

**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**

**October 14, 2020**

*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, Paige Hill, Andy Medellin*

**ABSENT:**     *Darin Soukup, Mary Diebert*

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

**1.0    CALL TO ORDER**

*The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Poythress.*

**2.0    PUBLIC COMMENT**

*None.*

**3.0    INTRODUCTIONS & RECOGNITIONS**

*None.*

**4.0    CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA**

*No changes.*

**5.0    CONSENT CALENDAR**

**5.1    Madera County Economic Development Commission Minutes**  
*-July 8, 2020*

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

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

## **6.0 ACTION ITEMS**

*None.*

## **7.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **7.1 Madera County Small Business Grant Program**

*Lois Leonard reported the county has completed 107 applications for Round One of the grant program and is expecting about the same amount of applications for Round Two. Applications can be found on the EDC website.*

## **8.0 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

*None.*

## **9.0 OPEN DISCUSSION/REPORT/INFORMATION**

### **9.1 Commissioner Reports**

**Commissioner Poythress - (Madera Chamber)** - *reported the Chamber is handing out PPE kits for small business.*

**Commissioner Frazier- (Board of Supervisors)** - *reported the county is not only dealing with the COVID response but also the fires. Working on getting the county open up again. Working on SIGMA/GSA enforcement while looking out for future generations. County hired a new Ag Commissioner and received a grant for behavioral health. Just wrapped up an MOM with High Speed Rail for the impact of their project on Fairmead and other county roads.*

**Commissioner Ridge - (Madera Ranchos Chamber)** - *reported pretty quiet right now, although there will be a ribbon cutting for the new substation on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The new Liberty Ranchos Café has been doing well. Supervisor Frazier added Golden Valley School District received a waiver and will begin to open their schools TK-6<sup>th</sup> grade.*

**Commissioner Scott Contreras - (Workforce Investment Board)-** *reported they wrapped up hiring for Vallarta and are working with Chukchansi with in person hiring. They're moving services and workshops to virtual platforms. Using grant monies to supply laptops to people for training, remote work and education. Giving one time support to people for utilities and rent. Then referring them CAPMC or Social Services if more assistance is needed. They received a grant to help dislocated workers. They recently completed a "drive thru" event with partners. They distributed resources and food at the event. Their numbers are coming up as more people are coming in. Bobby Kahn added Vallarta wrote a nice letter complimenting Workforce on the hiring process. After interviewing 1,100 people, they hired 250 people.*

**Commissioner Medellin- (City of Madera)-** *reported the city is still closed to the public due to COVID. They have switched over systems for rate payers. Zero late fees as they work through the process. He thanked the EDC for the support of small business with the grant program and thanked Tracie for their help with the hiring process with Vallarta. Reported on openings of a new Starbucks, Burger King and Taco Bell. There are more activities in the community that Bobby will share. Lois added City of Madera grant program will begin soon with funds the city received from HUD.*

**Commissioner Ahmed - (City of Chowchilla)-** reported they've been working on a large project and they are one of two locations the company is choosing from. He thanked Tracie and Bobby for their presentations at their meeting. They will have a new Subway, Jack in the Box, Burger King and Auto Parts Store.

**Commissioner Wheeler - (North Fork Chamber) -** reported they're been hit hard by both the fire and COVID. They will get the grant information out to people. They are also doing a push on helping people with PPE.

**Commissioner Johal- (Coarsegold Chamber) -** reported the chamber started a creek fire clothing drive, to help those in need. The monies will be used to distribute gift cards. They are distributing PPE kits they received from Visit Yosemite. He did a video with Lois Leonard regarding the County Pandemic Grant program. Both the Broken Bit, and the Rodeo Grounds property are for sale. The owners are also selling a commercial building as they are leaving the state.

**Commissioner Flores - (Industry at Large) -** reported in general, industry is weathering the storm better than other segments of the economy.

**9.2 Staff Reports**

**Executive Director-** Bobby reported business is active. Sealed Air is completing a solar project. Corporate chose the Madera plant over the North Carolina plant to expand a new line They received a PG&E ED rate to reduce energy costs. Project Sunset is deciding between two sites, after reviewing 20 different sites in California. The Chowchilla site is one of the two. EZ Trip at Avenue 12 and Vallarta in Madera have opened. Vallarta was thrilled by the welcome they received. Attended the ribbon cutting in Oakhurst for Tractor Supply. Span Construction is working on a major project. The Markarian family is selling property to Ardaugh to complete a solar farm. They intend to use the proceeds to develop an opportunity fund and build warehouses on their farm. He thanked Matt Treber and Jamie Bax from County Planning for expediting the parcel maps for the project. Oberti family is working on a project at 629 E Yosemite. Another large project, procurements centers for distribution is looking at the county. And an Industrial project where multi-tenants share a building. He serves on the CALED Legislative Committee. Marketing has adjusted to virtual meetings with brokers and Site Selection (Select USA) in lieu of their annual meeting. North Fork Casino got a ruling in their favor and are good to go. They have started work on a traffic study.

**9.3 Manager of Business Development & Marketing**

Julie reported she shut down the Facebook COVID Resource page as people were getting political and it was not what she had anticipated it would be.

**9.4 Business Assistance/Office Manager**

Lois reported she will have a new loan for the City of Madera for the loan committee to review soon.

**10.0 NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Commission will be held the first Wednesday of January 2021.

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Lois Leonard, Recording Secretary