



## **COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING MINUTES – June 24, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Regular meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

#### **ATTENDANCE (September 2020-July 2021):**

Committee Member	Present 6/24/2021	All Meetings Year to Date		Meetings Mandated By Resolution	
		Present	Absent	Present	Absent
Council Member Salinas	✓	7	0	7	0
Council Member Wahab	✓	5	0	5	0
Council Member Andrews	✓	5	0	5	0

#### **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Kelly McAdoo, City Manager; Jennifer Ott, Assistant City Manager; Michael Lawson, City Attorney; Paul Nguyen, Economic Development Manager; Catherine Ralston, Economic Development Specialist; Suzanne Philis, Senior Secretary

Council Member Salinas reminded members that their goal was to provide high-level feedback to staff.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

#### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING MAY 27, 2021**

A motion to approve minutes from the May 27, 2021 Regular Meeting with one minor change was made by Council Member Wahab and seconded by Council Member Andrews. The motion was approved.

#### **2. PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAMS**

Assistant City Manager Ott introduced the item noting discussions on how to spend the \$38 million the City would receive in Federal American Rescue Plan Act 2021 (ARPA) funds had occurred at City Council and various Committee meetings. Council would approve the list of recommendations at the July 13<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting, but she noted programs might change over the three years the City

had to spend the money as the list of programs was aggressive and staff may not be able to get to all of them. She acknowledged the work of Economic Development staff in preparing the report and presentation and said the total cost of the proposed programs was \$2 million. She then introduced Economic Development Specialist Ralston who gave the presentation.

With first-year programs having the biggest impact, Specialist Ralston gave the presentation noting staff was really looking for direction on priorities in the second and third years.

Of the approximately 450 Hayward businesses that closed during the pandemic, Council Member Andrews asked what sector was most heavily impacted. Economic Development Manager Nguyen explained that the statistics included in the staff report were primarily for larger businesses, but in general, the biggest impacts were felt in the hospitality, restaurant, and service industries.

Council Member Andrews asked if staff was partnering with the Hayward Chamber of Commerce for reopening plans. Manager Nguyen said yes, but noted staff was also working with the City's Communications team to produce a robust marketing campaign that included videos, business profiles and social media posts.

Regarding the tuition reimbursement program discussed in the presentation, Council Member Andrews asked how many businesses were targeted with the \$150,000 budgeted for the program. Manager Nguyen said staff wouldn't have that number until further analysis of costs of certificate or other training programs was performed.

Council Member Andrews said she appreciated the inclusion of the Hire Hayward – Local Hire Subsidy Program and suggested partnering with Comcast's Rise program to save some money. She also suggested reaching out the Eden Area Regional Occupational Program Center to create one site where local youth could go to look for jobs.

Expressing dissatisfaction with past Façade Improvement results, Council Member Andrews suggested having better examples, fewer choices, and CEDC review before approving changes.

Regarding parklets for outdoor restaurant dining, Council Member Andrews confirmed businesses would receive a grant and staff said yes. She suggested partnering with Home Depot to help with building supply costs and also local businesses for discounted street furniture. She also encouraged staff to coordinate landscaping projects to see if there was an overlap with business improvements.

Council Member Andrews said local businesses needed to learn how to be more resilient, better able to pivot and repackage in times of crisis. She used Hippies Brew as an example of a local business that simplified its menu and began offering jugs of coffee to go. She said businesses needed to have a plan ready.

Council Member Wahab thanked staff for the report and presentation. She said the proposed budgets for the "Hayward Open for Business" and "Shop Hayward" campaigns were too high. She also expressed concern that the gift card proposal would waste money by leaving too many small unspent amounts when other more direct programs could be funded instead.

Council Member Wahab expressed preference for increasing the "Get Digital" E-Commerce Expansion

Assistance Program and noted immigrant business owners really needed this help.

Council Member Wahab said one idea not on the list was streamlining the business permitting process. She said business owners should be able to go online and get a business license in 10 minutes. Other communities had reported big impacts by cutting the red tape and make the process linear, she said.

Regarding assistance for outdoor dining spaces, Council Member Wahab said she saw this suggested all the time for downtown but would like to see it directed to other areas of Hayward. She said streets in south Hayward should be closed and a big event held there for a change.

Council Member Wahab agreed with Council Member Andrews that the Façade Improvement Program should have higher standards and a limited color palette. She added that rather than bars in the windows, businesses should focus on improving lighting and security.

Council Member Wahab said the city should benefit from having an \$15 an hour minimum wage by attracting workers to Hayward.

Council Member Wahab said she was glad to see the Workforce Development – Tuition Assistance program and commented the City could implement these types of programs faster if we partnered with other agencies. Council Member Wahab suggested including as eligible programs online schooling programs aimed at working adults and not just youth. She said she would like to see the funding amount increased for this program by shifting monies away from Marketing.

Regarding the Small Business Assistance Grants, Council Member Wahab said she had concerns about equity and said it seemed like the same businesses kept receiving assistance or at least that was perception. She encouraged staff to promote the wide range of businesses receiving help to counter that.

Council Member Wahab said she'd like to have a conversation with staff and partner agencies about an entrepreneur program, but complimented staff for a great job on the report and suggested programs.

Council Member Salinas said the results of the Business biggest needs Survey surprised him; he didn't expect the high level of demand for assistance with technology. He said his biggest priority was bringing people back to local stores and shops and explained that he'd been visiting other downtowns and they were popping, and not just the restaurants. During a recent visit to Southland Mall to get a new ballcap, he asked how the business was doing and was told by the owner of Lids that the store had been so packed the prior weekend that he'd had to rotate customers in and out. Council Member Salinas said he wanted this for all the shops at Southland Mall, downtown and the Tennyson corridor.

Regarding outdoor dining, Council Member Salinas said the City needed to be flexible and suggested closing B Street so people could enjoy local restaurants and walk up and down the street with their food. He mentioned the City had discussed closing Main Street and he said the City needed to do these kinds of things to support local businesses.

Council Member Salinas said he finally saw DHIA staff steam cleaning downtown sidewalks and although he was happy to see them, there were still areas that needed attention.

Council Member Salinas also mentioned that during a recent trip to Calistoga, he noticed the sandwich board signs outside of businesses with attractive chalk writing and images. He said they looked classy and would prefer Hayward use the same rather than plastic. He agreed with Council Members Wahab and Andrews that the mural on the side of the grocery store at D Street could have been better.

Council Member Salinas said sidewalk vendors were small neighborhood entrepreneurs and the City should help them along with other small business entrepreneurs. He agreed with Council Member Wahab that the proposed gift card program could waste money if funds were left unspent on cards and he advocated to provide more direct assistance to small business owners instead.

Regarding Marketing programs, Council Member Salinas encouraged staff to do whatever they could to help get customers back in stores. If restaurants want to build parklets in front, he said the City should be as flexible as possible to allow them to do so.

Council Member Andrews pointed out that there was no public art in the downtown or on the Tennyson or Hesperian commercial corridors. She said that other cities had public art to attract people to the area and help stimulate surrounding businesses. She acknowledged that statues were expensive but noted there were other options beside murals. Council Member Andrews added that by bringing more people to an area to view public art, an additional benefit would be improving street safety.

Council Member Salinas agreed that public art didn't always have to be a mural. He mentioned an episode of Hometown Takeover where the name of the City was painted on the side of building and folks would stop there to take a photograph. Imagine doing something similar on the side of the sushi restaurant on Foothill, or on the walls of the empty lot between Buffalo Bill's and the bank, he said.

Council Member Andrews liked the idea and suggested something simple and fun like Texas' "Keep Austin Weird" sign.

Economic Development Manager Nguyen said art and signage was part of placemaking and could be incorporated into the recovery program's façade improvement elements. He agreed with Council Member Andrews that Hayward needed more "Instagram-able" spots to bring people into local retail. He added that data shows that brick and mortar retail was not dead. Businesses that provide quality products and unique customer experiences survived. Retailers needed to focus on creating more experiential opportunities to draw customers.

Assistant City Manager Ott said that Council Member Andrews had mentioned some of these ideas at a City Council Meeting. Manager Ott pointed out that public art wasn't listed under program because Treasury guidelines didn't include public art as an option for ARPA funding.

### **3. FUTURE MEETING TOPICS AS OF JUNE 24, 2021**

Economic Development Manager Nguyen reviewed upcoming topics including a Preliminary Concept

Review of a potential hotel use on Dixon Street. He also noted the CEDC would not meet during the Council's summer recess in August.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REFERRALS**

Economic Development Manager Nguyen said the Together for Hayward Downtown Re-Opening event would be a full court press to bring people back to the downtown on July 10<sup>th</sup> (from noon to 6pm). He noted that Economic Development staff had personally delivered flyers to 77 businesses on Tuesday to invite them to have a free booth. So far, he said, over 30 businesses had responded and although there would be no food sales, there would be live music, arts, crafts and coupons from local restaurants. At noon the Mayor would cut a giant red ribbon at the intersection of B and Main Streets which would be closed for the event. Manager Nguyen thanked the Communications Team for their assistance in preparing materials and promoting the event via social media.

Council Member Salinas requested that all future marketing pieces be sized for easy sharing on social media.

Council Member Andrews also requested short URLs for the purpose of sharing.

Council Member Andrews thanked staff and the owner of Stacks Record Shop for their help and participation in the City's first Juneteenth celebration on Saturday. She noted the additional foot traffic was a boon to the Farmers Market whose vendors sold out of fruits and veggies. She mentioned the Market was looking for more vendors and then also thanked the Chamber and the Downtown Hayward Improvement Association for their help with the event.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.