



Economic Sustainability Commission

MINUTES of the March 9, 2022 meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair David Jessee, Jack Moracco, Jim Porto, Soteria Shepperson, Randee Haven-O'Donnell, and Susan Romain

STAFF PRESENT: Jon Hartman-Brown, Staff Liaison

OTHERS PRESENT: Miles Fitch, Potential ESC Member

Chair Jessee called the meeting to order at 6:18pm.

1. Consider Minutes from the January 12, 2021 meeting

Chair Jessee made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Porto seconded the motion with unanimous approval.

2. Committee and Staff Reports

a. Carrboro Business Alliance Update

Chair Jessee stated that the CBA has been in a “watch and see” mode with regard to the 203 Project. He also said business is coming back and it looks like many businesses will continue to mask even though the mask mandate has been lifted.

b. Comprehensive Plan Taskforce Update

Mr. Porto stated there was no updates at this time since the Council is considering it and requested the Council liaisons to provide an update.

c. BIPOC Business Update

Mr. Hartman-Brown stated the Town is partnering with the Small Business Center at Durham Tech to offer business training opportunities and will be prioritizing BIPOC businesses and entrepreneurs for the program. A Spanish-speaking training is also being considered if resources can be found.

d. Staff Update

Mr. Hartman-Brown stated that getting the COVID-19 Mitigation Business Grants finalized with the COVID Grant/Loan Review Committee meeting being scheduled in order to review the final five applicants.

3. Update on UNC DFI Proposal

Mr. Porto stated he reviewed the proposal and felt that it did not specifically address the issues that had previously been discussed in a conference call. He suggested the Commission go back to meet with the DFI (Development Finance Initiative) Staff to clarify what the Commission is looking for in a proposal. There was much discussion about the proposal and a general agreement to have Mr. Porto, Chair Jessee, and Mr. Hartman-Brown meet with the DFI staff and better explain what we are looking for.

4. Racial Equity Commission Appointment Discussion

Mr. Hartman-Brown introduced the item and informed the Commission that this seat has been opened due to the resignation of Mr. Dan Mayer. Mr. Porto volunteered to serve as the representative until at such time more members are brought on to the Commission and may be more willing to serve. Chair Jessee made the motion to nominate Mr. Porto to represent the ESC on the Racial Equity Commission, seconded by Ms. Shepperson with unanimous in favor.

5. Discussion on Decreasing the Commission Size

Chair Jessee introduced the item and stated that during his tenure on the Commission it has rarely had all of the seats filled. Mr. Porto questioned whether members could live or work outside of Carrboro. Mr. Hartman-Brown responded that potentially yes, if the Council so chose. Discussion also included membership make-up and types of members with various expertise. The Commission generally determined to keep the Commission size the same and work harder to find a potential members with various experience.

6. Revolving Loan Updates & Discussion

Due to time limits, this item was differed to the next meeting.

7. Other Business of the Commission

There was no other business to discuss.

A motion was made by Mr. Porto to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Chair Jessee with a unanimous vote in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.