



# City of Tacoma Economic Development Committee Minutes

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402

Conference Room 248

January 29, 2019

10:00 AM

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Chair Robert Thoms, Vice Chair Conor McCarthy, Lillian Hunter,  
Catherine Ushka, Chris Beale (alternate)

## Call To Order

Chair Thoms called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Present:** 3 - Hunter, McCarthy and Thoms

**Absent:** 1 - Ushka

Council Member Ushka arrived at 10:11 a.m.

## Approval of Minutes

1. [19-0083](#) Approval of the Minutes of the January 8, 2019 Meeting

**MOTION:** Council Member Hunter moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2019 meeting.

**SECONDED BY:** Deputy Mayor McCarthy.

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

**Ayes:** 3 - McCarthy, Thoms and Hunter

**Absent:** 1 - Ushka

## Briefing Items

2. [19-0091](#) Election of the Committee Chair and Vice Chair

**MOTION: Deputy Mayor McCarthy moved to elect Council Member Thoms as Chair of the Economic Development Committee for the year 2019.**

**SECONDED BY: Council Member Hunter.**

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

**Ayes:** 3 - McCarthy, Thoms and Hunter

**Absent:** 1 - Ushka

**MOTION: Council Member Hunter moved to elect Deputy Mayor McCarthy as Vice Chair of the Economic Development Committee for the year 2019.**

**SECONDED BY: Chair Thoms.**

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

**Ayes:** 3 - Hunter, McCarthy and Thoms

**Absent:** 1 - Ushka

3. [19-0084](#) Update on Namatad  
[Pat Beard, Project Manager, Community and Economic Development]

At approximately 10:08 a.m., Pat Beard, Project Manager, Community and Economic Development (CED), introduced Matt Tolentino, Assistant Professor, University of Washington-Tacoma.

Council Member Ushka arrived here, at 10:11 a.m.

Mr. Tolentino provided his background, background of the project, and the challenges faced by firefighters in the field. He described Firefly, which is a platform designed to assess building fires or other dangerous situations; the components of Firefly; continuous development, including fire response, enabling smart buildings, identifying exposure risk with autonomous drones, and conducting field evaluations; and the annual cost to fire services. Mr. Tolentino concluded by reviewing adjacent market opportunities, target markets, and next steps.

Discussion ensued regarding continuing development and next steps.

4. [19-0085](#) Development and Discussion of the Economic Development Strategic Plan  
[Jeff Robinson, Director, Community & Economic Development, and Chris Mefford, President and CEO, Community Attributes Inc.]

At approximately 10:55 a.m., Jeff Robinson, Director, CED, provided background on the City's Economic Development Strategic Action Plan, including realignment of the department into a business, services and workforce partnerships division and the creation of an economic development services division; future plans on placing more emphasis on maintaining and expanding current small and mid-size businesses; and introduced Chris Mefford, President and CEO, Community Attributes, Inc.

Mr. Mefford reviewed his background with the City and the regional work currently being done. He presented the Strategic Plan working draft schedule, covering landscape analysis, an economic profile, stakeholder outreach, and the Strategic Plan. He concluded by outlining the next steps and how they plan on moving forward.

Discussion ensued regarding community outreach, ways to utilize data from past economic development strategies, recruiting businesses to utilize empty spaces with a focus on downtown Tacoma, introducing incentives for small and medium businesses, and how to make the City an employment center. Discussion concluded on a request for an update on the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council.

## Topics for Upcoming Meetings

5. [19-0086](#) February 12, 2019 - Pierce County Workforce Development Strategic Direction and Alignment Opportunity, Foss Waterway Development Authority land transactions  
February 26, 2019 - Green Economy Update

Chair Thoms stated the February 12, 2019 meeting will include presentations on the Pierce County Workforce Development Strategic Direction Alignment Opportunity and the Foss Waterway Development Authority land transactions; and the February 26, 2019 meeting will include an update on the Green Economy.

Discussion ensued regarding receiving presentations on the retail marketing efforts, the free trade zone and how it is currently utilized as an economic tool, reviewing viable ways of utilizing Luxurious Resilient Flooring, and clean up of the Tacoma Dome.

## **Public Comment**

There was no Public Comment.

## **Other Items of Interest**

Council Member Hunter brought to the Committee's attention the bill for restricting booth rentals, specifically hair stylists, so the Committee could be aware of possible outcomes.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

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Robert Thoms, Chair

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Katie Foster, City Clerk's Office