

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

April 12th, 2023

The Richmond Economic Development Commission's monthly meeting convened at 11:39 AM on April 12th, 2023, via Zoom webinar.

Call to Order: 11:39 AM by Chair, A. Anderson

1. **Roll Call:**

A quorum was present with the following commission members: A. Anderson, A. Portillo Knowles, G. Sewell Murphy, O. Willis, D. Wear, D. Heiss, R. Yazdi, R. Lee, D. Thompson, C. Kenney, D. Heiss

2. **Absent:** B. Evans, K. Lynch, A. Nurse, A. Huie

3. **Staff:** Lizeht Zepeda

4. **Council Liaison:** Cesar Zepeda

5. **Guest:** Kyle Tankard

6. **Minutes:**

1st – G. Sewell-Murphy, 2nd – D. Thompson

Presentation

Kyle Tankard (SCI Consulting) - Recommendations for Increasing Number of Cannabis Retail Locations

Ord No. 16-19 adopted by City Council allowed for adult-use cannabis activities and proposed 2 new non-storefront permits bringing total to 5 permits. Proposed permits stricken by City Council prior to adoption. City staff directed to return with a Cannabis Equity program that would prioritize issuance of license to equity applicants. Equity program was adopted on December 7, 2021. City council motion directing City staff to work with EDC to research increasing cannabis retail locations on December 20, 2022. City is currently in the final stages in selecting a firm to develop a technical assistance program for equity applicants. An equity applicant is in development for applicants for the technical assistance program.

Three factors analyzed for support for more retail locations: population density, competition, and consumer demand. Based on population density, Richmond can support 3-5 additional retail locations. Richmond currently has 3 retail locations for 116,000 people, which is 38,000 people per retailer. Standard metric is one retail location for 15,000 to 20,000 people. There is a consistent upward trend in sales from 2016-2021. However, in 2022 there was a drop in retail

sales, and projections for 2023 suggest a continuing downtrend. This suggests that the consumer demand is met, and retail cannabis market might be approaching a saturation point. Additional of more retailers may lower average sales of existing retailers. Some expansion scenarios include:

Conservative: 2 additional storefront retail locations (1 equity, 1 existing retail operator)

Moderate: 3 additional storefront retail locations (2 equity, 1 for existing retail operator) and 1 non-storefront operator (equity)

Aggressive: 4 additional storefront retail locations (3 equity, 1 for existing retail operator) and 2 non-storefront operators (both equity)

Chair and Vice Chair Information/Updates

City staff has submitted a Request for Legal Opinion regarding upcoming Chair and Vice Chair elections and eligibility to run for consecutive terms. A google form was sent out to nominate candidates for Chair and Vice Chair.

Committee Reports

Policy/Green Blue New Deal

Commissioner Willis discussed that Brandon will be stepping in for the Chair of the Subcommittee. Subcommittee met monthly virtually. Meeting focused on discussing environmental literacy curriculum needed to support and provide informed decision on the Green Blue New Deal, and stances such as Investment Reduction Grants and Wind Energy. Roots of Success in Berkeley, led by SF State Professor, provides environmental literacy curriculum nation-wide. Roots of Success have been very successful at preparing people for jobs in the green economy and educating case managers and workforce development practitioners. They are currently doing a project with Rubicon. Commissioner Willis will be having lunch with Tamara Walker of Employment and Training. Commissioner Willis read Justine Burt's Updates for the Green Blue New Deal. Updates include progress and activities such as workshop with the Council of Industries and Chamber of Commerce, tour of Port of Richmond and tenants, sharing of preliminary findings of Green Blue New Deal Survey, and offshore wind conference in Sacramento

Community Engagement

Commissioner Wear discusses working with Justine Burt to create an invitation for aspiring entrepreneurs. Goal is trying to arrange a cohort of 5 people who want to gain information about Green Blue New Deal and guidance in areas such as writing business plans. Commissioner Wear will be following up and continuing working with the Neighborhood Councils who helped with disseminating the Green Blue New Deal survey.

Taste of Richmond

Commissioner Portillo-Knowles presented on behalf of Commissioner Evans. Subcommittee decided on the City Plaza and Auditorium will be the venue for Taste of Richmond. Will be working with a small business management company. Subcommittee took a tour. Date will be

July 15, 2023. Flyer will be distributed in the upcoming weeks.

Cannabis

No update from subcommittee.

Sustainability: Businesses/Industrial Hemp & Expo/Assessment

Update will be provided next month.

Staff Reports

Finance Department

No Updates

City Manager's Office

No updates

Mayor's Office

Chief of Staff from the Mayor's Office Staff ask interest in EDC for ideas to develop a subcommittee to build small business rapport. Mayor's office wants to provide more targeted support to small business in areas such as Measure U and permitting processes.

Public Comments/Announcements/Handouts Presentation:

Lizeht Zepeda read Cordell's comment: The commission is invited to the El Cerrito Chamber Luncheon, April 26th, 11:30 PM at El Mono.

7. Next Meeting: May 10th, 2023

8. Adjournment: 1:11 PM