Downtown Committee Put On Council's July Agenda

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

A downtown revitalization committee may soon be forming in Kodiak. During last night’s city council work session Mayor Pat Branson pitched the idea to the council, which would need to approve the formation of such a group. Branson said she approached a number of folks to participate in something like this last year.

“People who were artists, the arts council representation, that kind of thing. Then when we had several community members come forward during a couple of our meetings and be concerned about the downtown area as a safety issue as well, I talked with them on the possibility of serving on a downtown committee on downtown and Councilman Bishop, I did ask him as a council member to do that. So we have.”

She said that the committee would still have to answer to the city council, but would serve as an idea-generating board for ways to improve downtown.

“So the purpose is to look at how we can not only beautify the downtown, make it safe, but bring some economic development to the core of our downtown community as well.”

In order to make the committee a reality, the council will need to appoint one, which City Clerk Debra Marlar said is relatively easy.

“The council needs to do that by motion, if there is a consensus expressed tonight that could be as early as July 11 meeting. The motion would establish a special committee, the purpose of the committee would be briefly summarized in the motion, and the council can either name members individually, or

authorize the mayor to get members for the committee and add them.”

City Manager Aimee Kniaziowski said the timing of all of this fits rather well with Mayor Branson’s recent invitation to attend the Aspen Creative Placemaking Roundtable in September.

“The mayor was selected by the Rasmuson Foundation to participate in the Aspen Institute Creative Placemaking Workshop. It’s pretty exclusive, it looks really interesting. Mayors from a selected group of cities come forward with ideas of how they can integrate art and beauty into every day environments in their community.”

Branson said the conference will tie in well with the city’s recent focus on downtown improvements, although she said they shouldn’t wait until September to form a committee. Council members agreed, and the necessary motion is tentatively set to visit the council during the July 11 meeting.