

Meyers Advisory Council

April 22, 2020; 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Virtual Meeting
Member and Public Access via Zoom

<https://www.edcgov.us/meyers>

Members:
Leon Abravanel
Joseph V. Cardinale
Trevor Coolidge, Secretary
Greg Daum
Carl Fair
Josh Marianelli
James Marino
Amanda Ross, Chair
Judith Wood, Vice Chair

1. Call Meeting to Order and Establish Quorum

Abravanel, Cardinale, Coolidge, Daum, Fair, Marianelli, Ross, and Wood were present, in addition to Brendan Ferry, Planning Manager with El Dorado County.

Chair Ross welcomed members of the public attending online and gave thanks after serving as the Chair of the MAC for the past year.

The meeting was called to order with a quorum established.

2. Approve Agenda

Agenda was approved without modification.

3. Correspondence

No correspondence was reported.

4. Minutes: January 14, 2020

No changes to the minutes were requested and the minutes were approved.

5. Public Matters: Informational items and persons wishing to address the Council regarding non-agenda items

No members of the public sought to speak on non-Agenda items.

6. Agenda Items:

A. Election of MAC Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary

Following the first year, the three positions on the Council were up for nomination. Chair Ross indicated that she would not seek to Chair the MAC for another year due to numerous commitments and her recent appointment to the County Planning Commission.

Wood and Coolidge indicated an interest in continuing on in their existing roles, but did not have availability to step up to Chair the MAC. Ross outlined the duties of the Chair, that included working with County and other agency staff to set the agenda, advance projects, and coordinate with staff to address issues and provide presentations. Several members expressed an interest to support the new Chair, but did not believe that they had the time to commit to being an effective Chair. Leon Abravanel expressed interest in serving as the Chair; based on his interest, Mr. Ferry proposed moving forward with Abravanel as Chair, Wood as Vice Chair, and Coolidge as Secretary for the next year. It was unanimously accepted. Ross will work with Abravanel to transition duties, with support from Wood and Coolidge.

The item included brief discussion regarding the seat on the MAC that was left vacant after Mr. Jim Marino stepped down due to other commitments - in order to fill the seat, a public recruitment and appointment by the BOS is required.

B. COVID-19 Update & Discussion

Mr. Ferry provided a brief update regarding the current status of COVID-19 and the County's response. As identified in the Agenda, Ferry called attention to the County's website for the most recent information, available at: <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/hhsa/Pages/EDCCOVID-19.aspx>

Mr. Ferry noted that he had reached out to EDC Public Health officials, but they were not available to present at the MAC meeting. Mr. Ferry covered the major events including County, State, and Federal guidelines and restrictions related to travel and commerce. The most recent local action was an EDC order calling for a stop to non-essential travel into the El Dorado County portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Cardinale asked about how travel restrictions were being enforced and if they were occurring elsewhere; Ferry and Leona Allen (a member of the audience and Lake Valley Fire Protection District Board Member) indicated that similar restrictions were occurring elsewhere, but that the means of enforcement had not been finalized. Ferry indicated that the EDC was continuing to operate as an essential service, with DOT and law enforcement continuing normal operations, but a large portion of staff was working remotely. Cardinale noted that Tahoe Paradise Park's Board is considering how they should remain open and was considering only being open on weekdays. No action was taken.

C. Local initiatives to help those struggling in the County

A general discussion occurred, with several MAC members noting services available for those in need, including:

- *Wood expressed thanks to LTUSD for giving out 900 bags of food to children in the community last Friday, approaching 5000 bags of food per week. She also noted that the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe is providing 80-100 hot meals each evening via a drive-thru system; meals have ranged from fresh pizza to donated roasted chicken.*

- *Christmas Cheer and Bread & Broth are also providing food assistance.*
- *Abravanel noted that he was working with Rise Designs of Meyers to create merchandise for Tahoe Together, a fund raising effort with proceeds to support COVID-19 relief funds administered by three local community groups: the El Dorado Community Foundation, Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation, and Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation.*
- *Wood also noted Tahoe Magic can help those in crisis in a variety of ways, following an agency referral to their services.*
- *Lake Valley Fire Protection District was thanked for getting groceries for highly vulnerable residents.*
- *Ross shared that a listing of restaurants offering take-out and to-go food is available at www.Tahoe.is*
- *Coolidge noted that the Barton Foundation is providing grants for up to \$500 to individuals and organizations in need or facing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19.*
- *MOBO Law and MacLean Financial Group were noted as providing support to local businesses for applying for business loans and federal aid.*
- *Tahoe Chamber is providing weekly presentations for current issues related to HR and business during the COVID-19 crisis.*

D. Potential impacts from loss of County sales tax and TOT revenue

Mr. Ferry noted that there would be revenue impacts to the County, but that the amount of lost revenue was not known at this time, nor was the duration of the VHR restrictions.

Cardinale asked if there was the potential for reimbursement for lost income from the State or Federal governments - it was unknown if a program existed.

Ross asked about the impacts of lost TOT on specific programs - the specific impacts were not known. Meyers Community Foundation (MCF) is working with the same group that completed the art in Tahoe City, but progress has slowed due to COVID-19. Ross suggested that MAC apply directly for TOT funding to advance projects of interest to the MAC. Wood suggested partnering with MAF due to their non-profit status, as they could act as a pass-through. Ross noted possibly making a request for an economic study or beautification effort.

E. Commercial Cannabis Ordinance Update

Ferry noted that the EDC Planning Commission was meeting tomorrow, and that Ross was a member; the Commission will hear planning zone ordinance amendments that will add Community Center and Industrial areas in Meyers to the existing EDC code for cannabis retail distribution, in addition to light manufacturing, testing, and delivery operations. There is also a request for one additional county facility to bring the county total to 8 that would be restricted to

An exception to the 500 foot setback is included in the proposed ordinance due to no properties otherwise being eligible due to the small size of Meyers; proximity to a residence will be evaluated based on the proposed use as part of the permitting process for a business. Ferry noted that all applications would require a special use permit. Following the first reading, a second reading would occur on May 12th, with changes to go into place 30 days after the second reading, if approved.

Wood asked what the process would be for a business coming into the community. She noted that the City included a consideration of a corporate responsibility and community benefit; Wood noted that there could be community benefit as a new source of revenue. Ferry indicated that the County has had an open application process and that there is a wait list, and that the wait list includes businesses that wish to locate in Meyers. Ferry indicated that businesses are scrutinized for issues ranging from security to odor as part of the permitting and application process. Ferry would pass along the desire to have a community minded business. Wood added that the City also considered locally based businesses due to the community connection and better interface with the community. Ross sought to clarify that the setback would be completely eliminated and noted that there could be a business next to a residence. Ross and Ferry noted that a conditional use permit would have to be issued, and the application process would have additional outreach and potentially result in additional conditions.

Mike Marini, a member of the online audience, noted concern surrounding the issue of marijuana sale in EDC and that the County should develop drug addiction treatment centers and programs if sales will be added.

A member of the online audience noted concern that VHRs are in neighborhoods as businesses and asked if cannabis businesses could operate in a similar fashion; Ferry clarified that the businesses would have to be in select zoning areas, and that the proposed ordinance did not include residential areas.

A member of the online audience, Mr. Charles Willett with Tahoe Honey Co of Truckee noted that he is a business owner that would like to open a business and contribute funds to a nonprofit that would benefit the community. He also noted that he seeks to operate a clean and secure business that would interface with the community.

Discussion returned from the public to the MAC members. Ross noted that the way that the cannabis licenses are structured, it is not likely that revenue would stay in the community.

Cardinale noted that the money would go to the County, but that the issue stays in Meyers. He felt that the benefits were not present to warrant opening Meyers to cannabis uses and that it might lead to community issues.

Wood asked what implications it would have for other businesses. Ferry indicated that it would only add to the possible allowable uses.

Marianelli noted that he might be concerned if a business was nearby, but was not opposed to the ordinance due to the additional permitting that would be required.

Abravanel noted that there were other businesses that either exist or are currently allowed that don't contribute in a positive way to the community, and that the right owner of a cannabis business could create positive change. He noted that there is stigma associated with cannabis and that there are significant restrictions surrounding cannabis. He thought that local ownership was important to help ensure the potential business would work with and contribute to the community.

Ross asked if money could be kept locally or if the ordinance could direct funding. It was believed that it could not.

Coolidge indicated that he struggled with the exclusion of cannabis from Meyers zoning being the result of an omission in the original ordinance, but that he did not think the change was consistent with the MAP or what the Meyers community wanted. Abravanel again noted that not every business was necessarily a productive contributor to the community, citing bars and liquor stores.

Wood indicated that she did not necessarily like it, but that it was the law, and that cannabis was in the community due to stores being present in the City.

Daum noted that he thought with the right owners and the right location, there should be the potential for cannabis in Meyers. Fair also indicated being in favor of the ordinance.

Ross requested a vote in order to inform the EDC planning commission and BOS in consideration of the cannabis ordinance. Due to her recent appointment and roll on the planning commission, Ross abstained from the vote. The MAC voted 5-2 in favor of the proposed ordinance.

F. Discussion of Measure M & Measure B Outcomes & Next Steps

Both measures M and B failed, with the majority of votes counted.

The County had found roughly 66% of voters supporting additional funding for snow removal when polled. The vote came back with 49.1% voting yes and 50.9% voting no, short of the needed two-thirds

threshold. The County was not in a position to advocate or advertise for the measure. Voter turnout was very low. There are no plans for pursuing additional funding at this time.

In response to Measure B failing to be adopted by the voters, Lake Valley Fire Protection District (LVFPD) Chief Zlendick reported that LVFD is focused on the community's needs and COVID. LVFPD will maintain service as best they can and will hold a position vacant to reduce costs. They are working with their Board and remain focused on COVID and the upcoming fire season. Leona Allen, a member of the LVFPD Board, thanked Chief Zlendick for his service and for taking over at a very difficult time.

G. MAC Subcommittee Updates

No subcommittee updates.

7. Adjourn

Based on the availability of MAC members and EDC staff, the next meeting was set for June 24, 2020 at 4:00 PM. The meeting was adjourned.