

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

February 22, 2018 - 3:00pm

Commissioners:

Chair: Peter Pelham; Vice Chair: David Winton
John Williams; Coy Smith; Rodrigo Silveira

Ex-Officio Members: Timothy Howard and Sylvia Barry

A. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Pelham called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM

Commissioners Present

Peter Pelham, Chair, Coy Smith, John Williams, David Winton, Timothy Howard (Ex-Officio), Sylvia Barry (Ex-Officio).

Commissioners Absent

Rodrigo Silveira

Staff

Jessica Deakyne, Peggy Flynn, Maggie Rufo

Public

Bruce Balfour, Leslie Balfour, Councilmember Drew, Councilmember Eklund, Hutch Turner, Don Cliver

B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA

MOTION TO APPROVE FINAL AGENDA

M/S/C SMITH/WILLIAMS AYES: 4 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1

C. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 25, 2018

MOTION TO APPROVE MEETING MINUTES (SUMMERIZE ITEMS ONLY ITEM E)

M/S/C PELHAM/WILLIAMS AYES: 4 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 1

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS - NONE

E. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Economic Development Rebranding – Claire Knoles, Kiosk Agency

Overview of new economic development microsite and rationale for design and content. Chosenovato.com and #choosenovato. Integrates Loopnet to help businesses find space. Suggestion to add info on investors and loans. We will compare traffic stats from old page to this new site's stats. Marketing materials have also been created to match the site.

2. Marin Economic Forum Update – Robin Sternberg, CEO & Rob Eyler, Chief Economist, Marin Economic Forum

Robin introduced herself and the mission of the forum.

Rob provided an overview of the current American economy and spoke about Novato. Data seems to show there be will no recession before 2020 (source: Phila. Federal Reserve Branch). Eyler also noted that California will not recess before the rest of the country.

Novato Opportunities and Challenges:

- Retail spaces – Eyler expressed uncertainty about the future of retail, noting the need to inventory & for a strategic plan.
- Housing – location, amount and mix
- Biotech – Can there be an expansion? Novato could be the hub in Marin County. Buck could serve as a catalyst to draw researchers to this area.
- Tourism/Hospitality – Eyler predicts opportunities and long-term challenges given the effects of fires region-wide.
- Supply chain – services & logistics will also be affected by the Northbay fires.
- Challenges:
 - Politics of growth
 - Demography of Novato: an aging population (median age 46.5 – oldest in CA for community size)
 - Location: regional competition

3. Marin Small Business Development Center Update – Miriam Karell, Marin SBDC
City of Novato is a sponsor of the organization which provides free one-on-one business advising for small business owners. Increased connection 26% last year to Novato clients, including 874 hours of direct service with Novato clients. 41% of clients are existing business and 59% are new clients. Would like to connect more to existing businesses to help them grow.

F. Commissioner Comments
None

G. Staff Updates

- 3/3/2018: Strategic plan workshop, followed by series of council meetings.
3/17/2018: Community workshop – kick-off for historic train depot and site planning.
3/22/2018: State of the City – 8 am at City Hall Council Chambers
3/27/2018: Economic development discussion at City Council meeting to get Council’s feedback.

First Economic Development e-newsletter developing, please give staff your comments and ideas.

H. ADJOURNMENT
M/S/C WILLIAMS/WINTON **AYES: 4** **NAYS: 0** **ABSENT: 1**
Chair Pelham adjourned the meeting at 4:59 pm

Next meeting: March 22, 2018 - 3 PM