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City and county had agreed to six members on new board, but seventh member, to be appointed by Chamber of Commerce, was added to resolution by unnamed person

By JESSICA CRAWFORD • Daily Leader

Further discussion occurred regarding reforming the Joint Economic Development Council during Tuesday evening's city commission meeting.

The commission expressed much displeasure after reading how the advisory board would take shape, considering what it had agreed upon with the county commission during a joint meeting was not reflected in the resolution prepared for review.

During a joint county and city commission meeting just last month, the two entities agreed that the Joint Economic Council would be formed by the appointment of three members from each commission, bringing the total number of members from 15 down to six.

Due to the fact that the JEDC, by law, is only an advisory board, they cannot vote on matters during meetings. With that in mind, commissioners from the county and city felt it unnecessary to add a seventh member, as that member would only need to exist for tie- breaking purposes. Since voting is not an issue for the JEDC, the commissions had agreed on the board consisting of six members.

When approached with a final drafting of the resolution describing the formation of the JEDC, commissioners noticed a seventh member, to be appointed by the Chamber of Commerce, had been added to the resolution. Commissioners from the county and the city were not pleased, considering they had already agreed upon how the board would be formed by a general consensus.

"I don't have a problem with the chamber appointing one person,"

commissioner Bob Carlile said. "But we need to go back over there again. We all sat over there, and we hammered this thing out. We just need to go back and have a meeting with those guys and get this thing straightened out and then come back and do our thing. So I make a make a motion that we table this resolution until the next meeting."

Commissioner Dave Harrison also expressed concern that the resolution did not resemble the conversation the two entities had or what they had ultimately agreed upon.

"I don't think I agree with anything," Harrison said. "The way I understood it was that staff was going to bring us back a copy of the resolution with the suggestions that we talked about. I am not going to agree to anything until we vote on it in these chambers. We can go back and have a meeting, I think that is fair enough, I don't have a problem with it."

Carlile said the two commissions must meet again in order to work out how the JEDC will be formed.

"I thought we had everything hammered out," Carlile said. "But if we want to make a change we have to go back over there and talk to those guys. I think we go back one time and whatever that discussion is and whatever we agree upon, that is what we do."

Commissioner Larry Koochel had strong words for the situation. He felt the two commissions had agreed upon how the resolution was to read, however somewhere along the way changes were made without the knowledge of either commission.

"I was under the impression that we all agreed on everything,"

Koochel said. "We agreed that it needed some changing. We haven't even gotten our resolution passed yet and we have problems – backdoor politics is what it looks like to me."

Commissioner Carlile had some concern that the situation could cause some strife between the two commissions.

"I just want to make sure that we don't destroy relationships with the county commission," Carlile said. "We want to go back, have a meeting with them, then come back and do it."

The resolution was unanimously tabled until the two commissions can meet again. Mayor Joe Denoyer promised to schedule a meeting as soon as possible.

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