

CITY OF PACIFICA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of September 13, 2011

In attendance were members: Vasudev Narayanan, Sue Vaterlaus, Courtney Conlon, Sue Digre, Mike Ervin, Jim Heldberg, Mary Ann Nihart, Victor Spano, and Sam Casillas

Absent: Mary Brown and Javier Chavarria

1. Call to Order

Chair Jim Heldberg called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

2. Approval of August 9, 2011 Minutes

The August 9, 2011 minutes were approved on a motion made by Sue Vaterlaus and seconded by Vasudev Narayanan. The motion carried.

Chair Heldberg postponed agenda item #5 to the next meeting in October as the Pedro Point representative was not able to attend. It was approved.

3. Discussion on Objectives for Committee

Jim Heldberg provided a brief historical perspective on how the objectives came to be for the newcomers on the committee.

Objective #1 is almost complete, but discussion about measuring customer service satisfaction surfaced, and the group felt it should still be monitored.

Objective #2 pertains to Existing Business Districts. Sue Digre mentioned that rents are escalating and driving businesses out of the area. It was stated that merchants are complaining about similar businesses coming into each center and a lack of exclusivity. Vasudev discussed adaptation strategies to keep businesses in business. Even having similar businesses in one area can bring more business to that specific neighborhood which benefits the overall group. Questions arose about whether the Chamber can offer some support to existing businesses? Can we do Event Nights to attract out of towners? What effect can social media sites have to entice outsiders into Pacifica? Discussion ensued regarding Groupon and Living Social and the pros and cons.

Objective #3 involves outreach and marketing of Pacifica. Questions arose as to where to go outside Pacifica to bring people here. Suggestions included looking at associations of antique dealers, restaurants, and other services which may have possible ideas. The San Mateo Convention and Visitors bureau will hopefully be able to provide some information.

Discussion continued about making Pacifica an office space community and to find occupants for the empty storefronts that already exist. Studies were

conducted previously on this issue, and Steve will bring those findings in at the next meeting.

The members of the Subcommittee were:

Objective #1	Mike Ervin
Objective #2	Vasuyadev Narayanan, Victor Spano, Courtney Conlon and Sue Vaterlaus
Objective #3	Sam Casillas, Mike Ervin, Jim Heldberg, and Courtney Conlon

4. Foreign Trade / investment Initiative – Victor Spano

Victor brought up HYSTA – a high tech group with about 5,000 members, who, along with the Consul General of China, went to Lodi to invest and begin trade talks. They have now started importing wines from Lodi to China. Would they have any interest in Pacifica? It would take a huge commitment, and it was suggested that the San Mateo County Visitor and Convention Bureau should spearhead such an undertaking.

5. Update on Using Art to Fill Vacant Spaces – Victor Spano

Victor spoke with the Sanchez Art Center, and they are supportive of the idea of using art to fill vacant spaces but they cannot get involved because they are a non-profit organization. They suggest Victor contact the Art Guild of Pacifica to find local artists, along with Skyline college and local high schools. The process is moving along nicely.

Vasu spoke to the Biagini brothers about Eureka Square. They have already given him two possible spaces in the center. The hope is to find local artists first and hope to change displays weekly. Vasu volunteered serving wine and hors d'oeuvres to mimic typical art shows.

Discussion arose about insurance and whose coverage would be used to hold such an event.

6. Oral Communications from the Public

Cindy Abbott wanted to discuss the Mayor's Walk that focuses only on businesses. There is no reaching out to the residents in town. Why doesn't anyone ask what the residents want that we don't have? In terms of office space, she suggested we approach a big company and entice them to come to Pacifica. Try to work with non-profits and do more with them to get additional involvement.

7. Oral Communications from the Committee

Vasu mentioned that he just added meeting space above his store and has opened it up to miscellaneous groups. The calendar is filling up with meetings.

Sam mentioned that the Pacifica Land Trust partners with a few businesses to do nights out, and they have been very successful.

Many Ann mentioned that the next Mayor's walk is in Eureka Square on October 31, 2011.

8. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date was set for October 11, 2011.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.