

April 20, 2021 Minutes

Meeting called to order at 4:35pm

Clayton, Eads, Deckard, Poulin, and Ward in attendance.

Introduced two new members, Deckard and Ward to the Commission.

Reviewed February meeting minutes. They were unanimously approved.

Old Business

Introduced O'Toole and Stone from the BCEDC to review the survey of businesses located in Port Royal. Stone thanked Clayton for her efforts on circulating the survey and thanked Eads for putting the survey together. There were 90 responses to the survey.

Results:

Most interaction was through the business license office, but a fair amount through the town manager and town council, but also the website.

How to assist business? highest through website, town clerk, and then town manager.

How would you prefer to interact? Email highest, call directly, then in-person

How to enhance business? Pretty spread, Keep PI, port redevelopment were the two top.

How to streamline? Make processes through internet overwhelming favorite.

How aware of town comp plan? 34% never heard of it, 20% aware, but didn't understand impact.

How aware of BCEDC? 46% unaware, 23% aware, but didn't know mission. Most respondents not in the industry sector, so maybe not aware.

Are you aware of the local orgs that help businesses? Most aware of the chambers seemingly. Redevelopment Commission did well. A lot of respondents via mail list subscription.

Overall, need to keep the website up to date and make businesses aware of other organizations that can assist businesses. Covid and lack of direct interface has probably impacted responses.

Maybe consider section for Businesses to be added to the website.

What direction would BCEDC recommend? He suggested digging down into comments. Find 3 or 4 actionable items and pursue. Raising awareness would be helpful.

Moving forward in 2021, Town directs street festivals, but Redevelopment Commission is focused geographically, basically commercial corridors. How to attract traffic/business? What role would BCEDC play? O'Toole stated that they are primarily focused on light industry, but would consider other commercial pursuits if directed by the board and/or community. Would certainly welcome input. New member of the board Greg Shelton is taking an active role and will be helpful to both BCEDC and the Town.

Next steps: study the survey, provide input to the Commission/BCEDC/Town Council. Need to stress tech side of website in response to survey.

Deckard had some questions regarding funding and its pursuit. She has an idea, but wasn't yet willing to share, but would discuss with BCEDC.

Ward asked how businesses are selected for Port Royal. What are the targets? Should Redevelopment Commission participate in the discussion of selecting types of businesses?

O'Toole discussed the targeted businesses of the BCEDC. Eads commented on marine related businesses that could be attracted to the port property. Commerce had looked at heavy industry, which didn't seem to fit.

Ward asked about a study of the corridors and what could be potentially attracted to those areas.

BCEDC could pinpoint info on specific sites/properties and what could be attracted. Clayton discussed all of the corridors that are delineated in the ordinance. Our board member could work with the Town and identify what is feasible in the Town.

Ward wants to pursue what enhances what people like about the Town.

Eads would like to review purchasing power for the area and address the results of the study. Would help drive the agenda for the next meeting.

Deckard's objective is to work on funding for the Commission.

Market data can be viewed at the BCEDC website.

Hope to have BCEDC back to discuss additional businesses.

Deckard moved to adjourn, Eads seconded.

Meeting ended at 5:36pm.