

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by EDC Chairman Kevin Emerick.

ROLL CALL: EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Bafaro; Tim Budelman; Jill Craig; Kevin Emerick; Paul Hansen-alternate for Jennifer Prickett; Steve Krautscheid; Rick Lafave; Jaunita Lint; Mark Nakajima; Tom Raabe; Guy Storms; Javier Urenda, Jessica Harrington-Alternate for Jonthan Yawson;

EDC MEMBERS ABSENT (EXCUSED): Rob Langford; Jim Langstraat; Alfredo Moreno; Jonathan Yawson

OTHERS PRESENT: Jared Parker; Gabriel Salamenca; Dick Stinson; Barbee Williams

COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilor Timothy Rippe

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff King, Economic Development Manager; Shannon Reynolds, Admin Specialist

2. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:

None

3. APPROVAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES:

The May minutes approval will be conducted at the July EDC Meeting.

4. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:

Discussion on drafting a letter of support for the Council Creek Project.

5. BUSINESS:

A. Chamber of Commerce Update, Juanita Lint:

Juanita Lint provided a Chamber of Commerce update. The "Farm to Table" dinner has been cancelled due to lack of resources (staffing) for restaurants to prepare for this event. Jaunita has since focused on helping businesses locate more resources of support. Tourism banners have been placed throughout Forest Grove. "Avocado Toast" has been initiated. This is a fun way to highlight various businesses and their unique products. Things you may not know about them will be published each week. Adelante Mujeres will be partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to work on the BRC starting July 1st. Responsibilities will be split going forward thru the end of the year. All Junior Achievement funds that were committed have been paid. The Chamber will make up the difference for funds still needed. They will help pay for a match to enable Junior Achievement Programs to taught in Forest Grove schools.

B. City Council Update, Councilor Rippe:

Councilor Rippe provided a City Council update to the EDC. Council continues to work on the new budget for 2021-2022. The American Rescue Plan funds are being addressed. The City will be receiving \$5.2 million in federal funds that will need to be dispersed. The government has specific guidelines on how these funds can be used. A

sub-committee has been formed to address this issue specifically. A presentation for this committee's recommendations will be given on June 15th. Input from the EDC would be helpful in regards to specific business needs. Council Creek Regional Trail working group is applying for a federal grant to provide funds for trail construction. This group is looking for letters of support for this grant effort. Councilor Rippe asked the EDC to draft a "letter of support". Jill Craig made a motion to allow Jeff King to draft a letter from the EDC in support of the Council Creek Trail, Tim Budelman seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Jeff will obtain an approval signature from Kevin Emerick upon completion.

C. Employee Recruitment & Unemployment Program Update – Barbee Williams, Oregon Employment Department:

Barbee Williams from the Oregon Employment Department provided an update to the EDC. June 19th is the deadline for the first group of employment benefit applicants to complete their registration with the Employment Department. They must prove that they have been able, active and available or they will lose benefits. July 25th is the deadline for job seekers to have reported their job searches. A drive thru employer event is being set up for any employers seeking new hires. Participants can drive thru and speak directly to hiring employer's without getting out of their car. Please contact Barbee if there is interest from any businesses in Forest Grove to hold or participate in this event. The OJT (On the Job Training) Program is also coming soon. This is a federally funded program that helps pay wages for the first six months of an employee's training. Barbee will send Jeff the information as soon as it is available.

Jared Parker discussed an existing federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Jared provided information on how employers can benefit from the use of this tax credit. He is available to help anyone interested in this program.

Gabriel Salamenca works with Work Source Oregon in the construction sector. His area also covers Forest Grove. Retention, minorities in the work place and youth employment are the three main points he is working on in the construction industry. Gabe mentioned the Jobs Plus program that is similar to the OJT Program. He also mentioned some work barriers he has noticed, such as transportation to work and child care. Public transportation really needs to meet the needs of the employer. Gabriel discussed the Second Chance Employer Program as well as the Bonding Program that helps with the first six months of employment for persons with background issues.

D. Board Member Round Robin; All:

Jeff King asked for member discussion regarding critical issues with their own business and how those needs can be met. Kevin mentioned the ability to find quality employees right now as very difficult. Trade shows have been helpful in the past and they have not been able to hold those for some time. Mark Nakajima mentioned the same. He would like to see government promote businesses now rather than require more regulations. Paul Hansen of McMenamin's mentioned staff struggles as well as capacity issues while

regulations are in place. Jill Craig mentioned the need to re-evaluate a new business plan as things will most likely not return to the way they were. Covid-19 has changed things for the long term. Keeping business going at a 25% capacity while maintaining staff is very difficult. Rick Lafave is trying to bring cost down as inflation affects product material prices. He continues to diversify his business in states that remain open and bring work back to Forest Grove. He is in the planning stages of making a few changes to his restaurant. Staffing issues are huge. Difficulty finding people who want to work. Steve Krautscheid mentioned staffing and childcare issues for those in the healthcare field. Javier Urenda spoke on issues with returning to work from a work from home Covid-19 environment.

E. ARPA Update; Jeff King:

Jeff opened discussions on how to implement a program to help small businesses with the federal funds coming soon. Possible low interest loan program over a long term with some forgiveness may be an option for businesses lacking the capital to return to full pre-pandemic capacity. A second program concept was discussed on how to retain and preserve front line employees of small independent that are at-risk or may be poached by larger corporations. Childcare subsidy, staff incentive pay, reward employees for working through the pandemic and a hiring/sign-on bonus are possible program options.

6. STAFF AND BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS:

None

7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:

Chairman Kevin Emerick, announced that the next meeting of the EDC will be on Thursday, July 8th at 10:00 a.m. (virtual).

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Kevin Emerick adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m. by consensus.

Respectfully submitted by:

Shannon Reynolds

Administrative Specialist

City of Forest Grove

Approved by the Forest Grove EDC:

Date: 7/8/21