



City of Blue Lake

Economic Development Commission

Meeting Agenda

Tuesday November 12, 2024 at 4:30PM

Unless Otherwise Noted, All Items on the Agenda Are Subject to Action.

MEETING LOCATION: Skinner Store 111 Greenwood Road, Behind City Hall, Blue Lake.

Public Input can be given to the Commission by contacting the City Clerk at cityclerk@bluelake.ca.gov, or by phone at 707-668-5655 until 3:30p.m. on Tuesday November 12, 2024. Written comments may be submitted via email or by submission to the City Clerk at City Hall.

1. Establish a Quorum of the Commission
2. Motion to Approve Agenda
3. Public Input – *The Public is invited to present petitions, make announcements, or provide other information to the Commission that is relevant to the scope of authority of the City of Blue Lake that is not on the agenda. The Commission may provide up to 15 minutes for this public input session. To assure that each individual presentation is heard, the Commission may uniformly impose time limitations of 3 minutes to each individual presentation. The public will be given the opportunity to address items that are on the agenda at the time the Commission takes up each specific agenda item.*
4. Approve the Minutes from October 8, 2024, Commission Meeting- Action
5. Retail Cannabis Ordinance- Discussion/Recommendation
6. Vacant Commercial Property Assessment and Ordinance-Discussion
7. Business Outreach-Discussion
8. City of Blue Lake Project Updates-Discussion
 - a. Blue Lake Community Visioning Strategic Plan
 - b. Town Square Construction Project
 - c. Powers Creek District
9. Chamber of Commerce Report
10. City Manager and Staff Report
 - A. Parks and Recreation Event Schedule Update
11. Announcements
12. Future Agenda Items
13. Motion to Adjourn

A request for disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aid or services, may be made by a person with a disability who requires a modification or Accommodation in order to participate in the public meeting, by contacting the City Clerk at 707-668-5655, at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the meeting.

BLUE LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES

Tuesday, October 8, 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 4:37 pm.

Commissioners Present: Roxanne Rothery, Cindy Trobitz-Thomas, and Kelli Costa

Commissioners Absent: Jake Hussin and Darcey Lima

Staff Present: City Manager Mandy Mager

Others Present: Mayor Adelene Jones, Lori Ponte and Justin Noyb

2. **Motion to Approve Agenda**

Motion: Trobitz-Thomas

Second: Costa

Passed: Unanimously

Public Comment: No public comments.

3. **Public Input:** No public input.

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

Motion: Costa

Second: Trobitz-Thomas

Passed: Unanimously

Public Comment: No public comments.

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), update report is tabled until Lima is in attendance. The City of Eureka is considering a dispensary request. The Ad Hoc Committee is tracking the discussion to gather insights that may assist the Ad Hoc Committee to develop draft recommendation for EDC review and forward to the City Council for consideration.

It was suggested the Ad Hoc Committee contact the City of Weed to find out how their program is going and if there are significant staff costs to enforce.

Public Comments:

Lori Ponte originally did not want dispensaries in Blue Lake. The Community has more needs. Would facilities be located around schools? She understands the need for sales tax, but this may attract an element that would not be good in Blue Lake, especially with the focus on families (ballpark, roller rink, etc.). Plus, the cannabis market in Humboldt County is saturated.

6. **Vacant Commercial Property Assessment and Ordinance** ~ City Manager Mager provided an update on the City of Eureka's Vacant Community Property Assessment and Ordinance. Eureka revised the draft ordinance to include a strong definition of what constitutes a vacancy. A first step would be to conduct an assessment of the existing vacant buildings and work with the building owners to develop an estimate of what the cost to update/renovate would be. Explore resources to assist with upgrade costs. If fines collected, those fines could be offered back to the property owner in the form of a grant to make the improvements. Commissioners touring some of the buildings was discussed.

The vacant Calgon Power Plant is still for sale. The owners are interested in demolishing the buildings and clean up the site. City Manager Mager will be touring the site. Prospective developers are interested in mixed use. Due to unknown contamination issues, residential development causes more concerns. More environmental analysis's needs to be completed. The City may want to acquire the property and work with a qualified developer. The contamination liability needs to be satisfied prior to acquisition, a Brownfields grant is a possibility for cleanup.

Stardough's Café owner has expressed interest in leasing their building for a food service. The City has been collaborating with the owners for numerous years, offering potential types of assistance. The City has been talking with potential operators about the possibility of offering minimal preparation items (pizza, sandwiches, ice cream etc.) which may not require major kitchen upgrades.

The status of other vacant commercial buildings was discussed.

Public Comment: No public comments.

7. **Business Outreach** ~ At the Commissions last meeting, partnering with the Chamber was discussed to join forces to visit Blue Lake businesses, (ask how they are doing, anything the City can do to assist them, identify barriers to their success). During these meetings, information on available local, state and federal business programs can be shared and assistance offered. Possibly invite the SBDC to provide business training. The Chamber has started their business visitations.

Public Comment: No public comments.

8. **City of Blue Lake Project Updates**

- a. Town Square Construction Project ~ Power is being installed today. Had a soft opening for the splash pad with an ice cream social. The Old Crows are working on the shade trellis with lumber donated North Fork Lumber. Additional seating will be added.
- b. Powers Creek District ~ is progressing. Due to planning work that has been done, there has been a lot of developer interest in the Powers Creek District. The EDA Grant is completed. The Bike Park is moving forward and has had received numerous donations. The City has received a written offer for the Corp Yard property. Sjaak's is back. The City Manager reported on other pending opportunities.

Public Comment: No public comments.

9. **Chamber of Commerce Report** ~ Chamber President Justin Noyb reported on the Chambers business outreach activities above in Item 7, and invited the Commissioners to attend their meetings on the second Monday of the month, 5:30 at the Skinner Store.

Public Comment: No public comments.

10. **City Manager and Staff Report**

- a. Parks and Recreation Schedule Update ~ The Medieval Festival was held on weekend of Oct 5th and 6th. The event was very collaborative and included not only Coastal Grove Charter School, but the Blue Lake School, the Saddle Club, Archery Club, Parks and Recreation, etc. The event was well attended. Parks and Recreation staff are busy planning for the fall and holiday season events/activities.

Public Comment: No public comments.

11. **Announcements**

- Next Regular Meeting is November 12th, 2024 (2nd Tuesday 4:30 PM Skinner Store).

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
- Retail Cannabis Ordinance

13. Motion to Adjourn at 5:57 PM

Motion: Costa

Second: Trobitz-Thomas

Passed: Unanimously

BLUE LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT PATCHWORK SITUATION

While cannabis use is legal in California, Counties and Cities can decide to prohibit some or all cannabis businesses. Cannabis use is not permitted in public places like restaurants or bars, wherever it is illegal to smoke tobacco, or within 1,000 feet of a school, day care center or youth center while kids are present. All retailers must be licensed by the Department of Cannabis Control (DCC), which prevents sales to minors, ensures all products are tested and that the labelling is accurate.

Currently the state is a patchwork of jurisdictions where it is and is not permitted to establish a cannabis business. Incorporated Cities do not need to align with the rules of the County in which they are located, and County restrictions apply only to unincorporated areas. Some jurisdictions limit the number of businesses that may be licensed. As of July 2022, there were 4.5 retail licenses per 100,000 people in California. Cannabis was deemed an essential industry in California during the COVID-19 pandemic, and a state regulatory framework now exists. In 2022-23, California legal cannabis sales to consumers and patients were stable at \$4.9 billion per year. September Year-to-Date Sales in California are \$3.5 billion.

As of July 2024, the DCC website shows that 46% of Cities and Counties in California allow at least one type of cannabis business, and 42% allow retail cannabis businesses. Along the North Coast, Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, Mendocino and Lake Counties all permit retail cannabis in unincorporated areas. Humboldt County permits all types of state licensed cannabis businesses, including (retail storefronts, retail delivery, distribution, testing, manufacturing and cultivation). Of the seven municipalities in Humboldt County, Arcata, Eureka and Rio Dell allow all types of cannabis businesses, with the City of Arcata restricting retail cannabis to medical only. Blue Lake, Ferndale, Fortuna and Trinidad currently prohibit all cannabis businesses.

Eureka's ordinance was passed in 2016, just ahead of state legalization. It was updated in July 2022 to simplify the license structure, remove the cap on new cannabis businesses, and set guidelines for temporary cannabis events. The DCC lists 20 retailers in Eureka, with some duplicates and at least one that is no longer operating.

Arcata's Ordinance No. 1501, effective July 6, 2018, restricted the number of permits to 15 and prohibits cannabis only shops on the Arcata Plaza. In May 2022 the limit was lowered to 10 retail permits with no other changes. Additionally, Arcata's ordinance allows for "accessory" sales, which does not require a permit. "Accessory" use applies to any business that sells a small amount of cannabis products but is not their primary business. Currently there are 8 retailers in Arcata listed on the DCC website. McKinleyville is unincorporated with three retailers listed.

In 2019, Rio Dell put out an RFP for retail cannabis outlets, and received six applicants. City Staff recommended four of those to the City Council, for three available conditional use permits in Rio Dell's Town Center Zone. Currently there are two retailers in Rio Dell listed on the DCC website.

On December 2, 2024 the Drug Enforcement Administration will hold a hearing with respect to the proposed rescheduling of marijuana into Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act. This class of substances "*has a currently accepted medical use, has a potential for abuse less than the drugs*

or other substances in schedules I and II, and that its abuse may lead to moderate or low physical dependence or high psychological dependence.” This rulemaking process is cumbersome and slow; the scheduled hearing was postponed until after the November election, and a formal decision is unlikely before January 25, 2025.

Sources

California Department of Cannabis Control cannabis.ca.gov/cannabis-laws/where-cannabis-businesses-are-allowed/

Lostcoastoutpost.com

www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/08/29/2024-19370/schedules-of-controlled-substances-rescheduling-of-marijuana

Massive volunteer effort underway to build large skate park in Blue Lake



The paving of the Blue Lake skate park Thursday - which will likely be completed next year. PHOTOS BY SAGE ALEXANDER — TIMES-STANDARD



Volunteers spread asphalt Thursday in Blue Lake on a public skate/bmx park.

BY SAGE ALEXANDER

SALEXANDER@TIMES-STANDARD.COM

A volunteer push was underway Thursday to pave a new skate and BMX park in Blue Lake.

Funded by donations and pulled off through volunteer sweat, the park will be massive by Humboldt County standards when completed.

Paving is expected to be finished by next year — and on Thursday, people were getting asphalt on the track.

Volunteers said the most important part of the project was making a place where kids can play.

“Lots of us have kids now, none of us had this when we were growing up,” said volunteer Brent Knappek.

The project broke ground last year.

On the site of a former lumber mill on Taylor Way, the layout was masterminded by a couple of pro racers.

Former ATV/motor cross racer Dana Creech was operating an excavator, while ATV/MX racer Tavis Cain was raking the asphalt into place.

Some of the first tracks at the property were made with hand tools during the COVID-19 pandemic by kids, said City Manager Amanda Mager. This has since ballooned into a larger public park that will host tracks for multiple skill levels.

“It gives me goosebumps! As you can see, this place is like no place you’ve seen before,” said Rick Willits, a volunteer.

Thursday’s paving is essential, said Mager, to protect the tracks from the weather as the wet season looms. This batch of pavement was transported by Mercer Fraser as they were working on roads in Blue Lake the same day.

Mager estimated the park would have cost about half a million dollars if people from multiple private companies didn’t step up to donate time, volunteering their equipment and giving discounted materials for the project.

“We literally raised like \$25,000 in less than four days to pay for it,” she said, “something we wouldn’t be able to do ourselves, for sure.”

People there expected the park to be a big draw for Blue Lake, noting its proximity to the Hatchery Ridge trails. The trail system is managed by the Redwood Coast Mountain Biking Association, and many members were helping pave the track.

“This is a big project. And it’s needed, it’s something for the next generation to enjoy. And current generation” said Justin Noydb, Blue Lake resident.

Sage Alexander can be reached at 707-441-0504