

BLUE LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

**Tuesday, August 13, 2024, 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 4:34 pm.

Commissioners Present: Roxanne Rothery, Cindy Trobitz-Thomas, Darcey Lima and Kelli Costa,
Commissioners Absent: Jake Hussin

Staff Present: City Manager Mandy Mager, Parks and Recreation Director Emily Wood

Others Present: Mayor Adelene Jones, Kent Sawatsky, Julianna Christie, Jennifer Kramer, and Justin Noyb

2. **Motion to Approve Agenda**

Motion: Costa

Second: Trobitz-Thomas

Passed: Unanimously

Public Comment: No public comments.

3. **Public Input**

Kent Sawatsky suggested the Commission review the last Council Meeting regarding business issues, in particular funds owed to the Sheriff's department. The FY 2023/24 invoice has not been totally paid. With lack of payment to the County's Sheriff's Office, there is a perception there is no law enforcement in Blue Lake.

Emily Wood advised the Commission she has stepped down as Chamber President, Justin Noyd is the new President, Emily is now the Vice-President.

Mayor Adelene Jones clarified why she is in attendance. The Commission's Council liaison Elizabeth Mackay has resigned from the Council and Mayor Jones is filling that role.

Julianna Christie suggested generating a survey to identify what people want to purchase in Blue Lake, where is the sales tax potential. What purchases are seasonal? Also, businesses are experiencing more theft. Julianna referred to Kents Public Comment above.

4. **Approve the Minutes from the Previous Commission Meetings**

Motion: Lima

Second: Costa

Passed: Unanimously

Public Comment:

Kent Sawatsky complimented the Secretary for accurate and thorough minutes.

5. **Retail Cannabis Ordinance** ~ City Manager Mager reported the City Council is discussing lifting the cannabis restriction and allowing limited retail cannabis permits within the City. The City Council is wanting to remove barriers.

The ED Ad Hoc Committee (Lima & Rothery) reported there are 30 dispensaries in Humboldt County promoting local cannabis. They have visited several. Still waiting to hear back from the Rio Del City Manager.

Public Comments:

Kent Sawatsky attended a Humboldt County Board of Supervisors meeting. The State and Federal governments are going to allow hemp to be grown countywide. At this point, the County does not have regulations in place to allow growing hemp.

Julianna Christie stated that Kent's comments are valued. New State and Federal legislation will have a major impact on the industry. Suggested reviewing Eureka's ordinance and putting a cap on the number of cannabis retail outlets in Blue Lake.

Jean Lynch stated there is a cross contamination issue when growing cannabis and hemp in the same vicinity.

6. **Vacant Commercial Property Ordinance** ~ City Manager Mager provided an update on the City of Eureka's Vacant Community Property Ordinance. Eureka is still reviewing and will be revising the draft ordinance to include a strong definition of what constitutes a vacancy. Once completed, Blue Lake will review and determine if this is a direction to follow.

Public Comment:

Kent Sawatsky, a member of Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce Business and Political Committee, they have been reviewing the draft Eureka ordinance providing comments, concerns and suggestions to the City of Eureka. Kent also expressed concerns over the City of Blue Lake not renting facilities for fair market rate, which could be interpreted as a gift of public funds.

Jennifer Kramer stated vacant commercial buildings in Blue Lake is a huge problem. There are some landowners who refuse update/renovate their buildings for rent/lease. Take care of our homes before forcing others.

Julianna Christie commented on Eureka's Ordinance. The Planning Commission might be the appropriate oversight Commission. Eureka City Council discussed incentives to encourage property owners to upgrade and actively rent/lease their property.

Jean Lynch stated the City of Blue Lake already has a nuisance abatement process. This is my property, why are you deciding what I need to do? This infringes on "private property rights". Also, due to the current economy people may not be able to finance improvements.

7. **Blue Lake Branding & Signage Updates** ~ City Manager Mager shared Commission suggestions from the July meeting with Noah, Visual Concept. Noah has modified the branding logo. Blue Lake will order a few signs to get a feel how they work in the community and make modifications based on input.

Public Comment:

Julianna Christie asked when did this become a project, was it discussed during the budget, why didn't the designs go to Council for consideration? Lack of public input and transparency.

Kent Sawatsky encourages more public participation. Maybe the artists submitting designs for the fire hydrant painting would have ideas.

Jennifer Kramer commented the City does an excellent job getting information out to the community. She is very happy with Mandy as the City Manager.

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

- a. Town Square Construction Project ~ Is 75% complete. Irrigation has been installed and the splash pad is operational. Blue Lake artist Patricia Sennott will be painting the first art panel on the bathroom structure.
- b. Sports Complex Development Concept ~ The non-profit interested in developing an indoor/outdoor sports complex in Blue Lake is continuing to meet with City Staff and prospective partners. destination branding. The identified site is the B&B property. Planning includes a tennis club and indoor/outdoor pickle ball courts, juice bar, etc.
- c. Container Village Development Concept ~ The City has entered into a 6 month Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the owners of B&B (Eisner). The appraised cost could be adjusted to cover the clean-up costs.
- d. Bike Park Development ~ Is in full swing. There is a lot of community involvement to develop a state of the art Bike Park destination. Fundraising is ongoing. It is being tested by young riders. North Fork Lumber is donating lumber for the fence.
- e. Baduwa't Community ~ Project Danco project site plan been revised and flows much better. Environmental review is in process. Once complete the EIR will be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The powers creek restoration is moving forward. The grant received an extension to expand the scope to include to include flooding mitigation.
- f. Northern Side of Taylor Way Masterplan and Parcel Subdivision is moving forward. The Masterplan is complete and will be brought back to the Commission of review. Storyland has looked at the proposed projects, (Container Village, Sports Complex, Baduwa't, etc.) and provided suggestions for improvements to the City and Developers.
- g. Greenwood Street Improvement Project should be complete before school opens. RAO is doing an excellent job. There a bulb outs around the power poles. Unfortunately, PGE was unable to underground. The sidewalks will be ADA compliant.

Public Comment:

Kent Sawatsky commented the Town Square does not reflect the original drawings and design gathered from public input. Critical of the light fixtures.

- 9. **Chamber of Commerce Report** ~ Chamber President Justin Noyb reported on the Chamber activities. The Chamber made \$500-\$700 dollars from Annie & Mary Day, after everything was paid, Had several complaints regarding the Trump flag in the parade. Need to have event signage to direct people to medical, beer, maps for the vendors, etc. The overall event was well attended and positively received.

Public Comment: No public comments.

10. City Manager and Staff Report

- a. Parks and Recreation Schedule Update ~ Shutting down the Summer Camp for the season. The Barn Dance was wonderful and well attended.

Public Comment: No public comments.

City Manager Mager exited the meeting after Item 10.

11. Announcements

- Next Regular Meeting is September 10th, 2024 (2nd Tuesday 4:30 PM Skinner Store).
- Council Member Mackay has resigned from the Council. Mayor Jones stated they are seeking qualified applicants to submit an application for consideration.

12. Future Agenda Items

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

13. Motion to Adjourn at 6:21 PM

Motion: Costa

Second: Lima City Manager Mager exited the meeting after Item 10.

Passed: Unanimously