REGULAR MEETING
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (EOAB)

Held at Grand County, Utah Chambers
217 E Center Street
Moab, Utah 84532
EOAB 9/25/24

MINUTES

September 25, 2024 | 3:00pm
****Time stamps (HH:MM:SS) correspond to the video****

Members in Attendance: Forrest Rodgers, Chris Wilson, Cassie Oliver, Amy Weiser, Bega Metzner

Members in Attendance Remotely: Jazmine Duncan, Michael Black, Colette Cox, Debra McKee, Melisa Jeffers, Mary McGann

Welcome
00:09:25
Introductions
00:11:00
Conflicts of interest, disclosures, ex-parte communication
None at this time
Citizens to -be- heard
None at this time
Presentations, if any
None at this time

Discussion and Action Items:

Approval of minutes for July 31, 2024, and August 13, 2024
a. Deferred to future meeting due to lack of voting members

Articulate individual responses to the Trail to Tomorrow (TTT) recommendations and perspectives (00:14:00)
a. Forrest invited feedback from members on the TTT plan
b. Amy Weiser questioned how aligned the plan was with other plans generated in the county's Planning & Zoning Department and expressed general unfamiliarity with the plan and its process.
c. Chris asked if the Grand County Commission formally approved the TTT plan. Forrest clarified that the commission had not formally adopted the plan but only "accepted" it.
d. Chris and Forrest discussed the need for the commission input on the plan, noting the plan's repeated calls for collaboration and direction.

e. Michael noted that he and the Moab City Mayor were not deeply involved in the creation of the TTT plan.
f. Jazmine also concluded that the plan called for few “specific actions,” adding that much of the recommendations did not seem new, such as the need for increased affordable housing and locals’ sentiments towards tourism. She noted that the TTT plan suggests focusing on the “quality” of visitation to Moab as a priority.
g. Forrest agreed that the plan is “soft on specifics,” adding that this is “okay” for a strategic plan’s strategy section. He added that the plan contains a sizable number of goals and that the board would need to determine which of the plan’s three pathways should be prioritized. He added that TTT plan language like “encourage” and “support” reflected that Grand County is still building an ecosystem for business, nonprofit, and governmental capacity.
h. Chris suggested the board view this plan as an opportunity in line with the board’s bylaws changes which focus on advising the commission on policy decisions. He advocated the board put together working groups to focus on the plan’s recommendations and suggested that, should the county commission not adopt the TTT plan as a whole, the board work to put forward related policy recommendations on prioritized items within the plan.
i. Amy agreed with Chris, suggesting the board and related groups work to identify what action items should be accomplished based on the plan. Cassie agreed, describing what she believed the intention of the planning process was.
j. Jazmine asked how the plan aligned with the county’s adopted General Plan and advocated that action items derived from the TTT plan also align with the General Plan’s related economic development sections.

At 00:35:25, Melisa Jeffers and Mary McGann joined the meeting. Debra McKee, Amy Weiser, and Ben Alter were briefly reintroduced.

k. Amy discussed the current revisions occurring in the county’s General Plan. She noted that Section 11, “Healthy Economies,” is where the TTT plan should be considered for incorporation.
l. Chris suggested that transient room tax (TRT) may be able to fund some of the action items that are called for in the TTT plan and that the board should lead that discussion with the county commission, especially should items align with the TRT’s “establish and promote tourism” stipulation.
m. Forrest and Chris discussed creating working groups around the TTT plan’s three pathways and what their directives might be.
n. Colette offered to assist the board with connecting to regional and state resources in pursuit of the plan’s pathways. She also suggested that the board work with the governor’s Unified Economic Council to recognize “points of alignment” with its own plan, noting that initiatives in support of “targeted industries” often are backed with funding.

Consideration of future agenda items

a. Ben Alter provided an update on the county's decision to not request that Utah State University (USU) return funds previously allocated for staffing a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) role, noting that USU intends to advertise the job posting.

At 00:57:00, Forrest adjourned the meeting.