

# COVINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

City Council Chambers  
16720 SE 271<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Covington, WA 98042  
253-480-2400

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## MINUTES

Thursday, August 27, 2015

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Jeff Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

Members Present: Zach Steele, Jeff Wagner, Laura Roth, Ed Cook, Lisa Agron, Krista Bates, Steve Pand, Kathy Fosjord, Josh Lyons (arrived late)

Members Absent: Kevin Holland

Also Present: Kathryn Groves, Regan Bolli (arrived late)

### **Approval of Minutes from July 23, 2015:**

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes with one correction to a spelling error in Ed's name on page two. Motion passed 8-0

### **Chamber Announcements – Kathryn Groves, Chamber Manager**

- The Board approved Kevin Holland to fill the CEDC vacancy left by Sherry Corbey.
- The Board approved a new tiered investment dues structure to be rolled out slowly over the next year.
- Affinity at Covington, the new 55 and over community going in behind Safeway is joining the Chamber. They will not officially open until July 2016, however have begun pre-leasing now.

### **City Announcements – Regan Bolli, City Manager:**

- Eastern Washington University may no longer be interested in coming into Covington, however Green River College is still interested.
- The Sausage and Cider Fest was very successful with over 300 attendees.
- KidsFest had 1,200 attendees, the previous highest attendance was 750.
- Currently working on 2016 legislative agenda, which will include trying to secure grant funding for transportation projects.
- MultiCare is still planning to open summer of 2017
- Inland Group is still moving along with the Affinity apartments.
- Chick-Fil-A is having some delays due to permitting issues.

### **Election of Co-Chairs**

- Zach Steele nominated and seconded for Co-Chair on the Chamber side, passed 9-0.
- Jeff Wagner nominated and seconded for Co-Chair on the City side, passed 9-0.

### **Orientation of CEDC**

- Discussed the history and purpose of CEDC as an advisory council to both the City Council and Chamber Board of Directors.

## **Discussion on the Direction of CEDC – SWOT Analysis**

- Strengths
  - Strong City Council & Chamber Board, supportive of economic development
  - Proximity to Highway 18
  - Strong youth activities bring people into the area
  - Large retailers like Costco bring people into the area
  - Heavy traffic along Kent-Kangley brings a lot of people through the area
- Weaknesses
  - Lack of funding for research
  - Ambiguity of our purpose/direction
  - Lack of continuity among CEDC members, difficult for long term projects
  - Lack of parks/ballfields, destinations to attract people to the area
  - Lack of available space and land for development
  - High expense for leasing commercial space
  - Traffic congestion along Kent-Kangley
- Opportunities
  - Covington is a young city with opportunities to grow
  - Strong health care cluster, opportunity to bring in complementary services
  - PAA/FAA-GMP (possible future annexation)
  - Large community events can bring people into the area
  - Hawk Property will bring in clientele we don't currently have (higher end retail, theater, hotel with conference facilities)
  - Opportunities to define what “growing towards greatness” means and create a “destination”
- Threats
  - Vulnerability during an economic downturn due to the heavy retail, lack of economic diversity
  - Strong health care cluster may be a barrier to competition for smaller independent providers
  - King County GMP – occurs only every 4 to 6 years, delaying annexation opportunities
- Next meeting we will use this analysis to define initiatives and work plan.

### **Comments:**

- Ed: when discussing cost of commercial space, cost per square foot is relative, there are a lot of factors to consider.
- Josh: Grew up in this area, considers this part of his roots, hopes to be able to add something to the group.
- Laura: Hopes we can all work together in a positive manner as we have done in the past.
- Zach: Believes CEDC has lost some efficiency over the last couple years which we can't have until we have a clear direction and vision.

Next Meeting: September 24, 2015 6:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.

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**CEDC Members**

Zach Steele, Co-Chair  
Krista Bates  
Lisa Agron  
Josh Lyons  
Kevin Holland

Jeff Wagner, Co-Chair  
Steve Pand  
Laura Roth  
Kathy Fosjord  
Ed Cook

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**Staff**

Regan Bolli, City Manager  
Kathryn Groves, Covington Chamber of Commerce Manager