

Elissa Wyatt

Viewers via Live Stream:

I. Call to Order

Mingo Marquez called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM. A quorum was present.

II. Invocation and Pledge

Shonda Marshall led the Invocation and Sandra Loeza led the pledge.

III. Citizens Comments

There were no citizen comments.

IV. Consent Agenda

1. Approve Meeting Minutes for February 08, 2022

Josh Mitchell made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Jeff Pena seconded.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

V. Presentation

1. Logo Contest Winner- Aracelli Woodard

Shonda Marshall spoke of the logo design contest, announced Aracelli Woodard as the winner and presented her with the \$250 prize

VI. Discussion & Action Items

1. Discussion and possible action on Outriggers Grand Opening Sponsorship. -Melanie

Melanie Oldham said at the last meeting Mr. Hayes came and said he would be having a grand opening for his restaurant Outriggers Bar and Grill. The conversation ended with Mr. Hayes agreeing to repair the EDC dock. Melanie Oldham is asking if the EDC could assist with Outriggers' grand opening for items for advertisement, and kid friendly activities like the kid's fishing tournament and face painting. Melanie Oldham asked where the rest of the board stood on this.

Josh Mitchell said he is in support but would like to know how much money the EDC would like to contribute. The total provided was \$8700

Jeff Pena said the original discussion was that Mr. Hayes was asking to use the dock for this event, however it is needing repairs. In exchange for Mr. Hayes using the dock for this event, he would need to make the repairs himself. Jeff Pena said he thought was the use of the dock would be EDC's support for the grand opening and not a monetary amount. Jeff Pena said however he does think the EDC could host a ribbon cutting for Mr. Hayes

Melanie Oldham said the last meeting took her by surprise, she does not feel it is fair for Mr. Hayes to foot the bill for the EDC dock if he is not getting exclusive use. Melanie Oldham proposed a \$3500 sponsorship for Outriggers Grand Opening.

Sandra Loeza recommended the EDC make a standardized plan to provide all new businesses with grand openings or a new business grant.

David McGinty said he has spoken with Jason Hayes and been involved with the scope of work. David McGinty said the repairs are going to be pretty costly. David McGinty suggests the EDC pay for a ramp to get on the dock and this be the EC's sponsorship.

Mingo Marquez said he agrees with David. Mingo Marquez said the dock is the EDC responsibility and it would not be fair for the EDC to have Mr. Hayes foot the bill for this.

Jeff Pena said the Fish Market is also set to be on this space and he will include the cost to fix the dock in this plan.

Melanie Oldham said she wants to ensure the EDC is doing the right thing. Melanie said she feels it is important to support not only the existing businesses but the new businesses as well.

Mingo Marquez made a motion for the EDC to repair the dock and allow the marketing committee to come up with a new business grant. Jeff Pena seconded.

Shonda Marshall asked how the EDC plans to advertise for the grand opening.

Mingo Marquez said the marketing committee will discuss and report back. Mingo Marquez said other board members may email their suggestions to Josh Mitchell, David McGinty, and himself.

Mingo Marquez called for a vote.

MOTION PASSED 6-1. Melanie Oldham voted Ney.

Melanie Oldham said to be clear she is in support of the EDC repairing the dock but she feels they could do more for Mr. Hayes.

2. Discussion and possible action on live stream of EDC meetings -Jeff

Jeff Pena asked if there were any concerns on live streaming the EDC meetings via Facebook. Jeff Pena asked if the meeting was currently being streamed and if so, which page was it streamed on.

Kaytee Ellis responded yes, on the Freeport Economic Development Corporation page.

David McGinty said his concern is how City Council twisted the arm of the EDC and told them the "had" to live stream. David McGinty said he is all for streaming the meeting because he feels it shows transparency and leads to a more involved and informed citizenry,

he just wants to make sure it is brought about the right way and at the decision of the EDC and not at the order of City Council.

Mingo Marquez agreed with David McGinty. Mingo Marquez said he is in favor of live streaming meetings long as the comments are turned off. Mingo Marquez said his reasoning for this was due to the number of negative comments on the live stream of City Council meetings and he is wanting to avoid this. Mingo Marquez reminded the public that the EDC is separate from City Council.

Jeff Pena said he believed the previous board voted against live streams of the meetings but he is in support in order to show transparency. Jeff Pena asked Chris Duncan if a vote needs to be held.

Chris Duncan said this could be at the discretion of the President, but if the board chooses, they could also make a motion.

Jeff Pena made a motion to live stream the EDC Meeting via Facebook Live so long as the comments be disabled. Sandra Loeza seconded.

Shonda Marshall stated she felt it was important to allow comments so that the public could also show their support when they choose as well as make the board aware of any technical difficulties within the live stream.

Mingo Marquez responded that comments on City Council live streams are never helpful or supportive and by allowing comments he would be opening the platform up to ridicule of the board or board members.

Shonda Marshall asked if the EDC could remove the negativity or block people from commenting that are problematic.

Chris Duncan said since the EDC is a public platform you cannot sensor individuals or delete comments.

Jeff Pena suggested the assistant could leave a phone number on the stream so that the public could text in with comments or concerns.

Kaytee Ellis responded she was not comfortable using her personal number so the EDC would need to provide one.

David McGinty suggested using an email address instead that could go to the EDC iPad in real time and would solve this issue.

Mingo Marquez called for a vote.

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

3. Discussion and possible action on BCHCC Business Expo -Jeff

Landis Adams introduced himself and chamber board members present in the audience. Landis Adams thanked the board for their participation and sponsorship with the Business Expo. Landis Adams informed the board that all 21 booth spots have been filled and there will be two food trucks, Michelle's Cajun Shack and Sauce Street Grill. Landis Adams encouraged the board to come to the expo.

Jeff Pena thanked Landis for his work on the Expo.

Sandra Loeza said the posters look great and she will be at the Expo for both TEDCU and the EDC

Jeff Pena asked if the food trucks would be free for vendors and attendees.

Landis Adams responded no.

Melanie Oldham asked who would be presenting on behalf of the EDC.

Mingo Marquez said he would be talking to board members to see who will be present to speak and help with the booth.

4. Discussion and possible action on Board Training with Mike Barnes -Shonda

Shonda Marshall said the training subcommittee has met and received a proposal from Mike Barnes Group. Shonda said Mr. Marquez had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Barnes. Shonda Marshall instructed the board to review the information provided in the packet. Mr. Barnes would give an EDC training, would address marketing, and train on incentives such as PIDs, PUDs, MUDs, so the EDC could make more informed decisions to better assist the businesses. Shonda Marshall suggested Saturdays for the training and that Mr. Barnes is available March 5th. Shonda Marshall said it is important the EDC get this training as soon as possible and would like to extend the invitation to Council and City Officials. The cost of the training is \$1500 plus mileage, hotel, and meals.

Mingo Marquez said when he met with Mr. Barnes, he expected a quick 30-minute meeting and ended up lasting over 3 hours. Mingo Marquez said he believes Mr. Barnes will be a good asset for the EDC.

Jeff Pena made a motion to move forward with the board training. Josh Mitchell seconded.

Sandra Loeza asked if a date needs to be confirmed.

Mingo Marquez said this would be coordinated within the training committee.

Shonda Marshall suggested March 5th as Mr. Barnes has already expressed his availability. Jeff Pena said he cannot confirm that date.

Jeff Pena amended his motion to state the EDC could move forward with the board training and to allow Mingo Marquez to sign the contract with Mike Barnes. Josh Mitchell seconded. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

5. Discussion and possible action on Subcommittee Updates -Mingo

Josh Mitchell said they had two grants to discuss tonight, McBride Funeral Home and Outriggers Bar and Grill. Josh Mitchell said the subcommittee has met and wants to recommend both for approval.

McBride Funeral Home:

Jeff Pena asked why there are two different floorings, one epoxy and one concrete

Sam Reyna said it is because some is workspace and some is the chapel which would need to look nicer, will be used more so needs a better surface.

Melanie Oldham asked Mr. McBride if he was leasing long term and if the building owner would be applying for the grant as well.

Mr. McBride said he did sign off his application.

Mingo Marquez said he also signed a 5-year lease which was provided.

Sandra Loeza asked if he would be holding funerals at this location.

Mr. McBride responded yes.

Sandra Loeza asked how many parking spaces there were and if this was adequate parking.

Mingo responded yes there was plenty of parking.

Melanie Oldham asked if cremation will be done at this location.

Mr. McBride responded no; this will be done at his Texas City location.

Jeff Pena made a motion to approve the grant for McBride Funeral Home. Shonda Marshall seconded.

Josh Mitchell asked if any stipulations to be added to this approval.

Chris Duncan responded yes, they need to be added.

Jeff Pena amended his motion to approve the grant application for McBride Funeral Home and allow Mingo Marquez to sign the contract. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Outriggers Bar and Grill:

Mingo Marquez said this is the first grant that has ever come in complete the first time. Outrigger's is requesting roof replacement for \$9624.78, landscape, lighting, and fence for \$4150 and new doors for \$5410.33 for a total of \$19185.11

Jeff Pena asked if they have started the work.

Mingo Marquez responded no.

Melanie Oldham asked if Mr. Beacroft signed off on this application since he owns the building.

Mingo Responded yes and he did.

Jeff Pena made a motion to approve the grant application for Outriggers Bar and Grill and allow Mingo Marquez to sign the contract. Sandra Loeza seconded. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

6. Discussion and possible action on EDC Director – Melanie/Shonda

Mingo Marquez said he wanted to assign a committee to this. It would include Jeff Pena as chairman, Melanie Oldham, and Shonda Marshall.

7. Discussion and possible action on S.T.O.P. Outreach -David

Brenda George introduced herself and the STOP organization. STOP stands for Stop Talk Overcome Pain and is a youth suicide prevention organization. Brenda George said the organization originated in Freeport and is trying to bring it back home. Brenda George is asking the EDC to help sponsor an event at one of the local schools which would cover the shirts and a bracelet. Brenda George said the organization has an average of 55 students that cry out for help at each event.

David McGinty said he was not sure what the EDC was allowed to do with community outreach but he wanted to give the program an opportunity to speak.

Brenda George said if able, the EDC would be a corporate sponsor and would be able to have a banner and speak at the event.

Shonda Marshall asked what she was asking for the sponsorship.

Brenda George said \$2500 and would cover everything for that day.

Jeff Pena suggested adding to the City Council agenda and asked Chris Duncan if this was something the EDC could assist with.

Chris Duncan reminded the board of a discussion about the Blue Santa event. Chris Duncan said the EDC cannot give money to a non profit unless it contributed to business or bringing business to Freeport.

Tim Kelty asked if a banner was hung and the City promoted the event if this would be sufficient enough.

Chris Duncan responded not unless the banner could talk about the grant program or something of this nature.

Jeff Pena asked Chris Duncan if it would be more difficult for the EDC to sponsor this event or the City to sponsor.

Chris Duncan said it would be more difficult for the City to sponsor but he would look into this and report back.

VII. Subcommittee Updates

Josh Mitchell said the supplies are coming in for the Mardi Gras float and asked for the board to volunteer and help decorate. Josh Mitchell asked if Kaytee Ellis has posted Notices of Possible Quorum for these events.

Kaytee Ellis responded these have not been done yet because she does not have days and times.

Josh Mitchell would get with her on this information.

Sandra Loeza asked how much notice needs to be given.

Kaytee Ellis responded 72 hours.

David McGinty asked if there was somewhere to store the float.

Mingo Marquez said the subcommittee would work on this.

Mingo Marquez said the Marketing Committee is needing to come up with items to hand out at the upcoming Business Expo and set a budget to it. Mingo Marquez asked Kaytee Ellis to provide an update on this.

Kaytee Ellis said stress balls shaped like dollar signs or dollar bill, USB drives, cups, koozies, hand sanitizer, notepads are always nice to have because people don't always think to bring one and always end up wanting to write down notes or contact information. Kaytee Ellis mentioned tool sets to hand out with a slogan of "building a better Freeport" these would be something useful that would also promote the EDC wanting to better Freeport and help local businesses. Kaytee Ellis suggested getting business cards for everyone to hand out as well as making some pamphlets or flyers.

Mingo Marquez asked the board their thoughts.

Josh Mitchell said he thinks these items are great suggestions.

Mingo Marquez asked to authorize the marketing committee to order items and the board to set a budget.

Jeff Pena said a budget of \$500.

Mingo Marquez said it needed to be more.

Mingo Marquez made a motion to give the marketing committee a budget of \$1000 to order handouts for events. Jeff Pena seconded. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Mingo Marquez said the subcommittee needs to meet ASAP and get with Kaytee Ellis to place the order.

VIII. Board Comments

1. President Mingo Marquez:

Mingo Marquez wanted to thank everyone for all of their hard work and effort.

2. Vice President Josh Mitchell:

Josh Mitchell said he has been in touch with Gensler and is looking forward to seeing this development come to life. Josh Mitchell said he wanted to encourage those in the audience or listening live with a business or wanting to start a new business to get with the EDC and see how they can help.

3. Secretary David McGinty:

David McGinty said he wanted to update on the Western Seafood property. He is getting calls that people are hanging out on the property at night. The fence is being repaired but it does appear as if someone is getting on the property.

Jeff Pena said he would get with David and see if there were any other ways to keep this from happening.

Shonda Marshall asked if David was going out by himself.

David McGinty responded yes.

Shonda Marshall said she is a little worried for his safety and asked David to be careful.

4. Treasurer Jeff Pena:

Jeff Pena reminded everyone that early voting has started and encouraged them to get out and vote. Jeff Pena said he wanted to make sure a phone number was added to the Facebook live for comments.

5. Shonda Marshall:

Shonda Marshall said she feels like they had a good meeting and she is happy with the outcome of the logo contest as a good outreach opportunity within the community.

Shonda Marshall said she is looking forward to the retreat training and wants to make sure the invitation is extended to City Council.

6. Melanie Oldham:

Melanie Oldham said she is happy the EDC was able to help both businesses who applied for the grant but would like to have a discussion later on about a new business grant program.

7. Sandra Loeza:

Sandra Loeza said the subcommittee calls are great and the groups are getting a lot accomplished. Sandra Loeza is happy to be a part of the current board.

Shonda Marshall asked if anyone is keeping track of the grant amounts that are being awarded.

Mingo Marquez said he will provide a report at the next meeting.

IX. Executive Session- Adjourn into Executive Session

Executive Session Disclosure Statement: The FEDC Board of Directors reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personnel Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices) and 551.087 (Economic Development).

It is now 7:49 p.m. and I hereby recess the regular session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation February 15, 2022 meeting and do hereby convene an executive session, said executive session authorized under the following sections of the Texas 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney.)

In Accordance with the Texas Government Code:

Section 551.087 (Economic and Community Development Matters)

1. Discussion on EDC Project 2022B. -Mingo
2. Discussion on sale of EDC property -Mingo
3. Discussion on Policies for Contract Employees -Shonda
4. Discussion and possible action on EDC Housing Development -David
5. Consultation with Attorney -Mingo

Reconvene into Open Session

Board President's statement:

It is now 8:53 p.m. and I hereby close the executive session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and do hereby reconvene the regular open session.

X. Discussion and Possible Action

1. Discussion on EDC Project 2022B.
No action taken

2. Discussion on sale of EDC property

Melanie Oldham made a motion to extend the auction of 318 W 2nd Street to March 15th and post the action in the Facts, The Source, and on Facebook. Seconded by Josh Mitchell. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

2. Discussion on Policies for Contract Employees

No action taken

3. Discussion and possible action on EDC Housing Development

No action taken

4. Consultation with Attorney

No action taken

XI. Adjourn

Motion to close board meeting made by Josh Mitchell and seconded by Jeff Pena. **Motion passed** unanimously.

It is now 8:55 p.m. and I hereby close the board meeting.