



City of Tacoma

Economic Development

Committee Minutes

747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402, Conference Room 248

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 882 2753 9908

Webinar Link: www.zoom.us/j/88227539908 Passcode: 614650

January 24, 2023

10:00 AM

Keith Blocker, Joe Bushnell, Kiara Daniels,
Olgy Diaz, Sarah Rumbaugh (alternate)

Call To Order

Chair Blocker called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

Roll Call

Present: 4 - Blocker, Bushnell, Daniels and Rumbaugh

Absent: 1 - Diaz

Public Comment

There was no Public Comment.

Briefing Items

1. [23-0057](#) Election of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

MOTION: Council Member Bushnell moved to re-elect Council Member Daniels as Vice Chair of the Economic Development Committee for the year 2023.

SECONDED BY: Chair Blocker.

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

Ayes: 4 - Blocker, Bushnell, Daniels and Rumbaugh

Absent: 1 - Diaz

MOTION: Vice Chair Daniels moved to re-elect Council Member Blocker as Chair of the Economic Development Committee for the year 2023.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Rumbaugh.

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

Ayes: 4 - Blocker, Bushnell, Daniels and Rumbaugh

Absent: 1 - Diaz

2. [23-0055](#)

RAIN Incubator: Transformative Biotechnology Innovation & Training [Pat Beard, Business Development Manager, Community and Economic Development]

At approximately 10:10 a.m., Pat Beard, Business Development Manager, Community and Economic Development, provided opening remarks and introduced Dr. David Hirschberg, Founder, Readiness Acceleration and Innovation Network Incubator (RAIN). Dr. Hirschberg presented an update on RAIN, including an overview of what RAIN does; RAIN's local strategic partners; collaborations and contracts; who the target companies are, noting areas of focus; current and projected funding; the move to be more sustainable; RAIN's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, noting RAIN's readiness; the primary goal to develop severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) surveillance tools for Pierce County, noting a testing outline from May-June 2020; evaluation of commercial rapid antibody tests; identifying vulnerable communities through SARS-CoV-2 antibody tests; RAIN's evaluation of SARS-CoV-2 viral ribonucleic acid detection assays, noting a comparison of COVID-19 surveillance workflow; a lab site located at Westfield Southcenter; examples of news releases regarding wastewater surveillance; blue collar biotechnology in the South Sound, noting current activities; the goal to hold a conference on artificial intelligence and biotechnology in Tacoma; and images of RAIN vaccination clinics.

Discussion ensued regarding funding from the City of Tacoma; the number of people trained through RAIN and their career paths; wastewater testing; the intersectionality of artificial intelligence and biotechnology; professional lab spaces in Tacoma, noting zoning laws; and opportunities for biotechnology in the South Sound.

3. [23-0056](#) William M. Factory Small Business Incubator
[Tim Strege, Executive Director, William M. Factory Small Business Incubator]

At approximately 10:41 a.m., Tim Strege, Executive Director, William M. Factory Small Business Incubator, provided opening remarks and presented an update on the William M. Factory Small Business Incubator, including an overview of what the incubator does; local supporting partners; the number of entrepreneurs and startups that have been served, noting finance assistance and demographics of enrolled entrepreneurs; who the target entrepreneur and startups are; how the incubator is funded; top challenges local entrepreneurs and startups face; Washington State and United States employer rates by county, noting employer firms per 1,000 population; and how Tacoma can improve the climate for local entrepreneurs and startups.

Discussion ensued regarding the top three ways to improve the climate for local entrepreneurs and startups, and networking opportunities.

Topics for Upcoming Meetings

4. [23-0059](#) January 31, 2023 - Greater Seattle Partners
February 14, 2023- Port of Tacoma Update; Maritime Academy
February 28, 2023- Spaceworks Tacoma Update

Cathy Sims, Committee Liaison, stated that the next meeting will be held on January 31, 2023, and will include a presentation on Greater Seattle Partners; the February 14, 2023, meeting will include updates from the Port of Tacoma and maritime academy; and the February 28, 2023, meeting will include an update from Spaceworks Tacoma.

Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.



Keith Blocker, Chair



Jessica Mazique, City Clerk's Office