

BLUE LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

**Tuesday, May 14, 2023, at
Skinner Store – 111 Greenwood Road**

Unless Otherwise Noted, All items on the Agenda are subject to Action.

1. **Establish a Quorum of the Commission** at 4:30 pm.

Commissioners Present: Roxanne Rothery, Cindy Trobitz-Thomas, and Darcey Lima.

Commissioners Absent: Jake Hussin and Kelli Costa

Staff Present: City Manager Mandy Mager

Others Present: Councilmember Elizabeth Mackay, Julianna Christie, Justin Noyb, Mayor Jones, Councilmember Elise Scafani and Kent Sawatzky

2. **Motion to Approve Agenda**

Motion: Trobitz-Thomas

Second: Lima

Passed: Unanimously

Public Comment: No public comments.

3. **Public Input**

Kent Sawatzky stated there is a perception business and the Blue Lake Rancheria have a challenging time when dealing the City.

Julianna Christie suggested the Commission send out a survey to the residents of Blue Lake to gather input on what items residents would like to purchase items not available in town, including internet purchases. This information would assist targeting potential businesses to open in Blue Lake.

4. **City of Blue Lake Community Vision Update** ~ City Manager Mager presented a draft update with input from Committees, Boards and Commissions. Chair Rothery brought up the issue of securing homeowners/business insurance. It is imperative Blue Lake obtain a good fire rating. Challenges and opportunities were discussed.

The proposed updates and revisions were presented. It was suggested to add a General Store/ Mercantile where people could purchase/rent recreation items. Also, clinics would provide services to residents (dental, vision, veterinary, etc.). Currently the development opportunities are on Taylor Way. There appears to be a shortage of building owners in the downtown area interested upgrading for new tenants.

Alternative Art Galleries in vacant buildings were discussed. The issue once again is insurance which is cost prohibitive, due to change of use and required upgrades (Kent Sawatzky).

Blue Lake is in an excellent position to promote arts, recreation and entertainment activities with river, birding, dirt biking, Plein Air painting competitions, The Dog House, Jewell Distillery, Del'Arte, Mad River Brewery, Blue Heron, the Logger, etc.) Important to include local businesses to promote and participate in local events.

Live/work units are proposed in the developments on Taylor Way.

Public Comment:

Kent Swatsky commented on the need to have a “carrot vs. a stick” approach when working with local property owners and potential new investors. As a property owner, it is exceedingly difficult to invest in your building without a potential user. Kent is open to having the City promoting his property.

Julianna Christie on the need to use the 2014 General Plan instead of the 1997 Visioning Plan.

Elise Scafani suggested setting up an Ad Hoc Committee to meet with local businesses to find out what they need, what things are working, or not.

5. **Blue Lake Branding & Signage Project -Update and Discussion** ~ City Manager Mager provided a status update. Noah, Visual Concepts, has provided some concepts for Branding and Signage which will be provided to the Commission at the next meeting.

Public Comment:

Kent Sawatzky would like the City to post materials on the internet for people to review prior to meetings. Looking forward to seeing the design concepts.

6. **City of Blue Lake Project Updates** ~ City Manager Mager provided the following updates.

- a. Town Square Construction Project ~ Construction has begun. Sequoia Construction was the successful bidder. North Coast Lumber is donating lumber for the shade trellis. City Manager Mager passed out a copy of the site plan.
- b. Sports Complex Development Concept ~ a concept for future consideration as part of the Baduwa’t Community Project. The City was approached by a non-profit expressing the real need in Humboldt County for indoor/outdoor sports training complex. There is a shortage of places to hold sporting events, and practice space. This type of project could fit into Blue Lake’s recreation destination branding.
- c. Container Village Development Concept ~ The City has entered into a 6 month Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the owner ~~B&B~~ **Blue Lake Garbage** (Eisner).
- d. Bike Park Development ~ The Bike Park project is moving forward. Almost ready to take the tarps off the dirt piles. Meeting with partners on fundraising and workdays.
- e. Baduwa’t Community ~ The Danco project is moving ahead and will be going to the Planning Commission for review and consideration soon. Garrett McSorley is the new architect on the project.
- f. Northern Side of Taylor Way Masterplan and Parcel Subdivision Moving forward. Storyland is reviewing proposed/potential developments and developing a Masterplan. Once complete, SHN surveyors will begin working on the subdivision. A draft of the Masterplan was presented to the Commission.
- g. Powers Creek Restoration Project Moving forward. Project extension from the funding agencies, to address the flooding issues, has been approved by EDA. Flooding was not included in the prior design. The additional planning, design, engineering and restoration will expand the project footprint will provide for flood mitigation.

Public Comment:

Kent Sawatsky provided comments on the following:

The Town Square bathroom
The Sports Complex does not see it coming here.
County, State and federal funds are drying up.
Need to secure the power plant from break-ins

7. **Chamber of Commerce Report** ~ Chamber Secretary Justin Noyb reported on the Chamber activities. Justin shared information on the roundabout chamber sign update. The Chamber is having conversations with the City on reaching out to business. Annie and Mary Day is July 14th. Already have vendors. Looking at items to merchandise. The Grand Marshalls will be Marvin Samuels and Laurie Sexton.

Public Comment: No public comments.

8. **City Manager and Staff Report**

- a. Parks and Recreation Update ~ focusing on Summer Programs.

Public Comment:

Kent Sawatsky suggested the having Farmer's Market less often and with other Blue Lake events.

9. **Announcements**

- Next Regular Meeting is June 11th, 2024 (2nd Tuesday 4:30 PM Skinner Store).
- The Wha-Nike Plant Sale is June 8th in the Museum parking lot.
- August 17th is the City Wide Yard Sale.

10. **Future Agenda Items**

- Chamber of Commerce Report
- Event Calendar
- Business Outreach and Economic Development Education
- Meeting start time adjustment discussion.
- City Manager and Staff Report, Project List Updates and Discussion
- Blue Lake Community Visioning and Strategic Plan Discussion

12. **Motion to Adjourn at 6:33 PM**

Motion: Lima

Second: Trobitz-Thomas

Passed: Unanimously