

AURORA BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
January 25, 2021

Board Members Present:

Garrett Walls, Regina Edmondson, Carolyn Pace, Michele Redding, Bob Fryberger, Nosh Tarachand, Martin Liles, Chance Horiuchi; Alok Sarwal

Board Members Absent:

excused - Hitesh Patel

Council Members Present: CM Gardner, CM Hiltz, CM Johnston

Staff Present: Elena Vasconez, Leslie Epperson and Andrea Amonick

Guests Present: Steven Wright, Trevor Vaughn, Kevin Hougen

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 11:04 am by Garrett Walls

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Walls –Approval of December

Mr. Walls moved to approve minutes

Mr. Tarachand seconded

None opposed. Minutes for December approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

2021 Feminine Hygiene Products Sales Tax Exemption

CM Hiltz;

This proposal is to provide a tax exemption for menstrual products. This pandemic has highlighted some of the disparities in gender equity. This proposal would provide a tax exemption on menstrual products because they are not optional. Women miss work; Young women miss school. This is something that we are not only seeing in third world countries but right here in the United States.

Last year it was being looked at by the state. And there are several states that have already adopted this tax exemption because they recognize that these products are not optional.

CM Gardner;

Last year the IRS moved menstrual care products to the FSA category.

The issue is a lack of access to these products for women.

It's a combination of the tax benefit and matching what the IRS does.

The product isn't optional for women. It is a medical product.

Mr. Walls;

Had a few conversations with the Chamber and the Retail Association and didn't hear any objections on this. I think everyone understands the equity and access. This is one of those few rare circumstances where government can grant equity without major regulatory change.

My only concern is that the IRS classifies this as menstrual care products and if we make the language feminine hygiene products and you combine that with not limited to; that includes a whole array of products that aren't necessarily menstrual products and could be a question for retailers when reprogramming their POS for specific tax-exempt items.

CM Hiltz agreed with change.

Mr. Vaughn -

This definition is the same one Denver has. The State wants standard definitions. The State does not have this exemption. Increases complexity in the tax code because you would have exemptions and you will have to make adjustments for it.

Revenue impact is about \$230,000 annually. Home rule cities are very reliant on sales and use tax. 70% of the City's revenue are from sales and use tax. This would be an exemption and we have seen this in other areas; Prescription drugs and glasses.

NOTE: for administrative purposes, in the proposal, the first part of the preamble that is all in CAPS, there is a small typo. It says "feminine hygiene produces" instead of "products".

Mr. Vaughn will get that corrected.

Mr. Hougen;

Has heard of no problems currently.

Mr. Walls asked for comments from the BAB members.

Members had no comments.

Mr. Walls moved that the BAB Board approve the proposed amendments

Mr. Tarachand seconds.

No opposition – motion passes.

Mr. Vaughn will get with CM Hiltz and CM Gardner to make necessary changes in language to match the IRS.

IFC – Commander Wright

Commander Wright was not present at this meeting of the BAB.

Business Award Nominee selection

Mr. Walls stated that there would be a run-off for any votes that came within 1 vote.

There was only one category that was within 1 vote; Innovation and Creativity during Covid;

Wine Experience 4 /Create Cooking School 3 /Safety Solved 2

Run off between Wine Experience 7 / Create Cooking 1

Resiliency Award;

Merry Maids / Winchells Donuts 6/ Heirlooms Antique Mall 3

Community Impact Award;

Trunk Nouveau 1 / Legends of Aurora 8

Small Small Business Award;

Copper Pot 1/ Dig Deep Research 2/ **Envision Eyecare** 6

HM Essential Heroes;
Angels of Colorado 2/ **Village Exchange Center** 6/ Ready to Work 1

Mr. Walls moves to offer 2 HM Essential Heroes awards;
add **Create Cooking School** to HM Essential Heroes
Ms. Edmondson Seconded
None opposed – motion passes

Mr. Sarwal arrived – talked about vaccine – would like to partner w/city of Aurora to provide the vaccine to all of the vulnerable people of Aurora.
CM Gardner would like to know what Mr. Sarwal needs.
Mr. Sarwal specializes in minorities and immigrants. Entered SafetyNet program of the state. Look forward to multiple days.
CM Gardner – asked for Mr. Sarwal’s information.
Ms. Edmondson volunteered second chance as a location site for vaccinations. Their new location would be able to accommodate a great number of people.
Mr. Sarwal – needs to co-ordinate with the Department of Public Health. They're the ones who are making the deliveries and making all the schedules.

Mr. Walls will keep everyone in the loop

Chance – Spoke with Kendall at City of Aurora and right now they are not looking to do mass vaccination sites. When authorized they will have a prepared list. But they don’t want to do mass vaccinations. They don’t know if they will have enough vaccines to do a mass vaccination.
Mr. Walls – Smaller clinics like what Alok is doing and the council supporting that is a big step forward rather than being caught by surprise like other municipalities. It’s important for us to have a plan and smaller partners.

COUNCIL CONTACTS

Mr. Patel – CM Marcia Berzins –

Ms. Pace – CM Juan Marcano -

Ms. Horiuchi –CM Gruber –

Mr. Liles – CM Bergan –

Mr. Tarachand – CM Gardner – no updates – volunteer to help with vaccines.

Ms. Edmondson –CM Hiltz – no updates

Mr. Sarwal - CM Angela Lawson.- Covid testing, health and wellness – 1st phase for getting vaccines – Vaccine delivery – big push for vaccines, need a big event

Mr. Fryberger - CM Murillo, - no updates –

Michelle Reding –CM Combs. –at the NLC conference, Walmart wants to have outdoor marketplaces in the parking lot. Would small businesses be interested.

Garrett Walls – Mayor Coffman -

Outcome: BAB members will continue to reach out to their Council Members and keep them up to date. Please stay in touch and maintain the connection

4 terms expiring. Terms are confusing – not tracked from date your council person was appointed

Garrett Walls,

Carolyn Pace

Michele Reding

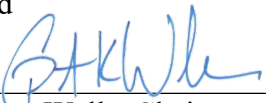
Nosh Tarachand

Mr. Walls and city staff will send out reminders to council members

Mr. Walls moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:42 am.

Ms. Reding seconded

APPROVED:



Garrett Walls, Chairperson



Aurora Business Advisory Board

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January 25, 2021

Mayor & City Council
City of Aurora
15151 E. Alameda Pkwy., 5th Floor
Aurora, CO 80012

Subject: Exemption of Feminine Hygiene Products from Sales and Use Tax

Dear Mayor Coffman & Members of City Council:

At the January 25, 2021 Business Advisory Board (BAB) meeting, Councilmember Allison Hiltz and Councilmember Curtis Gardner presented for discussion and consideration, an Amendment of Article II Section 130 of the City Code, relating to Exempting Feminine Hygiene Products from Sales and Use Tax.

COVID-19 has greatly impacted women, in December, women had a net 100% of the loss of jobs in the community. Further, the pandemic has highlighted disparities in gender equity. Finally, in June of last year the IRS moved menstrual care products into the FSA eligible category, thus making the products benefit from tax considerations. In view of the above, the members present from the Board voted without objection to support the Exemption of Feminine Hygiene Products from Sales and Use Tax. The only suggestions discussed by the Board with Council Members Hiltz and Gardner was the possibility of amending the proposed ordinance to match the scope and definition nomenclature within the IRS publication and the possibility of allowing retailers time to implement the ordinance. The Board would also encourage further retailer and businessowner training concurrent with or included in the ongoing sales tax training provided by the City and the SBDC.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Walls".

Garrett Walls, Chairperson

GW/ev

CC: BAB Members
Elena Vasconez, Economic and Business Development Supervisor
Trevor Vaughn, Manager of Tax & Licensing