

ACTION MINUTES

LAND USE & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 28, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Forster, Supervisor District 2
Frank Axe, Supervisor District 4

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

PRESENT: Glenn Spitzer, Deputy County Counsel
Mike Israel, REHS Community Development Director
Chuck Beatty, Planning Director
Todd Barr, Building Official
Ruslan Bratan, Planner I
Mary Ann Manges, Recording Secretary

Supervisor Forster called the meeting to order at 1:48 p.m.

AGENDA: Approved

CORRESPONDENCE: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 23, 2020 minutes requested to be approved at next Land Use meeting

PUBLIC MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA: None

ITEM 1: Discussion concerning deferral, reduction, or waiver of various fees that businesses may have to pay in order to operate, repurpose, or adapt their businesses during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion began amongst the Committee regarding impacts to departments during the economic recession and the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Beatty shared the Staff Report stating that a fee reduction ordinance from 2008 applied only to residential building permits and that it reduced 100% of the County Facility fee and 75% of the Parks and Recreation fees from July through November of 2008.

Mr. Barr shared that it appears that the reductions had no impact to the Building Department activity and elaborated that a lot of mitigation fees apply only to new construction.

Mr. Israel noted that during the recession, the Environmental Health Department saw a small burst of applicants that took advantage of the fee reduction. He added that the activity was similar to what happens when there is a pending code change and people file their applications before the changes go into effect. He stated that, currently, new construction and discretionary

projects do not appear to be effected, but that there has been a noticeable increase in restaurants, pools, camps, and hazmat facilities paying their annual Environmental Health permit fees late. He elaborated that these entities are have been especially hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. He shared that Environmental Health fee-based revenues cover about 30 to 35% of the cost of running the department, and overall, are maybe a 5% short of normal revenues. He shared a spreadsheet containing fees assessed by 5 surrounding counties and 5 comparable counties. It was discussed that the fees in Amador County on average are substantially lower than the counties included in the comparison and that there are about 300-500 facilities assessed each calendar year. He stated that refunds are labor intensive and prone to error.

Supervisor Axe stated that a reduced fee impact to businesses is desired, but that he wants to make sure the County can afford it and suggested prorating fees. Supervisor Forster added that if something is done to reduce fees, it should be substantial. Supervisor Axe shared that he is comfortable with that suggestion, and asked Mr. Israel to run the numbers.

Committee Action: The Committee made a recommendation to review this again at the next Land Use meeting after Mr. Israel looks at scenarios and compiles a list of those hardest hit.

The meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.