

**BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CITY OF PALMER, ALASKA**

**REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2019
6:00 P.M. - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
*Amended***

A. CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the City of Palmer Board of Economic Development was called to order by Chair Silva at 6:03 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Present and constituting a quorum were Board Members:

Dusty Silva, Chair	Lorie Koppenberg
Peter Christopher	Janet Kincaid
Barbara Hunt	

Absences excused without objection:

Kelly Turney, Vice Chair
Christopher Chappel

Also present were:

Brad Hanson, Community Development Director
Nathan Wallace, City Manager
Pam Whitehead, Recording Secretary

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge was led by Board Member Koppenberg.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Agenda was unanimously approved as amended by all members present. New Business item 1, *Lee Hart presentation*, was moved forward to immediately follow Audience Participation out of time courtesy to the presenter. There were no objections.

[Kincaid, Christopher, Koppenberg, Hunt, Silva; *Absent:* Turney, Chappel]

E. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

The Minutes of the **May 6, 2019 Regular Meeting** were unanimously approved as presented by all members present. There were no objections.

[Kincaid, Christopher, Koppenberg, Hunt, Silva; *Absent:* Turney, Chappel]

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

There were no audience members wishing to speak on a topic not on the agenda.

I. NEW BUSINESS: [per Amended Agenda]

1. Lee Hart, Confluence Alaska Presentation.

Director Hanson introduced Lee Hart who has an extensive background in promoting events and community gateway opportunities. Her presentation will address the economic influence of recreation on

the State of Alaska and recreation as an economic engine for the City of Palmer. See packet, p. 23, for information on Alaska's Outdoor Economy.

Ms. Hart:

- gave a powerpoint presentation on gateway communities and outdoor recreation;
- Described her background in marketing outdoor recreation, in particular biking and skiing, such as running the Valdez Ice Climbing Festival, started a Fat Bike Event, and ran a Rock Climbing Event;
- Played a film illustrating her vision of promoting a destination using outdoor recreation as an economic driver and slide presentation reflecting how big the outdoor industry is compared to others;
- Spoke to the Walker Administration's Outdoor Products Study and Outdoor Recreation Impact Study - \$3.2 Billion in consumer spending in Alaska and 38,000+ jobs directly attributable to outdoor industry;
- Sees Palmer as having all the ingredients for "Mountain Town 101" – an incredible diverse array of public lands that attract people to the area, active enthusiast groups, mountain bike development, active snow machine groups, history, big agriculture, microbreweries, a lively arts community, and numerous community events that speak to the flavor of the community;
- Noted points In Palmer's 2011 Economic Development Strategy that stood out to her included: 1) Strengthen Palmer as a tourism destination; 2) Strengthen quality of life by supporting the agricultural and educational center, 3) Good IT and fast broadband – attracts younger workforce.
- Described and encouraged attendance at the 4th Annual Statewide Summit in Talkeetna this fall – theme: Gateway Communities.
- Responded to board member questions with regard to speeding up the event permitting process, mountain biking events, festivals, trail connections, grant funding, branding.
- Board Member Hunt requested to attend the 4th Annual Statewide Summit on Gateway Communities in Talkeetna this fall, described by Ms. Hart.

The Board expressed appreciation for and thanked Ms. Hart for her presentation.

[Chair Silva called a break at 7:10 p.m.; the meeting resumed at 7:19 p.m.]

2. Committee of the Whole to review and discuss Chapter 5.32 Marijuana businesses (note: action may be taken by the Board following the committee of the whole).

Main Motion: To enter Committee of the Whole for open and ease of discussion regarding Chapter 5.32 Marijuana businesses.

Moved by:	Koppenberg
Seconded by:	Christopher
Vote:	5 Yes / 0 No – Kincaid, Christopher, Koppenberg, Hunt, Silva <i>Absent:</i> Turney, Chappel
Action:	Motion Carried.

[The Commission entered Committee of the Whole at 7:20 p.m.; exited at 7:58 p.m.]

Staff report: Director Hanson reported the City Council has asked the Board to review the prohibition of marijuana businesses in the City of Palmer pursuant to PMC 5.32, enacted two years ago on October 12, 2015. The ordinance allows the City Council to amend or rescind a citizen-enacted petition after two years of enactment. The packet (pp 25-38) contains for example the City of Houston's ordinance regulating marijuana and Alaska AAC Article 2 local options for the Board's review/discussion.

Committee of the Whole discussion topics included:

- Positive economic impacts associated with marijuana retail dispensaries within city limits;
- Negative impacts if retail dispensaries were allowed within city limits;
- Marijuana cultivation related to taxes and licensing;
- Social versus economic impact.
- Discussion that any changes to the current ordinance prohibiting marijuana dispensaries within the City should be voted on by the community.

[The Board exited Committee of the Whole by unanimous vote 7:58 p.m.]

G. REPORTS:

1. Boards and Commission Report – Director Hanson:
 - Highlighted his written report in the packet (p. 11);
 - Responded to board member questions related to painted crosswalks;
 - Reported the recent Ordinance 19-009 change pertaining to the BED will require that by the year 2022, at least two board members must be residents of the city.
 - Board Member Koppenberg informed of and voiced concern over the comments made by Council Member Fuller at the 5/28/19 City Council meeting related to the BED citizen requirement and the effectiveness of this board; Chair Silva informed that his comments are available on Radio Free Palmer.
 - Director Hanson informed that it is now in code that all boards and commissions have the option to meet quarterly instead of monthly;
 - Reported on the current status of Building Permits.
 - Discussed the P&Z Commission’s work on Title 17.
2. Work Plan Activities Report – Director Hanson:
 - Board member Koppenberg discussed the impact on businesses by construction on the Glenn Highway and whether the City could ask DOT to work longer than 8 hours to move it along faster;
 - Goal 11 – revise to state “Increase marketing of Palmer and its diverse “thematic” attractions, *including outdoor recreation*, events and location.” Board member Hunt was impressed by guest speaker Lee Hart and felt what she had to say made a lot of sense.
 - Goal 12 – Create a business friendly environment for commerce and industry.
 - Assign board members monthly to visit/welcome new businesses to Palmer: add Koppenberg to the BED project team; provide contact information to new businesses.
3. Manager/Staff Report: Nothing additional.

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

J. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Board Member Christopher:

- Commented in appreciation of the guest speaker tonight; good meeting.

Board Member Kincaid:

- Spoke in appreciation of the City Newsletter.

Board Member Koppenberg:

- Thought the guest speaker was very informative and provided some things to think about in making Palmer a destination community;

Chair Silva:

- Also spoke in appreciation of the guest speaker and very interested in the information she had to bring; expressed thank you to Director Hanson for scheduling her.
- Informed she and Vice Chair Kelly will both be out of town for the July meeting and Director Hanson will be out of town the following week;
- Announced, following brief discussion, that unless otherwise rescheduled, the **July 1, 2019 BED Regular Meeting will be cancelled**. Board member Hunt was opposed to cancellation; thought it should be rescheduled as July is a very busy events month.

K. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

APPROVED by the Board of Economic Development the 5th day of August, 2019.

Dusty Silva, Chair

Brad Hanson, Community Development Director