



MINUTES
CITY OF NORCO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
2870 CLARK AVENUE
CONFERENCE ROOM "A"
JULY 28, 2015



EDAC Members:

Kathy Azevedo, Council Member
Kevin Bash, Mayor Pro Tem
Michael Bell, Community Business Representative
Ed Dixon, Retired/Resident Representative
Patrick Malone, Community Business Representative – Chair
Gabriel Martin, Community Business Representative
Brad Renfree, Community Business Representative
Diane Collins, Norco Area Chamber of Commerce Representative

Absent Members:

Vicki Leonard, Community Business Representative
Bill Schwab, Retired/Resident Representative
Melissa Villapando, Community Business Representative – Vice Chair

Staff Present:

Andy Okoro, City Manager
Roger Grody, Economic Development Consultant
Kelli Newton, Economic Development Intern
Diane Germain, Deputy City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER: **8:16 A.M.**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: **Member Michael Bell**

1. INTRODUCTION AND OATH OF OFFICE OF NEW MEMBER *(City Clerk Link)*

- Gabriel Martin

Chair Malone welcomed Gabriel Martin to the EDAC. Mr. Martin gave a brief background on himself, stating he looked forward to serving the community.

City Clerk Cheryl Link provided the Oath of Office for newly appointed Member Gabriel Martin for his service on the Economic Development Advisory Council.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR *(Term begin July 1, 2015)*

M/S Collins/Bash to re-appoint Chair Malone as Chair to the EDAC for fiscal year 2015-2016.

AYES: Azevedo, Bash, Bell, Collins, Dixon, Malone, Martin, Renfree

ABSENT: Leonard, Schwab, Villapando

M/S Dixon/Bash to appoint Brad Renfree as Vice Chair to the EDAC for fiscal year 2015-2016.

AYES: Azevedo, Bash, Bell, Collins, Dixon, Malone, Martin, Renfree

ABSENT: Leonard, Schwab, Villapando

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS: **None**

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **Recommended Action: Approval** (*Deputy City Clerk*)

- Regular Meeting of May 26, 2015

M/S Collins/Malone to approve the minutes of regular meeting of May 26, 2015, as written.

AYES: **Azevedo, Bash, Bell, Collins, Dixon, Malone, Martin, Renfree**

ABSENT: **Leonard, Schwab, Villapando**

5. SUB-COMMITTEES:

A. Realignment of Subcommittees

- Member Assignments

Chair Malone suggested that the group review current subcommittee assignments, asking for input from those who may wish to change subcommittees. With nobody wishing to make a change, discussions continued to the individual subcommittee reports.

B. Strategic Reports:

- Business Enhancement Subcommittee – *Bell, Malone, Villapando & NACC*
 - a) Progress report

Chair Malone stated that the subcommittee had met two weeks ago, at which point the group reviewed a list of businesses to pursue for Norco, which was initially created a couple of years ago.

Consultant Grody stated that the subcommittee plans to meet again the following week, for additional discussions.

Council Member Azevedo suggested that the subcommittee look at stores that specialize in sports, especially soccer, as well as in the English riding style.

Intern Newton suggested that contact be made with Dovers Saddlery, a store mainly located in the East but recently opened a branch in Laguna Hills.

C. Reports of Recent Activity:

- Electronic Sign Subcommittee – *Dixon, Malone & Schwab*

Member Dixon stated that the subcommittee had met a couple of times since last meeting, and interviewed a couple of candidates for the position of advertising salesperson. He provided background information on Diana McGrew, the candidate present at this meeting.

Consultant Grody shared that Ms. McGrew had met with the subcommittee and City Manager Okoro, adding that the other candidate withdrew from consideration. Consultant Grody introduced Ms. McGrew, noting her experience in marketing for local non-profits.

Ms. McGrew shared some of her background on previous assignments completed, such as for the Norco Fair, the City's 50th Birthday Anniversary, and others. She stated that she was excited to get started and thankful for the opportunity to do this for the city.

Chair Malone gave an overview on the sign's process, with Ms. McGrew in charge of acquiring and working on the advertisements; he assured the group that it will become self-sufficient.

M/S Azevedo/Bash to appoint Diana McGrew as Advertising Salesperson for the Sixth Street Gateway Electronic Sign.

AYES: Azevedo, Bash, Bell, Collins, Dixon, Malone, Martin, Renfree

ABSENT: Leonard, Schwab, Villapando

- Equestrian Activities Subcommittee – *Azevedo, Dixon, Schwab & Villapando*
Member Dixon stated that the subcommittee had not met in two months, adding that the last project discussed was a special rodeo for next year but that they were waiting for seed money.

Council Member Azevedo shared her experience from the past weekend's event involving the Special Olympics. She stated that numerous individuals, including members of EDAC, provided assistance, training and donations to the Special Olympics Equestrian Team; a donation from NACC and its members totaling \$700, which included lunch and additional funds to assist NDR in its costs for the usage of the ranch.

Member Dixon shared details of events at the National Day of the American Cowboy event, noting that the visiting Australians trained local horses in a short period of time to do the tricks and performance given. He added that there was an outstanding attendance, and that the Australian team will return next year.

- Film Norco Subcommittee – *Bash & Leonard*

Mayor Pro Tem Bash has begun working on the 2016 Film Festival; the "Kill Bill" trilogy will be shown. The Festival has booked Michael Parks, graduate of Corona High School, as a local graduate being highlighted. An exact date has not been set, but asked for support.

- Hospitality Subcommittee – *Bell, Leonard & Renfree*

Nothing to report.

- Navy Technology Subcommittee – *Malone, Renfree & Schwab*

Nothing to report.

Mayor Pro Tem Bash shared that although the Navy Base is safe from BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure), all bases are to cut costs by 40%, which may affect the City.

D. Establishment of Gateway Development Committee

Consultant Grody stated that by direction of the City Council, the area between Old Hamner Avenue and Sixth Street is to be considered for commercial development to complement Silverlakes Equestrian and Sports Park. It was suggested that a Norco village type of environment be created to include such businesses as art galleries, boutiques, a hotel, etc. in a Western theme. He added that this would be a short term subcommittee, from beginning to end of planning the potential project.

Consultant Grody stated that the Planning Director has offered to assist the subcommittee, noting that this may entail a zone change to accommodate commercial.

The following members volunteered to be on the Gateway Development Subcommittee: Council Member Azevedo, Members Bell and Martin, and the Norco Area Chamber of Commerce.

It was suggested that the subcommittee meet soon with the Planning Director, with the first item to be considered is the zoning change.

Public comment:

Lance Gregory shared information on a program he recently viewed called "Project Downtown" in Las Vegas, to make it a destination point; noting that the organizers worked with the small businesses to create it.

6. DISCUSSIONS:

A. Selection of an Advertising Salesperson for the Sixth Street Gateway Sign

- Diana McGrew

See above discussion under the Electronic Sign Subcommittee (Item 5.C.)

B. Update from the Norco Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center (NACC) President/CEO Diane Collins shared that the Military Luncheon had been well attended, 50% of the proceeds were donated to the presenting veteran's charities. The donations totaled \$5700 to Big Paws K9 Foundation and Veterans Honoring Veterans. Ms. Collins stated that the new web site is launching this coming weekend.

In response to Member Dixon, Ms. Collins confirmed that the NACC conducts an approximate 10 grand openings per year.

C. Economic Development Update (*Econ. Development Consultant Grody*)

Consultant Grody stated he is fielding calls from consultants and representatives for hotels whom are looking to come to Norco. With Silverlakes' opening, this is a great draw. There is room for an additional two hotels in town, a themed hotel would be excellent.

D. City Manager Update (*City Manager Okoro*)

City Manager Okoro provided a summary of the first town hall meeting held at Nellie Weaver Hall, hosted by R.U.R.A.L., stating that a lot of information was shared with the residents. Among the presentations, the City Clerk provided information and update on the upcoming elections, encouraging all qualified attendees to register and vote. The Ad Hoc Committee gave its final report to the City Council at its last meeting, the Council elected not to place any item on the ballot this year, adding that the Ad Hoc Committee is officially done.

Based on information received on property values within the County, Norco is up by 5.27%, in line with other cities across the County; sales taxes in Norco is low compared to neighboring cities, noting that this is why the work of EDAC is very important. The City Council passed a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. City Manager Okoro also shared that sales tax numbers on specific businesses are proprietary, protected by

California Government Code 7056; only general information can be shared such as the Quarterly Report from HdL.

Mayor Pro Tem Bash stated that commercial rents are very high in Norco at the moment, adding that property owners are not willing to come down in cost. He shared that R.J. Brandes, Balboa Management, has reached out to numerous businesses but is not getting return calls from local businesses. This is, again, where EDAC needs to help.

Council Member Azevedo noted that some businesses can't handle the volume needed by Silverlakes, but they need to collaborate with R.J. Brandes.

Mayor Pro Tem Bash suggested that EDAC members attend an event at the San Juan Capistrano location, and reach out to local businesses to suggest that they prepare for the opening of Silverlakes Equestrian and Sports Park.

7. Next Regular Meeting Scheduled: August 25, 2015

8. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Malone adjourned the meeting at **9:31 A.M.**