

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 12:11 p.m. by EDC Vice-Chairman Javier Urenda.

ROLL CALL: EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Bafaro; Tim Budelman; Steve Krautscheid; Mark Nakajima; Tom Raabe; Guy Storms; Howard Sullivan; Javier Urenda; Jill Verboort;

EDC MEMBERS ABSENT (EXCUSED): Kevin Emerick; Jennifer Prickett; Jonathan Yawson; Jim Langstaat

EDC MEMBERS ABSENT (UNEXCUSED): Christopher Wilmeth, Kevin Yamada

OTHERS PRESENT: Rod Fuiten; Bruce McVean; Patrick Newton; Kailey Summers

COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilor Rippe

STAFF PRESENT: Cassi Bergstrom, Permit Coordinator; Jeff King, Economic Development Manager; Jesse VanderZanden, City Manager

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:

None

3. APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES:

Howard Sullivan moved a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 3, 2019. Brad Bafaro seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:

None

5. BUSINESS:

A. Chamber of Commerce Update, Howard Sullivan:

Howard Sullivan provided a Chamber of Commerce update: FGHS held a Veteran's Day assembly that was very respectful and impressive. A Mercantile opened downtown as well as The Lazy Eye opening on Pacific Ave. Bella Donna's will be open soon. Junior Achievement is still in need of volunteer instructors. Jill Verboort explained her previous positive experience teaching the class. Planning update on the holiday parade for December 7th is coming along. Jeff King provided a handout with winter/holiday activities called "Cool Yule".

B. Council Update, Councilor Rippe:

Councilor Rippe updated the EDC on a few items. The Urban Renewal Agency expanded its borders by a very small percentage to the North. There are applications for vacancies on various Boards and Commissions. If you know of anyone interested, please encourage them to apply.

C. New Bylaw Template: Prep for December EDC review and vote, Jeff King:

Jeff King updated on the proposed Bylaw Template that was given to the EDC members. This will be filled out and given to City Council for review. All Boards and Commissions will follow this current template. This will help to aid in consistency throughout all Boards and Commissions. Councilor Rippe added that the purpose for each Board or Commission has been clarified with this new template.

D. Downtown Main Street Program Introduction, Jeff King:

Jeff King discussed opportunities to build capacity and increase economic viability and prosperity in the downtown. A lot of positive progress has been made but long-term success is fragile. One tool to consider supporting the advance of downtown is the Main Street program. This is a program that provides assistance, training, and technical services to communities who want to strengthen, preserve and revitalize their historic downtown commercial districts. The City will be participating in the “Exploring” category. With help from the Chamber of Commerce, the City Council, EDC and various volunteers will determine if the program is viable and if it will aid in the continued improvements to our downtown district through this program. Under the exploring category the downtown business and organizations with the City as a partner will self-determine if they want to proceed to a full Main Street program. While there is a Main Street template, the effort is built from the ground up and can be adapted to meet Forest Groves’ specific. Another key point Mr. King made is that the City is not leading this effort but rather is a partner and can help as a facilitator.

E. Downtown business Panel: Adelante Mujeres, Daniella’s on Main, Rod Fuiten:

Patrick Newton presented on his experience with owning a business and property in the downtown area of Forest Grove. He and his wife both enjoy living here and have been happy with the current improvements. He feels it’s very important to preserve the downtown area and ensure that main floor levels be strictly left for retail space, as there are not many left. Mr. VanderZanden added the importance of completing the parking study and making improvements in that direction to allow for more foot traffic for visitors coming to our town. He also mentioned the store front improvement grant has been a huge catalyst for improving the downtown.

Rod Fuiten spoke on the current tenants and the positive outlook he has had with renting space. The economy is good and continues to thrive in this area. He agrees with Patrick Newton on the importance of preserving the downtown area with more retail spaces. Jeff inquired if he had noticed any trends of why he has had such success in finding suitable tenants. Rod mentioned the importance of keeping rent affordable and competitive and to be where the local market is.

Kailey Summers spoke on the downtown area and the farmer's market as well as Adelante Mujeres. She mentioned the resistance she originally encountered with downtown businesses to the farmer's market has shifted completely. There is a renewed positive feeling and interest with downtown businesses and the farmer's market. She continued with the importance of businesses collaborating together to build a stronger downtown. She added the importance of Adelante Mujeres investing in the local area from a rural and urban divide stand point. Adelante Mujeres continues to help start-up businesses with education and services to get them going. Mr. VanderZanden asked about the type and number of vendors they are seeing. Kailey responded they currently have 65 vendors with a trend of more vendors committing to longer season of time. They also had a wait list during a few of the sessions, which is a good indicator of the farmer's markets success.

6. STAFF AND BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:

Javier Urenda announced that the next meeting of the EDC will be on Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 12:00 p.m. in the Alice Inkley Room at McMenamins Grand Lodge.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Javier Urenda adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m. by consensus.

Respectfully submitted by:
Shannon Reynolds
Administrative Specialist
City of Forest Grove

Approved by the Forest Grove EDC:

Date: _____