

Economic Development Commission Minutes
City Council Chambers Northside of City Hall
360 Rio Communities Blvd.
April 14, 2021

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 10:05 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Vice-chair Loedi Silva led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

- Present- Chairman Kuan Tikkun, Vice-chair Loedi Silva, Secretary Fran Rossberg, Frank Logan
- Absent: Tom Zanotti
- Present- City Manager Dr. Martin Moore and Deputy Clerk Amy Lopez

Approval of Agenda for April 14, 2021

- Secretary Fran Rossberg made the motion to approve the agenda for April 14, 2021. The motion was second by Mr. Frank Logan. Secretary Fran Rossberg. Vote: Chairman Kuan Tikkun – yes; Vice Chair Loedi Silva- yes; Secretary Fran Rossberg- yes; Frank Logan – yes; Tom Zanotti – yes. With a 4-0 vote the agenda for the Economic Development meeting was approved as written.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 24, 2021

- Secretary Fran Rossberg Logan made the motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for March 24, 2021. The motion was second by Mr. Frank Logan. Vote: Chairman Kuan Tikkun – yes; Vice-chair Loedi Silva- yes; Secretary Fran Rossberg- yes; Frank Logan – yes; Tom Zanotti – yes. With a 4-0 vote the Meeting Minutes from the March 24, 2021 Economic Development meeting was approved.

General Commission Discussion

- Chairman Tikkun began a discussion about broadband internet within the City-limits.
- Chair Tikkun asked what the commission should do with the broadband information gathered.
- Mr. Logan said that we don't have to be that specific and can just add general information to the map and continued the discussion.
- Chair Tikkun said there are different markets for the internet: commercial, residential and developers and asked if we use the information Henry Rau's report reflected.
- Secretary Rossberg said they are almost the same as Mr. Rau's but has the current speed data and continued the discussion.
- Commission decided to create one map showing all companies.
- Dr. Martin Moore said that he would help obtain the map.
- Vice-chair Silva said she has met twice with the incubator and we are proposing the Belen Chamber of Commercial to funnel grants and funding through since they are set up for that already and began a discussion.

Public Comment

- Arnold Apodaca said fix our streets, down my street are big potholes, a few people have had to replace their tires.
- Narene Baca said going to raise taxes again and get nothing in return.
- Mr. Logan said those questions are not really directed at us.
- Deputy Clerk Lopez responded to the comments online, directing them to call City Hall with questions.

S.W.O.T. Review Rau/Winters

- Mr. Logan said if we take the 20 most important pages, we can use that as the concept of the report and update it and continued the discussion.
- Secretary Rossberg said we would be able to put the presentation on the website and began a discussion.
- Secretary Rossberg said the sign will be a great tool for visibility and began a discussion.
- Vice-chair Silva said we really need community interaction and began a discussion.
- Secretary Rossberg said we would be able to put the presentation on the website and began a discussion.
- Vice-chair Silva began a discussion on how to better interact and have better involvement with residents and businesses.
- Vice-chair Silva said because the City does not have a relationship with the community, it is hard to get people involved and it is hard to come up with things to post on social media, and we really need activities to draw the City together,
- Manager Dr. Moore said it is difficult because we do not have a chamber of commerce and they really attract input and involvement from the community.
- Vice-chair Silva said she has put out little feelers to see how the community would respond, and the more I put it out there, the more the community was responding, and we need to use more than just the City website to make our presence known. The discussion continued.
- Vice-chair Silva asked Secretary Rossberg to do a write up about the businesses around the City and began a discussion.
- Vice-chair Silva said she would like to see the word old removed out of the report. She then asked if someone might want to come in if Oasis Café closes.
- Manager Dr. Moore said Pizza Nine is looking for a location.
- Vice-chair Silva said some of the feedback she received said businesses are worried about coming to a retirement community with people on fixed incomes because they will not be able to charge enough or be able to raise prices when they need to and maybe we need to consider that as a weakness.
- Mr. Logan said he does not believe that is a problem, the people on a fixed income are going other places, like Pete's in Belen, which is not cheap, to spend their money. He then explained getting people to work here is the biggest problem, you can make money with a restaurant, but people don't want to work. The discussion continued.
- Vice-chair Silva said an educated work force might be an issue in getting larger industry, and we need to get training programs in place and began a discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said there is supposedly a training center due to be opened in Los Lunas this year and began a discussion.
- Chair Tikkun asked how the S.W.O.T. can be used and began a discussion.
- The Commission began a discussion regarding the Sina Medical Center
- Chairman Tikkun said we need to set goals for EDC based on this report.
- Manager Dr. Moore said there is a list about Rio Communities that lists us at a 55% and a lot of the weaknesses on that list are no longer true, and he would like to see that list turned around. He then explained we need to work on getting the word out.
- Chairman Tikkun said EDC has worked on a lot of projects that are more behind the scenes, and the poor first impression is really from a person that drives through the City and that comes from the buildings that are not usable or in use, and that is her impression on why we got such a low score there. She then explained that Rau's presentation was put together from a resident's point of view, and Winters' presentation was based on a developer's point of view and we need both, so we need to address potential business and residents.
- A discussion began regarding the importance of having a park in Rio Communities.
- Chairman Tikkun said EDC has been trying to get beautification of the roadways and NMDOT has not been willing to work with us in the past and began a discussion.

Business Questionnaires

- Secretary Rossberg said there have been no more questionnaires that have come in since the last discussion.

Branding

- Chairman Tikkun asked Manager Dr. Moore what is happening with branding and the logo.
- Manager Dr. Moore explained what a brand is, that it can be simple, like the Hub City, and we will have to decide how we want to go. He then said he could reach out to Los Lunas.
- Vice-chair Silva said she has been trying to get a meeting between Belen and Los Lunas, to speak about our needs and community organization as County wide economic development, but so far, she has not been able to arrange anything yet and began a discussion.
- Manager Dr. Moore said that you could reach out to Los Lunas for ideas or someone that would be willing to come in and give us some suggestions as a resource to help get you where you want to be with the brand and began a discussion.
- Chairman Tikkun asked what Council's preference would be, would they want to have someone come in and talk to them about it.
- Vice-chair Silva said she thought branding was kicked back to Council and out of our hands at the moment and began a discussion.
- Chairman Tikkun asked for clarification on who was responsible for branding, and if Council will have someone present on branding at the joint meeting.
- Manager Dr. Moore said that he can discuss that with Council.
- Chairman Tikkun said she would like to have EDCs website on the Masthead on the newsletter and the website to be discussed at the joint meeting on April 28th.

Adjourn

- Mr. Logan moved to adjourn. Vice-Chair second the motion and the meeting adjourned at 11:40 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