another program. Staff is trying to come up with a framework that helps the Council walk through the decision-making to provide some guidance.

Director of Community Development Saied Naaseh stated it is difficult to determine if a business is growing or failing. The businesses should have to demonstrate how they will use the money.

Discussion ensued.

b. Major Events Task Force Update

Vice-Chairperson Wallace reported the taskforce discussed combining some of the critical items on the master calendars from the surrounding cities to determine how these items will impact each other. The big push is to really think about how to showcase Carson and how having a website to serve as a platform for information.

Economic Development Liaison LaToya Butler reported CIVITAS gave a presentation to the task force on creating a Tourism Business Improvement District.

Commissioner Apodaca reported the City of Torrance has a Tourism Improvement District named Discover Torrance. CIVITAS is working on a plan to present to the taskforce at a later meeting.

Chairperson Aldridge suggested the tying a “Shop Carson” campaign in with the 55th Anniversary of the City.

VIII. PUBLIC ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR MATTERS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA

Carson Chamber President Barry Waite reported the State of the District will be held on Friday, May 6, 2022 at the Doubletree Hotel from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The AXP Internship program will begin soon. High school students will be paired with businesses as well as the Chamber.

Vice-Chairperson Wallace shared the students voted on a referendum on an 83,000 sq. ft. health wellness, and recreation center facility.

IX. COMMISSION MEMBERS ORAL COMMUNICATIONS / ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None

X. STAFF ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chairperson Wallace moved to adjourn to the June 2, 2022 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Embry and unanimously carried.

Chairperson

Secretary