

**Economic Development Advisory Council Meeting
September 9, 2013
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Mat-Su Regional Medical Center**

Participants:

Kim Ford, Don Dyer, John Lee, Kay Slack, Kevin Toothaker, Roger Purcell, Lyn Carden, Bert Cottle, Dan Kennedy, Beth Fread, Chris Gates, Marty Metiva, Roxie Mayberry, Dina Sorensen, Cindy Bettine, and Kathy Rocci

Meeting Notes

1. Approval of minutes

August 19th, 2013 meeting minutes approved.

“Thank you” to John Lee and the MSRMC hospital for providing lunch for the EDAC.

2. Discuss Using Designated Time Slot for Each EDAC Meeting

Don mentioned that Borough Assembly members have suggested legislation be brought forth from EDAC to change existing borough code or state statutes. Don met with Alex Strawn, MSB Manager of Development Services, to discuss permit and regulation issues that businesses face. Don asked that a part of each EDAC meeting be designated to a section of Borough Code to see where we need changes. As an example: when building commercial property a permit is required from the State of Alaska through the Fire Marshall’s office, which is located at Station 61 in Wasilla (corner of Swanson and Lucille). We could legislate that a permit be issued by the borough instead of the state.

Beth Fread advised that the Transportation Workgroup will probably draft a resolution for EDAC to present to the MSB Assembly asking them to recommend the Wasilla Bypass to the state legislators. She will be discussing this at the 2nd Quarterly Mat-Su Economic Development Workgroup Meeting on September 20th.

EDAC will further discuss this at the October 14th meeting. Any requested legislation by EDAC will go to the appropriate workgroup for research and drafting, which will then come back to EDAC.

3. Discuss 2nd Quarterly Economic Development Workgroup Conference

A. Kay advised that a continental breakfast will be served at 9:00 AM. There will be three workgroups that will be giving presentations.

- Transportation (workgroup 3 A-D) – Beth Fread
- Expand Business & Education Partnerships (workgroup 4A) – Julia Renfro
- Local campaign to enhance image of MatSu (workgroup 5 A-B) – Jake Libbey and Roxie Mayberry.

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Each workgroup has 20 minutes for their presentation.

- B. Invitations went out to all the workgroup members.
 - C. Have letters of invitation to the mayor and assembly members that each EDAC member will sign today. Kathy will send them out. Because we are inviting the mayor and assembly, an ad in the Frontiersman will go out this Friday.
 - D. Don will be giving a Map N Tour presentation.
 - E. Afterwards, each active workgroup will set up a table to show what they have accomplished and what they are working on now. There will be a representative from each workgroup to man the tables.
 - F. Keynote speaker for the MatSu Business Alliance meeting will be Alaska Energy Authority Director Sara Fisher-Goad. She will discuss the Susitna-Watana Dam Project.
 - G. Demonstration by Jake Libbey
 - H. Business Survey that will be interactive with the audience, giving instant results.
4. Presentation of Barriers to Business Survey – Marty Metiva
- Marty started by giving a brief description of what Mat-Su Resource Conservation & Development (Mat-Su RC&D) does. They are a group of community minded individuals who find a need in the community and fill it. They are a private, non-profit entity. They are recognized under the ARDOR Program which is locally driven initiative, in partnership with the state and other entities, to stimulate economic development. He said the ARDOR Program was not reauthorized during the 2013 session of the Alaska State Legislature, but the governor elected to leave program funding in the fiscal year 2014 budget pending legislative action to reestablish a regional economic development program.

Through the Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Strategy Plan, a Barriers to Business Survey was conducted, in partnership with the chambers of commerces, Mat-Su Borough, and MatSu Business Alliance Association (MSBA) to get word out about the survey. All the survey responses from businesses were loaded into Executive Pulse, a CRM database. Executive Pulse database coordinates all business profiles that want follow up. Out of 308 responses, 202 wanted to be contacted. Executive Pulse will decide which lead goes to what workgroup. The majority of leads will probably go to the BR&E workgroup (1C, D, E).

Some businesses didn't put their names on the survey because they do business with the federal government and didn't want their name "out there".

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Marty stated that businesses don't want reports, they want results. Anchorage Economic Development Corporation and Kenai did their own survey and had approximately 300 responses. Said next survey should be community based, such as what we have as rentals, lands, etc. Marty said he would provide Kathy Rocci with the link to the survey results and have her send it to the EDAC group.

50% of respondents named worker availability (not having qualified workers) as a barrier to their organization. EDAC participants agreed this should be addressed at the 2nd Quarterly Economic Development Workgroup Conference on September 20th. Julia Renfro, workgroup 4A, will address this issue. It was suggested to have Ray DePriest and Deena Paramo from the Mat-Su School District at the event to help her.

Marty advised that The Barriers to Business partners will be meeting with other partners prior to any next steps being taken.

5. Sign Letters to Borough Assembly

All EDAC members signed the invitations to the mayor and borough assembly for the 2nd Quarterly Economic Development Workgroup Conference.

4. Meeting Adjourned, 1pm.

Next meeting:

Monday, October 14, 2013

MSRMC 3rd Floor, at 11:30am – 1pm

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