

Economic Development Advisory Board

May 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes

I. Call to order

Chair Chuck Goad called to order the regular meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Board at 3:30 PM on May 4, 2021, at Memorial Hall and via conference call.

II. Roll call

The following members were present:

Chair Chuck Goad (12-0)
Vice-Chair Wayne Stephany (12-0)
Secretary Tony Royse (12-0)
Jason Curtis (12-0)
Brian Hight (4-1)
Paul Yaroslaski (8-3)
Tabitha Snodgrass (Ex-Officio)
Lisa Wilson (Ex-Officio)
April Nutt (Ex-Officio)

The following members were absent:

Lori Kelley (10-2)

The following staff were present:

Kelly Passauer, City Manager
David Cowan, Assistant City Manager
Finance Director Lacey Lies
Administrative Aide Lydia Collins

The following visitors were present:

None

III. Approval of Minutes from April 6, 2021

A motion was made by Tony Royse to approve the minutes from the April 6, 2021 meeting, which was seconded by Brian Hight. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Items Requiring Action

A. None

V. Items for Discussion

A. Update from committee studying data analytics.

Brian Hight gave the report. After digging into the livability index, the committee discovered that AARP was only one of dozens of other groups that put out information. All the information is different, no continuity. They found some of the data sets were old, by three or four years. One of the most helpful things to make Independence look attractive is to rank the top 10 best things in Independence, making certain it is the most accurate information.

Lacey Lies said on the AARP livability rating independence was 50 and when compared to other locations we weren't that far off. Some larger locations were at 60.

Chuck Goad asked what the top 10 results were.

Lacey Lies said several of the larger websites need to be looked and the Wikipedia information is incorrect and needs to be updated. With the update, links can be updated which would help Independence move higher.

Brian Hight stated that the committee would choose a date to have the information and keep on from there.

Lacey Lies stated that the best pictures of Independence should pop up when it is Googled.

Brian Hight said that not only does the City need to work on this, but also the area businesses need to work on their numbers. The committee broke it into two goals, the first, as mentioned above, and the second to hold classes or workshop to assist the local businesses in getting their information accurate and up-to-date. The committee will meet monthly and get the tasks ordered and choose the top 10.

B. Update of Incentive Programs (Neighborhood Exterior Grant Program & Central Business District Commercial Building Grant).

Lacey Lies stated that a little over \$36,000 had been issued so far, leaving a little under \$14,000.

Wayne Stephany stated that people are really excited about this.

Lacey Lies said that April Nutt had been able to help a family through an other organization so that a low income neighborhood could join in. April Nutt has coordinated a meeting with banks and businesses about the grants the City has going on and codes and regulations for building.

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C. Discussion of “New Era of Remote Workers Spawns Domestic Migration as Small Towns Offer Financial, Other Incentives” article.

Chuck Goad said that the city has been talking about this for several years, along with other cities and it has been exacerbated by Covid. Over the last year we’ve seen people leaving urban areas to get into a rural setting at a rapid rate. If the tax base can be increased through remote workers we should look into that.

Lacey Lies said the subcommittee had also discussed this. To be eligible for the incentive you would have to move to Independence and be a resident for two years, Proof of ability to work remotely, proof of income of \$50,000 or greater and must purchase a home within the City of Independence for \$100,000 or greater. The incentive: \$10,000 to select new residents, plus \$2,000 per child enrolled in public schools, free lots available if building a house, 5-year personal income tax credit for out of state relocation (Rural Opportunity Zone), up to \$15,000 in student loan debt forgiveness (Rural Opportunity Zone), 1-year family membership to the Ash Youth Center, 1-year family membership to the Riverside Beach Aquatic Center, 1-year family membership to X gym, Promise scholarship – 2 years full tuition & fees (List types of 2 yr degrees), USDA down payment assistance.

Trisha Purdon is adding geofencing to her website to assist with the subcommittee’s goals.

Brian Hight said this will help to narrowing the net that is cast out.

Lisa Wilson wants to add the Veteran’s Success program at the college, Elk City State Park and concerning housing, could renovation be added in to make the \$100,000.

Chuck Goad asked April Nutt if, at her meeting, they could discuss why people are moving to Independence. He said that this subject should be revisited monthly at each meeting.

Lacey Lies said that Trisha Purdon thought the subcommittee should put together marketing that show low and no-cost incentives but also cash incentives.

Chuck Goad asked that this be researched to make sure the people won’t be waiting in line because one or more of the programs has been cancelled. He said as long as it is no cost, or funding is there it should be offered.

Lacey Lies stated there should be a disclaimer stating that it is gone over monthly.

Brian Hight suggested hunting and fishing licenses.

Chuck Goad thought maybe another organization could grant an incentive. It all depends on what people coming here want.

D. Status of Company “X” project.

Kelly Passauer stated that it is in process and meetings have been very positive.

E. Status of Company "S" project.

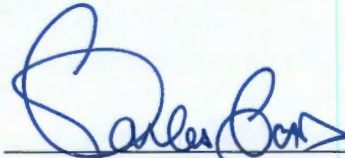
They have been sent the proposal and are looking at the Airport and West Laurel. We are waiting on more information.

F. Other Items for Discussion.

VI. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn by Wayne Stephany, seconded by Tony Royse. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes approved by:



Chuck Goad, Chair

Tony Royse

Tony Royse, Secretary

Signature: Tony Royse
Tony Royse (Jul 7, 2021 20:48 CDT)

Email: tony.royse@gmail.com






EDAB 05042021 Minutes

Final Audit Report

2021-07-08

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