

Economic Development Commission Minutes
City Council Chambers Northside of City Hall
360 Rio Communities Blvd.
July 8, 2020

This meeting was streamed on Facebook Live
<https://www.facebook.com/riocommunities>

Call to Order

- Chairman Kuan Tikkun called to order the Economic Development Commission meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Chairman Kuan Tikkun led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

- Present- Chairman Kuan Tikkun, Vice Chairman Loedi Silva, Secretary Fran Rossberg and Tom Zanolli
- Absent- Frank Logan
- Present- Deputy Clerk Amy Lopez

Approval of Agenda

- Fran Rossberg made the motion to approve the agenda for July 8, 2020. The motion was second by Loedi Silva to approve the agenda for July 8, 2020. Vote: Chairman Kuan Tikkun - yes; Vice Chairman Loedi Silva - yes; Secretary Fran Rossberg; Tom Zanolli - yes. With a 4-0 vote the agenda for the Economic Development meeting was approved.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 24, 2020

- Fran Rossberg made the motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from June 24, 2020. The motion was second by Loedi Silva. Vote: Chairman Kuan Tikkun - yes; Vice Chairman Loedi Silva - yes; Secretary Fran Rossberg; Tom Zanolli - yes. With a 4-0 vote the Meeting Minutes from June 24, 2020 for the Economic Development meeting was approved.

General Commission Discussion

- Kuan Tikkun began a discussion about the Opportunity Zone webinar.
- Kuan Tikkun said there was a grocery store that grows its own produce and that might be something Rio Communities might be interested in having in the city limits and began a discussion.
- Kuan Tikkun said LEDA is only interested in manufacturing, but the opportunity zone in our City would be retail rather than industrial because of the way it is zoned and began a discussion.
- Tom Zanolli asked if there was any interest in a grocery store here that would not want to be competing with another store with a vendor selling special vegetables and began a discussion.
- Kuan Tikkun said a grocery store and pharmacy are retailers that we have want in the City, but they have been illusive here.
- Loedi Silva mentioned that once Sina Medical Center is established, they are wanting to have a small pharmacy and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva explained funding for Opportunity Zones and the time restrictions.
- Kuan Tikkun asked if the Opportunity Zone is a topic to speak to Council about.
- Fran Rossberg said we would need to have a plan of what we want to do and how before we went to Council and began a discussion.
- Kuan Tikkun said there is an organizational infrastructure problem within the City that is preventing the use of the Opportunity Zone and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva said it is not too late for the Opportunity Zone, but we need to push forward quickly to find someone to take advantage of it and began a discussion.
- Tom Zanolli said one of the requirements for hiring a new City Manager should be to work directly with EDC and began a discussion.

- Loedi Silva said social media has been set up and we have posted a few things and are working to direct everything to Frank Logan's email, and she will work with Frank to prevent emails from falling through the cracks and began a discussion.

Public Comment

- There were no public comments.

Vision, Review, and Brainstorm

- Kuan Tikkun said she looked up a past goal for economic development: "Diversify the local economy, develop an economic plan that established an environment that is conducive and responsive to diverse and sustainable businesses that provide a full range of goods and services and gainful employment opportunities." She then asked what you would like to see us do.
- Tom Zanotti said he thinks the City has a lot to do and see but thinks the City is mainly a retirement community.
- Kuan Tikkun asked if we want to be labeled as a retirement community.
- Tom Zanotti said it doesn't make it just a retirement community because the number of retirees, but also for younger people, but there are things we need accomplish before we tout them.
- Kuan Tikkun clarifies that he wants to stress affordability, recreation and a healthy environment and began a discussion.
- Fran Rossberg said for branding she came up with "Rio Communities is living the good life destination" and continued to explain we have a lot to offer, market ready property, vacant land, a need for more housing that would attract businesses, low taxes, low rates
- Tom Zanotti said there is a tipping point between population and what the population can support, there is a point at which economic development increases when residents increase, and we might look at in development is having more of a senior living capacity and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva said it is the live work community issue, people don't want to commute to jobs, services and activities, so people live in Albuquerque, so we need to make Rio Communities a city where there are good paying jobs, services available and activities and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva said we need to find the direction we need to go in, we can be a retirement community but do need to consider the younger generation and what they will need, we will need to find that happy medium to accommodate both. The discussion continued.
- Kuan Tikkun said she sees the struggle is where are at and what our resources are and began a discussion.

Welcoming New Businesses

- Kuan Tikkun said there are seven new businesses we need to decide how to welcome into the community.
- Fran Rossberg said we were able previously to put ads in the paper for grand openings, but that might not have been the best way to promote the business.
- Loedi Silva said that we could use social media, and put a list of new businesses every quarter, she would like to present to Council an optional questionnaire when they apply for their business license to obtain further information on the business to help us promote them and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva said a phone call from someone welcoming them, but a questionnaire would give us a head start.
- Fran Rossberg said we need to be checking on our businesses often and asking them if there is anything we can do.
- Loedi Silva said we need someone to pull resources, such as loan information, and be able to tell them where they could find it on the website and began a discussion.
- Tom Zanotti said the general population does not have any inclination of what is going on, we are not a dying community, getting information out is important.
- Fran Rossberg said that maybe EDC needs to have a small blurb in the quarterly newsletter and began a discussion.
- Kuan Tikkun began a discussion on having a real estate showcase.
- Kuan Tikkun asked if there is anything that can be done to welcome the Sina Medical center on July 27, 2020.

- Kuan Tikkun said we need to ask Council if, when we get the electrical sign, we can feature businesses and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva said one of the questions we need to ask Council what we can do to help local businesses legally and began a discussion.
- Kuan Tikkun said we will need to consider questions for the questionnaire and began a discussion.

Residential Development

- Loedi Silva said Homebuilders Association of New Mexico projects two to three years out for their development, we need to get back in touch with them and present to them what we have to offer them, we have infrastructure capabilities and need to know where utilities are, and whoever the point person is for development needs to have that knowledge pulled together. She continued to say there are two new homes being built, but to have a developer come in and build, we need to go present ourselves to the Homebuilders Association of New Mexico.
- A discussion began about EDC working more closely with the City Manager.
- Kuan Tikkun said maybe we can get a map of the location of utilities for Planning and Zoning.
- A discussion began about following up with development inquiries.
- Tom Zanotti said the City really needs to have paths and parks to attract people and for our residents, people are really looking for those things when they are looking to stay here or looking for a new place and began a discussion.
- Loedi Silva said the City needs to show outward improvement to show we are not stagnant.

EDC History

- Kuan Tikkun said she is going over the history of EDC: We have developed a LEDA goal for infrastructure; created two websites and are now promoting through social media; we have created an independent non-profit; have been asked to consider having a welcome tourist center.
- A discussion began about a welcome/visitors center.
- Kuan Tikkun continued with EDC accomplishments: Residential and Commercial brochures and we have work on the zip code without cooperation.
- Tom Zanotti began a discussion about the zip code.
- Kuan Tikkun said we have also accomplished working with UNM and other agencies to improve education, attendance, graduation rates, and awareness among high schoolers about jobs and education after college.

Questions for City Council Joint Meeting

- Kuan Tikkun gave a list of topics to speak to Council about: Working together with the City Manager; recreation; questionnaire for businesses; use of the new electronic sign; information and map on water and sewer lines to be more knowledgeable about what development is possible cooperation between City Council and P&Z.
- Loedi Silva said she would like an update on the Industrial Park annexation.
- Kuan Tikkun would like contact information with the Industrial Park if we are allowed to contact them.
- Tom Zanotti said we need to discuss with Council that the public needs something visible as an improvement and began a discussion.

Adjourn

- Tom Zanotti moved to adjourn. Fran Rossberg second the motion and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m. with a 4-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy L. Lopez, Deputy Clerk

Date: _____

Approved

Kuan Tikkun, Chairman

Loedi Silva, Vice Chairman

Fran Rossberg, Secretary

Frank Logan

Tom Zanotti