

**M A D E R A   C O U N T Y**  
***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***  
***COMMISSION***  
**B O A R D   O F   C O M M I S S I O N E R S**  
**M I N U T E S**

**January 13, 2021**

*This meeting was conducted pursuant to the provisions of the Governor's Executive Order which suspends certain requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act. Social distancing per the Executive Order were used at the meeting. Members of the public were advised at posting of the agenda that comments were accepted via email at [info@maderacountyedc.com](mailto:info@maderacountyedc.com).*

**PRESENT:**    *Ollia Ridge, Brett Frazier, Brad Ditton, Darin Soukup, Aran Johal, Tracie Scott Contreras, Wade Wheeler, Ron Flores, Waseem Ahmed, Robert Poythress, Mary Diebert*

**ABSENT:**    *Paige Hill, City of Madera Commissioner*

**STAFF:**     *Bobby Kahn, Lois Leonard*

**1.0    CALL TO ORDER**

*The meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m. by Chair Poythress.*

**2.0    PUBLIC COMMENT**

*None.*

**3.0    INTRODUCTIONS & RECOGNITIONS**

*Commissioner Diebert introduced her replacement Anthony Corales.*

**4.0    CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA**

*No changes.*

**5.0    CONSENT CALENDAR**

**5.1    Madera County Economic Development Commission Minutes**  
*-October 14,, 2020*

**5.2    Madera County Economic Development Commission Financial Report**  
*- December 2020*

*On motion by Commissioner Scott-Contreras and seconded by Commissioner Frazier, the consent calendar is approved as presented. Motion carried.*

## 6.0 ACTION ITEMS

### 6.1 MCEDC Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Audit

*On motion by Commissioner Frazier and seconded by Commissioner Scott-Contreras the audit for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 is approved as presented. Motion carried.*

## 7.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

*None.*

## 8.0 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

*None.*

## 9.0 OPEN DISCUSSION/REPORT/INFORMATION

### 9.1 Commissioner Reports

**Commissioner Flores - (Industry at Large)** - *reported after 73 years, he sold his company, Florestone Products to American Bath Group. ABG, a 24/7 company that focuses on the construction industry. They are keeping the employees and he is continuing as the General Manager.*

**Commissioner Diebert - (Public Utility)** - *reported this is her last meeting and Anthony Corales will be the representative for PG&E. They completed a virtual solar webinar in December with 500 customers and vendors. She will send a flyer for their upcoming webinar on Time of Use Rate Change for Ag and Commercial Businesses. They have new implementers for the energy efficiency program. And reminded everyone about the on line bill financing program, with \$5,000 – \$250,000 loans available.*

**Commissioner Ridge - (Madera Ranchos Chamber)** - *reported not much is going on right now. They had to cancel their annual crab feed.*

**Commissioner Frazier- (Board of Supervisors)** - *reported the county has a new Chair of the Board, Rob Poythress and a new Supervisor, Lety Gonzales. He gave an update on vaccinations. 65 and up with existing conditions and people over 75 can now make an appointment. The moving of the Amtrak Station is reaching final approval and he reminded everyone to support their local businesses.*

**Commissioner Soukup - (Oakhurst Chamber)** – *Also reminded people to support their local businesses. Tourism has taken a hit in Eastern Madera County. Reported on the Chamber Awards for Man (Dan Rule) and Woman (Melanie Barker) of the Year, Business of the Year (Camarena Health) and President’s Award (Laura Norman). They’ve had discussion about making a request to have the Eastern Madera County Covid numbers separated from the rest of the county. Chair Poythress remarked the Board of Supervisors have already made that request to the state.*

**Commissioner Johal- (Coarsegold Chamber)** - *reported the chamber will have their meeting today to begin planning into 2021.*

**Commissioner Wheeler - (North Fork Chamber)** - reported Downtown North Fork is looking good. Jan McMillian has purchased almost ½ of the commercial areas. She opened a candy/gift store before Christmas. Two other stores should open in the next several months. She moved her trading post from Oakhurst to North Fork. New business, the Red Barn coffee shop worked with community partners and purchased 40 Christmas gifts for kids in the area. Grateful for North Fork Market being the anchor for downtown.

**Commissioner Ahmed - (City of Chowchilla)**- reported they are taking applications for a new council member.

**Commissioner Scott Contreras - (Workforce Investment Board)**- reported they have been tracking unemployment claims since March. The labor market has 62,000 to 63,000 people. Over 50,000 have filed a claim sometime over the last 10 months. They have done several food and job fair drive through events with their partners. They will have supportive services for those impacted by Covid until June. They received an initial \$300,000 grant for dislocated workers from the Department of Labor. The grant is to provide temporary jobs for fire cleanup in the county. They are working through the contracting process with the state now. Priority will be given to those impacted by the fire disaster. This will be approximately a two year grant.

## 9.2 Staff Reports-

**Executive Director-** Bobby reported Julie Herd, left the EDC on December 23<sup>rd</sup> to work for GoBiz. Interviews for the position are being held today and tomorrow by a three person panel. Second interviews will be done in house. Chowchilla is a major player for Project Sunset. He and the City of Chowchilla have put in a lot of work on the project. From big project to small project, he is working to find a location for a dog groomer in Chowchilla. Ecommerce has accelerated in looking for fulfillment sites. Miles Chemical has been approved and they are already looking to expand to a 50,000 square foot building. He is working with them on financing through the state IBank program. Cal Pacific is looking to build a 100,000 square foot facility. Helped CVOC find a new office location in Madera. He is working on a small neighborhood center in the Ranchos at Jason and Ave. 12. Reported on meeting with Robin Singh looking to develop a site near the old Oberti plant. Property east of Love's will soon be on the market and he worked with the Mono Tribe on an auto repair shop in North Fork. He participated in a Site Selector series and Select USA virtual conference with CCVEDC. He had a face to face broker meeting. Continues to attend the WYE Madera, Chowchilla staff and Chamber Alliance meetings. Introduced Asia King, the new EDA representative for our area via a conference call with county staff for a discussion on possible fire disaster funds. Been working with businesses on the California Relief Grant and were the administrators for the County Small Business Pandemic Grant that closed in November. Lois worked her tail off on the program where over \$3 million was distributed. You should have received the annual report and a reminder Form 700's are due. He shared a tidbit of CBRE's analytical team report. The Central Valley ranked Nationwide, 18<sup>th</sup> in net absorption, 3<sup>rd</sup> in Industrial growth, 29<sup>th</sup> in construction, 3<sup>rd</sup> in rent growth. In ecommerce, Amazon has purchased or leased over 64 million square feet with the next company purchasing or leasing under 5 million.

**9.3 Manager of Business Development & Marketing**

**9.4 Business Assistance/Office Manager**

*Lois reported the County Small Business Pandemic Grant helped 360 businesses.  
The loan committee approved a loan for a seafood and meat distributor in the City of Madera.*

**10.0 NEXT MEETING**

*The next meeting of the Commission will be held on April 14, 2021.*

**11.0 ADJOURNMENT -**

*The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Lois Leonard, Recording Secretary