

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES
February 23, 2021

A regular meeting of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Health & Social Services Commission was held via Zoom from the Mona Lisa Drexler Assembly Chambers, Juanita Helms Administration Center, 907 Terminal Street, Fairbanks, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Mayor Bryce Ward Chair.

A. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Meeks	Frank Tomaszewski
Paul Robinson	Abigail Riggs
Russell Talvi	Matthew Cooper
Mayor Bryce Ward	Deb Hickok

MEMBERS ABSENT (note if excused):

OTHERS PRESENT: Brittany Smart, Administrator
Alexis Fackeldey, Recording Clerk

B. MESSAGES

1. Communications to the Economic Development Commission
None
2. Citizen's Comments – limited to three (3) minutes
 - a. Agenda items not scheduled for public hearing
None
 - b. Items other than those appearing on the agenda
None
3. Disclosure & Statement of Conflict of Interest
None

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda and consent agenda made by **Commissioner Talvi** and seconded by **Commissioner Meeks**. Carried without objection or roll call vote.

D. MINUTES

Minutes from October 27, 2020. Carried without objection or roll call vote.

E. REPORTS

1. Fairbanks North Star Borough – CARES Act Grant Project Close Report

Ms. Smart summarized the report including the list of all businesses and the amount that each received per program. **Commissioner Hickok** asked if the list was divided by industry sectors. **Ms. Smart** said she had not, but it was being done state-wide by John Bitner.

2. Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development – ARDOR Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report

Ms. Smart summarized the report and stated that it also listed how the various ARDOR's (Alaska Regional Development Organizations) used the funding. **Commissioner Hickok** asked questions about the amount of funding received and the diversification of the funding. **Ms. Smart** explained the differences and fielded further questions from **Commissioner Hickok** regarding the government's role in ARDOR. **Commissioner Hickok** questioned whether the regional conference was still going on.

3. Associated General Contractors of Alaska – The Economic Benefits of Alaska's Construction Industry, January 2021

Ms. Smart stated she found this report interesting and shared it to the Commission for informational purposes. **Commissioner Meeks** called attention to a specific page of the report that highlighted **Commissioner Talvi**.

4. Alaska Small Business Development Center – 2020 Annual Report

Ms. Smart stated this report was also for informational purposes and explained the differences in the report from last year's.

5. Alaska Center for Economic Development – 2020 Economic and Demographic Factsheets: <https://ua-ced.org/legislative-fact-sheets>

Ms. Smart explained how the factsheet was laid out and stated it was a tool for the commissioners.

6. Explore Fairbanks – The Recent Cruise Ban and Other Issues Facing the Travel Industry

Ms. Smart introduced the piece and **Commissioner Hickok** stated it was an early document that was produced for Explore Fairbank's e-news.

Commissioner Hickok also iterated that land tours are reported to still be happening and travel restrictions have been lifted. Commissioner Hickok stated that PVSA (Passenger Vessel Services Act of 1886) was cost prohibitive as it features a fine charged per person. **Ms. Smart** asked about whether ships manufactured in the United States of America were subject to the same rules. **Commissioner Hickok** stated all but three cruise ships she was aware of were foreign flagged and manufactured somewhere other than the US.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Interior Alaska COVID-19 Impact and Recovery Plan – Implementation Update & Review

Mayor Ward gave a summary of the Interior Alaska COVID-19 Impact and Recovery Plan. **Ms. Smart** discussed each category including Completed, In Progress, and No Action Taken. These were explained in depth. **Mayor Ward** also commented throughout. **Commissioner Meeks** stated he would like the administration to attempt to revise the plan with more targeted tasks to specific industries rather than the Commission attempting to do it. **Commissioner Hickok** stated the pandemic was not over and that land tours would require very stringent protocols to keep guests safe.

2. CEDS Status Update

Ms. Smart gave an update on the current progress of the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) project. Ms. Smart also stated that the Economic Development Commission will be the steering committee for the plan.

G. NEW BUSINESS

None

H. EXCUSE FUTURE ABSENCES

None

I. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Chairperson's Comments

None

Commissioner's Comments

Commissioner Meeks announced the ribbon cutting of the IGU LNG (Interior Gas Utility Liquid Natural Gas) storage tanks.

Commissioner Talvi expressed gratitude that the contractor for the CEDS project was an Alaskan firm.

J. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.