



City of Tacoma Economic Development Committee Minutes

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402

Conference Room 248

May 26, 2015

10:00 AM

Chair Marty Campbell, Vice Chair David Boe,
Ryan Mello, Lauren Walker, Robert Thoms (alternate)

Call To Order

Chair Campbell called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Present: 3 - Boe, Campbell and Thoms

Absent: 2 - Mello and Walker

Approval of Minutes

1. [15-0492](#) Approval of the minutes from the April 14, 2015 meeting

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Boe moved to approve the minutes of April 14, 2015.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was adopted.

Ayes: 3 - Boe, Campbell and Thoms

Absent: 2 - Mello and Walker

2. [15-0541](#) Approval of the Minutes from the April 28, 2015 meeting

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Boe moved to approve the minutes of April 28, 2015.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was adopted.

Ayes: 3 - Boe, Campbell and Thoms

Absent: 2 - Mello and Walker

Briefing Items

Chair Campbell stated the Quarterly Economic Indicators Report would be presented first.

4. [15-0543](#) Quarterly Economic Indicators Report [Debbie Bingham, International Program Development Specialist, Community and Economic Development]

At approximately 10:03 a.m., Debbie Bingham, International Program Development Specialist, stated the sales and business and occupation tax revenues have increased, and unemployment has decreased. She reviewed quarterly statistics relative to tax revenues then reviewed the economic sectors. Ms. Bingham reviewed development and industrial performance, including the Port of Tacoma, average lease rates for office space, and residential and commercial building permits. Brief discussion ensued regarding the lease rates. Ms. Bingham then discussed employment rates in the City and by economic cluster; business start-ups and closures, the number of new business licenses, and workforce development and small business engagement. She stated overall the local economy is slowly trending upward.

3. [15-0542](#) Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion Efforts in Tacoma-Pierce County
[Ricardo Noguera, Director, Community and Economic Development;
Bruce Kendall, Economic Development Board]

At approximately 10:18 a.m., Ricardo Noguera, Director of Community and Economic Development, introduced Susan Suess, Senior Vice President of the Economic Development Board (EDB). Mr. Noguera stated the key ingredient in most cities is business retention and expansion. He reviewed successful business retentions this year, including the Bank of New York Mellon, Robinson-Noble, and Sound Physicians. Mr. Noguera then discussed business attraction, noting it expands revenue and creates new local jobs and successes, including Bass Pro Shops and State Farm Mutual Insurance. He then discussed expansions, including Lollar Guitars, ECO Building Products, Coordinated Care, and Evergreen Fire and Security. Ms. Suess discussed business retention in Pierce County, including Milgard Windows and Doors, Richards Packaging, and Boeing. She noted the goal of the EDB is to assist a business grow or expand in their city of operation first, then Pierce County. She stated business attraction is her key role at the EDB, which is a public-private partnership, and EDB can work quietly with the business and give them a sense of the market. She then discussed successes, including TriWest Health Care Alliance in Puyallup, Niagara Bottling, LLC in Frederickson, and Western Institutional Review Board in Puyallup. She then discussed successes in business expansions in Pierce County, including Toray Composites (America), Inc. and James Hardie Building Products and discussed the importance of utility infrastructure and capacity.

Mr. Noguera and Ms. Sues then discussed the partnerships with local agencies and businesses, including: Tacoma-Pierce County WorkSource, the Chamber of Commerce, Pierce County, the Economic Development Board, the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Tacoma Farmer's Market, various higher education and vocational partners, the Cross District Association and all neighborhood business districts, the Executive Council for a Greater Tacoma, the Tacoma-Pierce County Sports Commission, the World Trade Center, the Port of Tacoma, and Go Local. Discussion ensued regarding amenities and criteria of companies where Tacoma may receive positive or negative responses, including public transportation opportunities, parking, the local business and occupation tax, minimum wage predictability, community, and availability of office space. Discussion continued regarding growing quality jobs in Tacoma, identifying and removing threats and barriers for businesses, making downtown Tacoma a destination where businesses stay open, and attracting the 18-35 demographic.

Topics for Upcoming Meetings

5. [15-0544](#) The next meeting of the Economic Development Committee will be on June 9, 2015
Neighborhood Business Districts Program Review Check-in [Shari Hart, Program Development Specialist, Community and Economic Development]

Committee Liaison Brad Forbes stated the next meeting is June 9, 2015 and will include a Neighborhoods Districts Program review from Shari Hart.

Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.



Marty Campbell, Chair



Wendy Fowler, City Clerk's Office