

**Pima County Small Business Commission
Meeting**

Thursday, March 18, 2021
3:00 P.M.

Video Conference/Telephonic Meeting

SUMMARY OF MEETING

Commission Members Present

Kent Blumenthal, Chairman
Bernie Wiegandt, Vice-Chair
Jenni Zimmerman
Ken Goodman
Gabrielle David
Josh Jacobsen

Commission Members Absent

Mark Miller
Raul Aguirre
Guillermo Gallegos

Staff in attendance

Pima County:
Patrick Cavanaugh, Economic Development
John Moffatt, Economic Development

Guests in attendance:

Hon. Steve Christy, Pima County Supervisor D-4
Hon. Adelita Grijalva, Pima County Supervisor D-5
Maria Klucarova, Chair Bronson's Office
Kim Challender, Supervisor Scott's Office
Shaq McCoy, Supervisor Heinz's Office
Keith Bagwell, Supervisor Grijalva's Office
Elvira Suarez Din, Supervisor Grijalvas's Office
Arlethe Rios Morrison, Supervisor Grijalva's Office

MOTIONS

MOTION: Commissioner Jenni Zimmerman moved, seconded by Commissioner Gabrielle David to approve the February 18, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion approved 6-0.

MOTION: Vice Chair Bernie Wiegandt moved, seconded by Commissioner Josh Jacobsen, to appoint Kent Blumenthal as Chair. Motion approved 5-0 with 1 abstention.

MOTION: Vice Chair Bernie Wiegandt moved, seconded by Chair Kent Blumenthal, to appoint Ken Goodman as Vice Chair. Motion approved 6-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Josh Jacobsen moved, seconded by Commissioner Jenni Zimmerman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved 6-0.

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Call to Order

The meeting began at 3:05 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by Patrick Cavanaugh to start the meeting.

3. Chair's Report: Review of the agenda and virtual meeting protocols

Chairman Blumenthal welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Carlos Ruiz and Hon. Supervisor Adelita Grijalva; wished a speedy recovery to Commissioner Aguirre, and extended condolences to the family of Ellen Kirton, director of the Small Business Development Center. Commissioner Goodman noted Ms. Kirton's passing as a tremendous loss to the business community. Chairman Blumenthal remarked on the years of service of Deseret Romero to the Commission and Pima County before her recent resignation; and provided a brief overview of the meeting protocols and the review of the meeting agenda.

4. Call to the Public

All of the guests in attendance introduced themselves and greeted the Commission.

5. Introduction: Hon. Pima County Supervisor Adelita Grijalva

Supervisor Grijalva

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Jenni Zimmerman moved, seconded by Commissioner Gabrielle David to approve the February 18, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion approved 6-0.

5.

6. Ms. Diane Frisch, Director, Pima County Tourism and Attractions presentation

Ms. Diane Frisch provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Commission specific to tourism and attractions in southern Arizona including the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on the business aspects of Pima County tourism, attractions, festivals and events.

Ms. Frisch then answered questions from the Commission and discussed the following topics:

- Pima County PimaEats program
- Outreach to restaurants
- Pima County Ready for You
- Hospitality workforce
- Kino Stadium activities
- Job losses in the hospitality sector

Commissioners Jacobsen and Goodman expressed concern about the lack of outreach to restaurants for PimaEats and asked how many restaurants participated in Pima Ready for You and how many restaurants were in Pima County.

Commission Coordinator Patrick Cavanaugh stated 1,300 restaurants in Pima County had been certified through Pima Ready for You and that he was unsure how many restaurants were in Pima County, there are only approximately 9,000 restaurants state-wide.

7. Coordinator's report and updates

Mr. Cavanaugh reported on the following items:

- County Administrator's March 17, 2021 correspondence related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the federal American Rescue Plan.
 - Two funding tranches from Treasury, still awaiting federal guidance.
 - American Rescue Plan details for Cities/Counties/States is still forthcoming.
- b. SBC-proposed revisions to the Pima County 'COVID-19 Safety Standards Business & Community Reporting' webpage

The business reporting page is not receiving very many complaints lately. The Pima County Health and Communications departments are reluctant to make any changes to the language on the site in anticipation of Arizona's governor rescinding the executive order in the near future.

- c. Pima County Supervisor appointments to fill two (2) SBC vacancies

The District 4 office has placed Mr. Carlos Ruiz of HT Metals on the April Board of Supervisors agenda for appointment. Both the District 2 and District 4 offices were working on their vacancies.

Discussion occurred regarding the Commission by-laws and the number of unexcused absences that trigger automatic removal from the Commission. Chairman Blumenthal and Commissioner Goodman agreed that an examination of the by-law requirement and passed Commissioner absences should be conducted at a future meeting.

- d. 2020 Small Business Awards

Ms. Romero reported that two of the award winners had received their award of \$500 and that the remaining award winner was recently registered with County Vendor Relations to receive their award.

Chairman Blumenthal inquired as to the when the Board of Supervisors would return to in-person meetings.

Mr. Cavanaugh noted that the Board had not directly indicated the timeframe yet. The Supervisors will make that decision publicly and will likely base it on the public health data. The Supervisors will make the decision and he could offer no additional insight.

8. Unfinished Business

a. 'Ready for You 2.0' PSA Radio Spots

Ready for You Subcommittee Chair Ken Goodman updated the Commission on the content of the scripts developed for the ad campaign and reported that the initial drafts of the Hilton & Myers ad spots had been shared with the Commission's subcommittee. Commissioner Goodman commented on the prominence of the Small Business Commission in both the radio and digital ad spots and thought the ads were good.

Commissioner Jacobsen said he would like to see a different message in the radio spots and had not seen the digital ads, but believed business had moved beyond Ready for Your and Ready for You 2.0.

Commissioner reiterated the importance of the Commission leading on this issue for small business.

Mr. Cavanaugh stated the County's public health professionals felt it was a critical time to get this message out.

Chair Blumenthal directed that any additional suggestion about the ad scripts be forwarded to Mr. Cavanaugh.

Commissioner Jacobsen complimented Commission Goodman's work in moving the ad initiative forward.

b. Election of Small Business Commission Officers (2021-2022)

Chair Blumenthal directed Mr. Cavanaugh to oversee the item discussion. Mr. Cavanaugh recapped the by-law election process and the nominees from the last meeting and asked Vice Chair Wiegandt to make the motions.

MOTION: Vice Chair Bernie Wiegandt moved, seconded by Commissioner Josh Jacobsen to appoint Kent Blumenthal as Chair. Motion approved 5-0 (Chairman Blumenthal abstained)

MOTION: Vice Chair Bernie Wiegandt moved, seconded by Chairman Blumenthal, to appoint Ken Goodman as Vice Chair. Motion approved 6-0.

9. New Business

a. Service Worker Hiring Difficulties

Commissioner Zimmerman recounted the difficulties that she has had hiring workers for her business and what she's hearing from other businesses about the effect of the stimulus payments and additional unemployment benefits that make it difficult to hire people.

Commissioner Jacobsen said he believes business is competing with the government and he hears that other businesses are having problems finding job applicants.

Chair Blumenthal asked if wages are playing a role in the problem. Commissioner Jacobsen said it's not the primary issue. Vice Chair Goodman said he believes in the construction industry the primary issue is a lack of skilled labor.

Chairman Blumenthal directed that the item be retained on the next agenda for further discussion. Mr. Cavanaugh stated it is a confluence of issues leading to the open positions and would add that childcare issues and the disproportionate impact of the pandemic economy on women are also part of the problem but he would attempt to provide objective research on the issue to the Commission

b. Discussion Items (Chairman Blumenthal)

Chair Blumenthal noted six topics were listed under this item but in the interest of time he would defer some topics to the next agenda and address the following:

1. AZ HB 2770 '*Businesses exempt from mask mandate*'

Chair Blumenthal explained the proposed legislation and asked for comment from the Commission.

Vice Chair Goodman felt the bill was premature due to the continuing pandemic.

Commissioner Jacobsen said the bill removes business from the role of enforcing mask mandates and helps delineate government and private sector bills.

Mr. Cavanaugh provided an update on the status of the bill from the legislative website.

Chairman Blumenthal asked if the Pima County Board of Supervisors had taken a position on the bill. Mr. Cavanaugh replied they had not.

Commissioner Jacobsen said Supervisor Christy had come out strongly at the last Board meeting about governmental mask mandates and suggested a motion to seek metrics and data from Pima County on when mandates could be ended.

Vice Chair Goodman suggested a motion encouraging the Board to oppose the legislation.

Mr. Cavanaugh noted that the item was placed on the agenda as a discussion item with no indication of action being taken by the Commission and suggested under the Arizona Open Meetings Law it would need to be properly noticed on a future agenda before a vote could be taken.

Chairman Blumenthal stated he would place the item on the next agenda for discussion at either the next regular meeting or a special meeting that may be called. Vice Chair Goodman noted the bill was already in committee and would likely be resolved soon.

10. Adjournment (5:12 p.m.)

MOTION: Commissioner Josh Jacobsen moved, seconded by Commissioner Jenni Zimmerman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved 6-0.