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Neighborhood and Family Services Commission

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

City of Avondale, Arizona

Meeting Minutes

Jerome B Brownlee Jr
Jerome B Brownlee Jr (Mar 1, 2022 16:06 MST)

Chair

CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the accompanying document is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the aforementioned meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

Paula Swenson
Paula Swenson (Feb 28, 2022 08:17 MST)

Staff Liaison

2/23/2022

Date Approved





Neighborhood and Family Services Commission Meeting
Wednesday, September 29, 2021 6:00 p.m.
Avondale City Hall, 11465 W. Civic Center Drive, Avondale, AZ 85323
Mojave Conference Room
MEETING MINUTES

Commission Members in Attendance: Jerome Brownlee, Michelle McMullen, Hilary McKillip, Alternate Maxine White, Alternate Nellie Goetz, Lisa Osborne, Gloria Solorio

Commission Members Excused: Fabian Prado, Jeffrey Rich, Dawn Gerundo, Oliver Morrison

City Staff and Guests in Attendance: Assistant Neighborhood & Family Services Director Edith Baltierrez, Neighborhood & Family Services Director Chris Lopez, Economic Development Director Ken Chapa, Revitalization Manager Sandy Lopez, Administrative Assistant Paula Swenson, guest, ASU student Shahid Meighan

1. Call to Order

The Neighborhood and Family Services Commission meeting was called to order by Chairperson Brownlee at 6:01 p.m.

2. Review and Approval of the June 30, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Ms. McMullen made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Ms. Hilary McKillip. seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously with an Aye by Members present.

3. Approval of Amendment to the Neighborhood and Family Services Commission Bylaws

Mr. Chris Lopez presented the amendment to the Neighborhood and Family Services Commission bylaws for discussion and action. This amendment came from the City Clerk's Office with the intent for consistency of membership across city boards and commissions. The amendment would not go into effect until a Member terms out or resigns. Ms. White asked if there was a reason to consider moving down the membership to seven versus nine; Mr. Lopez replied that the majority of our boards and commissions have seven members so this would realign Neighborhood & Family Services to be consistent with others. It was noted that there will be one alternate versus two on the boards. Ms. Osborne motioned for the amendment to be approved as written. Ms. McMullen seconded the motion. The amendment was approved unanimously with an Aye by Members present.

4. Economic Development Update

Mr. Ken Chapa presented economic development updates to the Commission. Avondale Edge is the newest brand. 'Edge' stands for economic development growth for everyone. Avondale has three specialty districts: Healthcare corridor (McDowell Road), the Blvd, and Old Town. The healthcare corridor includes: Phoenix Children's Hospital, Akos (medical plaza), BioLife, Clear Sky Health (Brain and spinal rehab), and IMS, integrated medical services. Mr. Chapa stated that the Blvd map contains the Gateway, Residential, Park Avenue, Village, and the Promenade districts. Mr. Chapa stated that the city owns approximately 25 acres in total. Mr. Chapa displayed a conceptual usage map, which showed existing use, projected uses and future uses. It was explained that this is a concept of what could be. It won't be exactly the same but is more of what we are looking for.

Tap Two and Soda Bomb (custom sodas and cookies), along with the Aveda institute are opening on the west campus. We are full capacity at the Blvd now. Dutch Bros. coffee and other hotel products are coming into the Blvd, as well. We are adding 20,000 sq. ft. of office space. We are working to re-brand the Old Town area within

the next 12 months. We are going first towards the Avondale residents for re-branding. Industrial is a very high premium for us and the west valley as a whole. Once these spaces go up, they fill quickly. Industrial is huge but it will not be tied into everything. Avondale is looking into vertical farming. This is huge in Scandinavian countries. Vertical farming yields the same amount of vegetation using 3% of the water that we typically use in a desert. We are hosting a championship race at Phoenix Raceway early in November. Mr. Chapa explained that a championship race is equivalent to a super bowl in terms of economics. The new conference center will offer training and education events and will be another destination asset for us. Discover Avondale works with food bloggers while Visit Avondale shows destination assets and concentrates on the entire area. Play Avondale includes Tres Rios, a place that 'Birders' fly to see our various 200 plus species of birds. The pipeline manages approximately 101 projects. Many are manufacturing due to being so close to the highway and California. The pipeline shows an average wage of \$40,662; above median county wage. We project approximately 10,808 three-year jobs; and 2.9 billion dollars in the 3-year CAPEX. Noted correction to the amount listed on the slide. Most economic offices do not monitor their win rate but we do. Last year we were at about 5% win rate; the average is 3%. Avondale Edge is a nine-part series marketing tool. Mr. Shahid Meighan expressed interest in re-branding. Mr. Chapa explained that the process will include focus groups and residents in the area. Ms. McMullen inquired of office, industrial and commercial/retail opportunities. Mr. Chapa stated that our opportunity will be office jobs and include high tech careers. Not all jobs in the pipeline will land, but we do partner with colleges and universities. When companies come in, they need education partners to react quickly. The market drives demand. EMCC has been a great partner. Ms. McKillip inquired of additional grocery stores to the area. Currently, there is just a Fry's and Food City and some liquor stores south of MC85. Mr. Chapa explained that grocery stores are hard to recruit as they oversaturated areas in the past and many had to close during the economic recession in 2008. Now, grocers are the last in. Wins are with the smaller groceries. Specialty grocery stores play into the attraction of getting the larger stores back in. Meighan inquired of focus groups coming into the city. Mr. Chapa explained that land use is with the planning commission: zoning amendments are opportunities for public comment. Mr. Brownlee inquired if Trader Joes was considered a specialty grocery store. Mr. Chapa explained that the best way to get them to our area is to continue to purchases at our current grocery stores. Trader Joes and other grocers pay attention to those details. They use the information from purchases to show the areas the purchases come from. Mr. Chapa explained that questions regarding SNAP and other food assistance programs are up to the grocers as they look to see what a good fit is for their company.

5. Revitalization Update

Ms. Sandy Lopez provided an update on Cashion, Old Town, Las Ligas, and Rio Vista areas; commonly known as the revitalization area. Ms. Lopez described the boundary areas and the reasoning for taking back the name Old Town. The name complements residents who have been in the area for generations: this name is how they identify the area. A few years ago, a revitalization strategy was developed to start building stronger, well-connected relationships and trust in the neighborhoods. The city looks to adapt strategies to address current and future needs of the community. We came up with eight goals to pair with these five strategy areas: neighborhood resources, community engagement, housing, economic development and health & wellness. Ms. Lopez explained that the city was looking to increase the awareness of programs and services. We found out from our civic associations that some of the things that residents were asking for, the city was already doing. We needed to do a better job of creating an awareness. We want to expand our community resources with new opportunities. Recently, we have placed The Opportunity Tree in the location of our former resource center, 328 W. Western Avenue. This non-profit organization assists intellectual and developmentally disabled individuals by providing adult day care programs, vocational and employment services and youth transitional services. We have also enhanced some of our neighborhood appearances. This is seen with historic neighborhood street sign toppers; available to us through collaboration with development and engineering services, parks and recreation, and public works departments. This is also visible with small business façade improvements on Western and Central Avenue. These enhancements allow us to support our small businesses and to create identity. We aim to increase homeownership in the neighborhoods through first-time homeownerships and residential infill incentive programs. We encourage rehabilitation and maintenance of our existing housing stocks through our housing rehabilitation programs (requires income qualifications) and code enforcement. Neighbors take notice when a house has a rehabilitation done to it. This often has a ripple effect and a positive impact on the community. We check in with our small businesses regularly to see where we can help. We want them to be successful and have used federal grant money for smaller micro-enterprise businesses. We have also used some American Rescue Act money for non-profits, as well. We

promote a workforce development program for a youth paid internship. We have been successful in placing several of our youth with a variety of experiences in the city with various businesses and non-profits. We have increased our community engagement by creating two neighborhood civic associations, and have used the Front Porch to go out into the neighborhoods and invite discussion. We share volunteer opportunities with our plogging program which promotes health and wellness. We have a nutritionist, who promotes healthy snacks with locally grown produce and recipes. We team up with our libraries and promote their recreation and educational programs and participate in Make a Difference Day events. This year Make a Difference Day will include smoke alarms. Ms. White inquired if mile markers could be installed on trails so that people could see how far they walked. Mr. Lopez will check on that with Parks & Recreation. Ms. McKillip inquired of community pools. Mr. Lopez stated that conceptual work is being done for an aquatic center.

6. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Baltierrez stated that next month's agenda will include Youth Services and Community Engagement division and the Parks & Recreation department for an update on events, activities, programming and facilities. We will have an introduction of our two new Library Branch Managers. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17. This is one week earlier than regularly scheduled due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

7. Announcements

Ms. Baltierrez announced that Neighborhood & Family Services is starting a Homeless Services division. Recruitment is underway for a Homeless Services Manager and Coordinator. These positions will help with homeless initiatives, programs and services, and the implementation of a transitional and bridge housing facility to stabilize families experiencing homelessness. Ms. Baltierrez announced that the Libraries have two new library branch managers: Stephanie Douglas is assigned to the Civic Center location and Bridget Esqueda is assigned to the Sam Garcia location. Billy Moore festivities take place October 14 through October 17 on Western Avenue in Old Town Avondale. This event will include carnival rides, a parade, food vendors, live entertainment, a Wild West show, barrel wars and a corn hole tournament. There will be a Creepin' Cruise event on Thursday, October 28 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at the Phoenix Raceway. Activities will include passing out candy, a tunnel of terror and a haunted garage. This is a free event.

8. Call to the Public

One member of the public was in attendance; ASU student, Shahid Meighan.

9. Adjournment

Ms. McKillip made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Ms. Osborne. The motion passed unanimously with an Aye by Members present. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.