

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Monday, January 5, 2026 @ 5:15 PM
Council Chambers, First Floor of City Hall

MEETING MINUTES

City Councilors Present: Carson, Deane, Faloon, Fish, Hawes, Leonard, Mallar.

City Staff Present: Collette, Hernandez-Smith, Krieg, Lear, Wall.

Chair Leonard called the meeting to order at 8:04 P.M.

1. DISCUSSION ON CENTRAL KITCHEN PROJECT, Action requested to provide feedback to staff

Development Director Anne Krieg presented to the Committee and provided an update and background on the project.

Economic Development Officer Biguita Hernandez-Smith and Business Development Specialist Brad Wall presented to the Committee and provided further detail regarding recent project updates and the vision for the project moving forward.

Chair Leonard asked about possible consequences of either delaying or cancelling the project, in regards to previous grant funding received – Development Director Krieg responded and clarified. Leonard also expressed support for the project.

Councilor Faloon asked about the case studies presented by Business Development Specialist Wall – Wall responded that these studies are dated from 2022 until present. Faloon also asked about national statistics on success rates of these types facilities – Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith responded that these could be obtained for Councilors, and discussed further with Faloon.

Councilor Mallar asked about the building size discrepancy stated in different reports – Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith and Development Director Krieg responded and clarified. Mallar also asked about the estimated cost of the operations consultant – Hernandez-Smith responded and clarified. Mallar asked about the operational costs and bonding costs upon the facility opening – Krieg responded that this is not yet known. Mallar asked about the number of businesses that will be occupying the facility at any given time – Hernandez-Smith responded and clarified. Mallar asked about coordinating with the School Department and discussed with staff. Mallar also asked about the use of electric appliances and expressed concern about this – discussed with Krieg and Hernandez-Smith. Mallar asked about the commercial kitchen facility in Portland – Hernandez-Smith and Krieg responded and clarified, and discussed further with

Mallar. Mallar asked for additional information about bonding costs before deliberating further.

Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith discussed the importance of maintaining credibility with project partners.

Councilor Fish asked for clarification regarding construction costs – Development Director Krieg and Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith responded and clarified. Fish asked about a contingency plan if construction costs go over-budget – Krieg responded that this would be discussed with the contractor at that time.

Councilor Deane asked for clarification regarding possible revenue opportunities from the cold storage facility – Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith responded and discussed.

Councilor Mallar asked for additional clarification regarding the addition of the cold storage facility – discussed with staff and Chair Leonard. Mallar also expressed serious concern about the overall costs of the project and the usability of the facility based on current design proposals. Discussed with Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith.

City Manager Lear discussed the importance of economic development and that there will always be financial investment on the part of the City involved.

Councilor Fish asked about businesses who have already expressed interest in renting at the facility – Business Development Specialist Wall and Economic Development Officer Hernandez-Smith responded and discussed.

Chair Leonard discussed changes in the business climate and advancements in the food industry in the years since the project was first proposed, and expressed continued support for the project.

Councilor Carson asked about data on food service businesses already engaged in incubator-style facilities and expressed concern regarding investment in an industry that is often difficult for businesses.

Development Director Krieg asked to confirm what additional information Councilors would like to have for the next meeting – listed items that have already been discussed and asked for additions. Councilor Mallar asked about having an independent organization manage the facility and discussed with Krieg. City Manager Lear also asked to confirm whether pending Council agenda items regarding this project should be held pending additional information, or if Council can move forward with these items – Chair Leonard responded and discussed next steps. Councilor Fish asked for clarification regarding the approval procedure for bond funds – Lear and Krieg responded and clarified.

Councilor Mallar moved to postpone voting on pending agenda items until the next Committee meeting, seconded by Councilor Carson. Roll call vote conducted – 3

in favor (Councilors Mallar, Carson, and Fish), 2 opposed (Councilor Faloon and Chair Leonard). Motion passed.

Chair Leonard requested that Councilors submit any pending questions to himself or staff as soon as possible.

2. **ANNUAL REPORTS**, Action requested to accept and forward to full Council
 - A. **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**
 - B. **PLANNING BOARD**
 - C. **PENJAJAWOC MARSH/MALL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

Planning Officer Anja Collette presented to the Committee and provided an overview of the three annual reports.

Councilor Carson moved acceptance of the reports and to forward them to full Council, seconded by Councilor Fish. Vote unless doubted, no doubt.

3. **TINY HOME PARK PROPOSED ORDINANCE CHANGE**, Action requested to provide feedback for possible amendments

Planning Officer Anja Collette presented an overview of the proposed ordinance change.

Chair Leonard expressed opposition to supporting short-term rentals in the City.

Councilor Fish expressed support for short-term rentals and for the proposed ordinance change.

Councilor Faloon expressed some agreement with points raised by both Chair Leonard and Councilor Fish.

Councilor Fish moved to forward item to Planning Board and full Council, seconded by Councilor Faloon. Roll call vote conducted – 4 in favor (Councilors Mallar, Carson, Faloon, and Fish), 1 opposed (Chair Leonard). Motion passed.

4. **UPDATE ON 2022 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**, No action requested

Planning Officer Anja Collette provided an update and overview on implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Leonard asked about tracking the effectiveness of implementation strategies and how the various policies interact with one another – Planning Officer Collette responded and clarified. Development Director Anne Krieg provided additional details and clarification.

Councilor Faloon asked about whether the implementation policies are listed in order of importance – Planning Officer Collette responded that they are not.

Development Director Krieg announced the promotion of Jeff LaBree to the position of Code Enforcement Director.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 P.M.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted,

Sarah Maquillan
Admin. Asst.
C&ED