

**CITY OF FREEPORT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
200 West 2nd Street, Freeport, Texas 77541**

MINUTES

STATE OF TEXAS)
)
COUNTY OF BRAZORIA)
)
CITY OF FREEPORT)

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Economic Development Corporation of the City of Freeport met on Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Freeport Police Department Municipal Court Room, located at 430 North Brazosport, Freeport, TX, for the purpose of considering the agenda items.

FEDC BOARD MEMBERS: Quorum Present

Ed Garcia President
Josh Mitchell Vice President
Mingo Marquez Finance
Nicole Mireles Secretary
David McGinty
Shonda Marshall
Jeff Pena

Courtland Holman: Executive Director
Tim Kelty: City Manager
Chris Duncan: Attorney
Cathy Ezell: City Finance Director
Jerry Cain: Council Liaison

Visitors in Attendance:
No one filled out Visitor Attendance

I. Call to Order

President Ed Garcia opened the meeting at 6:00 P.M. A quorum was present: Ed Garcia, Josh Mitchell, Mingo Marquez, Nicole Mireles, David McGinty, Shonda Marshall and Jeff Pena.

II. Invocation and Pledge

Shonda Marshall led the invocation and David McGinty the Pledge.

III. Citizens Comments

None

IV. Consent Agenda

a. Approve Meeting Minutes for June 22, 2021 and July 7, 2021.

Jeff Pena made a motion to approve meeting minutes for June 22, 2021 and July 7, 2021. Motion was seconded by Josh Mitchell. **Motion Passed Unanimously.**

b. Review and Take Action on May Finance Statement.

Jeff Pena made a motion to approve the May Finance Statement. Motion was seconded by Josh Mitchell. **Motion Passed Unanimously.**

V. Discussion & Action Items

a. Discussion and possible action regarding subcommittee Construction Policy.

David McGinty said the construction policy has twelve points. David McGinty said he met with Nicole Mireles, Josh Mitchell and Mr. Holman to discuss this policy. David McGinty said if the board had any questions regarding this policy they should ask Mr. Holman he will answer them better than he can.

Nicole Mireles said item four states Architectural/ Engineering drawings will be required unless Executive Director or their designee determine the project does not require one, i.e. a small-scale job that would not require drawing. Nicole Mireles said this should go through the city to allow them to be able to determine what is acceptable.

Jeff Pena said he agrees with Nicole Mireles.

Nicole Mireles made a motion to approve the Construction Policy with the following change for #4 Architectural/Engineering drawings will be required unless Executive Director or their designee, in consultation with the city, determines the project does not require one, i.e. a small-scale job that would not require drawing. Motion was seconded by David McGinty. **Motion Passed Unanimously.**

b. Discussion and possible action in regards to having a board retreat and hire a consultant to facilitate FEDC's training and goal as a board.

Mr. Holman said he would like to propose a board retreat for the board and hire a consultant. Mr. Holman said the consultant explains what the EDC does and also the duties. Mr. Holman said he put a list together of recommended potential consulting firms. Mr.

Holman suggested the board to form a subcommittee and if they decide to go forward with this they should interview the potential candidates.

Ed Garcia said he would like to recommend Jeff Pena as chairman, Nicole Mireles and Shonda Marshall for this subcommittee to research and get back to the board with information.

Nicole Mireles made a motion to approve Jeff Pena as chairman, Nicole Mireles and Shonda Marshall for the subcommittee. Motion was seconded by Mingo Marquez. **Motion Passed** Unanimously.

c. Discussion and possible action regarding Business Improvement Grant request for Sweet T's.

Mr. Holman said Sweet T's has made a request to have a business improvement grant to replace and repair the roof. Mr. Holman said Ashley Construction is at \$28,802.67 and the EDC will only be able to do up to \$10,000 max.

Nicole Mireles said asked Mr. Holman when a business requests a business improvement grant does he suggest the business using local companies.

Mr. Holman replied yes, he does suggest using local companies but they are not required to use them.

David McGinty said he spoke to Tammy and encouraged her to use a local company if possible.

Chris Duncan said the board should have requirements for the business to have to stay open for a certain time period.

Mr. Holman said the owner of Sweet T's is currently purchasing the building and has a mortgage and has made improvements to the back side of the building demonstrating that she will remain in business. Mr. Holman said the owner is asking for help due to the damage caused by the storms.

Shonda Marshall asked who is responsible for monitoring and making sure the protocols are being followed.

Mr. Holman said the owner has to spend the money and she will submit the invoices for him to reimburse the owner. Mr. Holman said the board has the ability to help the owner upfront but he will still have to track the invoices, look at the work and take pictures. Mr. Holman said she will also have to obtain the permits and final from the city

Jeff Pena made a motion to approve the Business Improvement Grant request for Sweet T's. Motion was seconded by David McGinty. **Motion Passed** Unanimously.

d. Discussion and Action regarding Billfish Classic.

Mr. Holman said the EDC and the City have participated in sponsoring the Billfish Classic. Mr. Holman stated the Billfish Classic brings many businesses to the City of Freeport on an annual basis during this tournament. Mr. Holman said the Billfish Classic use a restaurant within the City as their point of organization which then brings business people to that restaurant. Mr. Holman said they also produce a three-minute video the City can use to promote Freeport and also do a larger video of forty-five minutes that is posted on their website that everybody can see. Mr. Holman stated both of the videos do a good job focusing on Freeport. Mr. Holman said what he is proposing is to continue funding up to \$2500 to the Billfish Classic.

Jeff Pena said it is important when looking to promote and sponsor the City to get the most bang for our buck. Jeff Pena stated what he liked about the EDC partnering with the Museum and Hispanic Chamber of Commerce was that the EDC had more control of the marketing of in promoting of the EDC being pronounced. Jeff Pena said he would like to hold back a certain amount of funds so the EDC can promote the Billfish Classic with the EDC and City of Freeport logo and brand so the surrounding cities know it is all Freeport. Jeff Pena said the fishing tournaments should be sponsored but how it is done is equally important and would recommend if the board is going to sponsor this event to only give them half of the amount and the other half the board retain to be able to control the marketing to make sure the City of Freeport is pronounced.

Ed Garcia asked Mr. Courtland if it possible for the Billfish Classic to put a better logo for this year's event.

Mr. Holman said he will ask the Billfish Classic to see if it is possible to put a better logo or on their video and expects them to say yes. Mr. Holman said the video and promotions they say Freeport all over even though it may not have the City logo, Freeport is being recognized by multiple people.

City Manager Tim Kelty said when the video is being created they look for people to interview that are on camera and he suggests a member from the EDC board or Mr. Holman to be interviewed to be identified as Freeport EDC.

Mingo Marquez made a motion to approve the \$2,500 for the 2021 Billfish Classic Sponsorship. Motion was seconded by Josh Mitchell. On a vote of 5 to 1. **Motion Passed.** Jeff Pena voted No.

e. Discussion and Action to pay for the accommodations and possible other costs for the representatives of the Sister City signing event with the City of Altamira Mexico and City of Freeport event on August 6, 2021.

Nicole Mireles asked why local hotels are not being used for this event instead of using hotels in Lake Jackson.

Ed Garcia said the best impression should be made for the representatives of the Sister City signing event.

Mr. Holman said we do not have the facilities to accommodate them, we have a Motel 6 and Days Inn hotel that is normally rented out.

Ed Garcia said the board should put their best foot forward and have committed to participate as well as Brazosport College and LNG it is a very important event not only for right now but also for the future. Ed Garcia said he also talked to Port representatives and are in favor of supporting this event also.

City Manager Tim Kelty said the City will be participating but have not decided the extent of how it will be, he said there is nothing budgeted and that will have to do budget transfer.

Gina Adams with the Brazoria Hispanic Chamber of Commerce said she will be receiving the representatives at the airport at 10:30am on August 4th, she will then take them to the consulate's office, then they will be taken to the hotel and that evening the Mayor was talking about having dinner with them to get to know everybody which include the City Council and the EDC board. Gina Adams and her husband came up with an agenda with a zero budget. Gina Adams said her husband got as sponsor for the transportation for the representatives. Gina Adams said she got with BASF and they said they would do a tour for the representatives and also lunch. Gina Adams stated many of the events, breakfasts and lunches are already taken care of. Gina Adams says the consulate has a lot of the channels like Telemundo and Univision and told the consulate she really wants the media and those channels there for the event. Gina Adams said the City of Freeport is very important to her but this is a historical event, this is an event that the City of Pearland and other cities want. Gina Adams said this is a very important and when the event happens she wants it to look nice. Gina Adams stated she is doing all the planning and she is not asking to get paid for it but she only wants to do something nice for the City. Gina Adams said the lodging will probably be \$300 less because six representatives are coming from Altamira and the head of the economic development of the consulate which might not stay.

Jeff Pena said he does not like the idea that the representatives who are here to promote and partner with Freeport go to Lake Jackson and stay the night. Jeff Pena said he checked his vacancy at his lofts for these days and has two units that are available and is happy to donate them.

Gina Adams said she will ask them but do not think the representatives will be willing to separate since it is government business.

Mingo Marquez said this event will be something neat and historically for the City of Freeport.

Mingo Marquez made a motion to approve up to \$3,000 for the accommodations for the representatives of the Sister City signing event with the City of Altamira Mexico and City of Freeport event on August 6, 2021. Motion was seconded by Shonda Marshall. **Motion Passed** Unanimously.

f. Discussion and possible Action to insure FEDC properties through TML.

Cathy Ezell said the City is doing an inventory of all of its property and equipment to make sure everything is insured. Cathy Ezell said while doing this she got with Mr. Holman to get a list of the properties that the EDC owns. Cathy Ezell said she approached Mr. Holman, Mr. Kelty and talked about the EDC being able to get a better premium for their insurance being under the City's umbrella and is asking the EDC to only pay the premium. Cathy Ezell said the list of properties the board has is the list that she has also that was provided by Mr. Holman. Cathy Ezell said she got a quote from TML to get the properties insured which will cost \$599.00 per year. Cathy Ezell said the properties are not currently insured. Cathy Ezell said she is approaching the EDC to see if they would like those properties to be insured under the City's umbrella at a cost of \$599.00 a year.

Jeff Pena asked if general liability and windstorm is covered and also how a claim would be made.

Cathy Ezell said general liability is covered and windstorm is not covered because it is something that is different and it is much more expensive. Cathy Ezell said the EDC would tell the City that a claim should be filed which is filed through her department (Human Resources and Finance), the claim is filed, TML will cut the City a check and then the City will endorse the check over to the EDC to do any repairs. Cathy Ezell said the property must have a building for it to be insured.

Nicole Mireles said she took it upon herself to get a list of the properties the EDC owns, she said this list has not been given to the board. Nicole Mireles said she personally does not know the properties the EDC owns that has buildings on them and she said she would like to know this.

Mr. Holman said the spreadsheet he gave to Cathy Ezell will be sent to Nicole Mireles also.

Nicole Mireles made a motion to insure FEDC properties through TML. Motion was seconded by Jeff Pena. **Motion Passed** Unanimously.

g. T-Mobile Downtown WIFI Concept discussion.

Jeff Pena said the dream and vision is for the City of Freeport to have free Wi-fi for the residents and guests. Jeff Pena said the initial concept was for the downtown to have Wi-fi. Jeff Pena stated two proposals have been received one quote from Houston PC Services that is general but does not have the specifics of the other proposal he received. Jeff Pena said the company that gave him the second quote met with Mr. Holman and himself was more comprehensive that included web page, splash page, potential to do go fencing, data analysis and potential webcam solutions. Jeff Pena said he would like the board members to also participate to make this happen.

Mr. Holman said he passed out an excel spreadsheet that breaks down the park public Wi-fi and the Bryan beach connectivity with some options as well. Mr. Holman said the

reoccurring cost is \$2000 for the landing page that would be a website that does the go fencing, advertising and other stuff. Mr. Holman said the landing page can be managed as well as any services and support in case something gets broken such as a lighting strike the company will replace it. Mr. Holman asked the company if the units for the Wi-fi usually break down and he said they told him no and usually last for six or seven years. Mr. Holman said the Bryan beach connectivity can be going off of cell tower that can be on the water tower which will point from City Hall to the water tower to Bryan beach connectivity which will also allow to be able to put a camera at the beach which can go to the Police and Fire department.

Nicole Mireles asked Jeff Pena why the board would spend this much money on the beach.

Jeff Pena replied to Nicole Mireles and said this is about quality of life, attracting tourist and different events.

h. Discussion and possible action regarding continuing with General Public joining the FEDC Board Meetings remotely via Teleconference.

Courtland Holman said the public can attend the FEDC board meetings and it is up to the board if they would like to continue having the City assist in having the freeconferecall.com to have audio use, people have the ability to listen online.

City Manager Tim Kelty said the public that is listening online are unable to address the board directly and if they have comments need to be submitted via email prior the meeting. Mr. Kelty said when council chambers is moved to City Hall it will be set up with the video recording.

Nicole Mireles made a motion to discontinue using the remote via teleconference for the FEDC board meetings. Motion was seconded by Mingo Marquez. **Motion Passed** Unanimously.

i. Discuss and take possible action to remove and or replace board member as a signing authority.

(1) Add VP Josh Mitchell as Signing Authority

Cathy Ezell said Mr. Holman and Mingo Marquez to go to the bank for the changes that were made previously before the changes are in effect. Cathy Ezell said it is her understanding Mr. Holman, Ed Garcia, Mingo Garcia and herself are the signatories.

Nicole Mireles made a motion to add Vice President Josh Mitchell as a Signing Authority. Motion was seconded by Jeff Pena. **Motion Passed** Unanimously.

j. Appoint a subcommittee to work on Annual Budget

Ed Garcia said he would like to appoint Mingo Marquez as Chairman, Josh Mitchel and himself for the subcommittee to work on the annual budget.

k. Analyst Admin Position

Ed Garcia said this item was tabled at the last meeting. Ed Garcia said he would like to revisit the job description for this position and would like to table this item again.

Mr. Holman said the board can create a subcommittee to rewrite the job description. Mr. Holman stated he will have to pull the advertisement of the position as it currently is from TML.

Nicole Mireles said she thinks an assistant is needed instead of an analyst.

Mr. Holman said the original job description was created by the board at one point.

Shonda Marshall said if this person will be assisting Mr. Holman she would like to hear from him what he is looking for.

Mr. Holman said the person he is looking for is a dual function which they will do some of the administrative duties, writing the meeting minutes, attending the meetings, filing, answering phone calls, help him with outreach going out to meet with businesses that he physically does not have time to do, promoting the EDC with the business community and going to other communities. Mr. Holman said he also has another job description that is a project manager that will take on a lot of the duties he performs on a daily basis such as creating packets that will go to business that are trying to attract and outreach to businesses and this position will be hourly.

Ed Garcia said he would like to appoint Shonda Marshall as chairman, Josh Mitchell and Nicole Mireles for a subcommittee to come up with the description and function for the analyst admin position.

l. Appoint a subcommittee to meet with a housing developer in regards to the City's 19 acres.

Ed Garcia said he would like to appoint David McGinty as chairman, Nicole Mireles and Ed Garcia for subcommittee to meet with a housing developer in regards to the City's 19 acres.

Mr. Holman said there is a business that is interested and would like to schedule a meeting as soon as possible with them.

VI. Board Comments

a. President Ed Garcia: announcements and comments.

Ed Garcia said he hopes all the subcommittees will get to work and are on the right track and would like somebody to tell the board if they are not on the right track. Ed Garcia said he appreciates all the support and help and hopes the EDC can do something good for the City of Freeport. Ed Garcia asked Gina Adams if she could tell the board who the sponsors are for the sister city signing event.

Gina Adams said she will send the board a list of the sponsors as well as the itinerary.

b. VP Josh Mitchell: announcements and comments.

Josh Mitchell said he agrees with Ed Garcia's comment.

c. Finance Mingo Marquez announcements and comments.

Mingo Marquez said he likes the activity going on in the downtown like the fountains working and would like the downtown to have more lighting. Mingo Marquez said he knows this is the City but would like the EDC to help the City get some lighting for the downtown. Mingo Marquez asked about the lighting on the levee.

Jeff Pena said the lighting on the 8.8 acres has a subcommittee of Ed Garcia, Mingo Marquez and himself. Jeff Pena said this has been on ice the reason being the changes happening on the EDC the last few months and is happy to get it back on track and can talk about it on the next meeting.

Mingo Marquez would also like to thank the board for moving forward on the grants and would like to get the word out to let other businesses know they are available for them. Mingo Marquez said it is the little things that make the City look better and be a place people would like to be in.

d. Secretary Nicole Mireles announcements and comments.

Nicole Mireles said she was on the subcommittee for the construction policy with Josh Mitchell and David McGinty, they met twice and were able to get it done. Nicole Mireles said if the board members that are in subcommittees have an obstacle they should let the board know they are not able to get it done. Nicole Mireles said she wanted to thank Gina Adams and she appreciates everything she is doing for the City. Nicole Mireles said she would like the agenda packet to go out on a timely matter.

e. David McGinty announcements and comments.

David McGinty said he echoes Nicole Mireles comment regarding the packet going out on a timely matter. David McGinty said there is no way to be properly educated in only twenty minutes. David McGinty said he also echoes the lighting issue downtown as well. David McGinty said he would also like to get on the way finding signs. David McGinty said there is many people coming in to town not knowing where businesses are at.

f. Shonda Marshall announcements and comments.

Shonda Marshall said she would appreciate it if she would get her packet on time to be able to listen to it. Shonda Marshall said she does not like to sit and be lost she wants to be an active participant. Shonda Marshall she said she knows several businesses in town that do not know about grants being available for them. Shonda Marshall said she would like the board to do a better effort to get this information out to the businesses.

g. Jeff Pena announcements and comments.

Jeff Pena said he would like to thank everyone participating. Jeff Pena said he is glad the board is moving on with a subcommittee format that motivated the new memberships. Jeff Pena said he was one of the councilmen that nominated Josh Mitchell and Shonda

Marshall and is glad to see them participating actively. Jeff Pena said he is glad to be working with a team that is willing to work together. Jeff Pena said the committees the board had last year included the signage, billboards and the way finding. Jeff Pena said he was collaborating with LeAnn Strahan with the museum as they are also wanting to put out new signage. Jeff Pena said the EDC is still looking for opportunities to promote the City. Jeff Pena said any developer the subcommittee decides to engage with for the 19 acres make sure their financials are in order.

VII. Executive Session- Adjourn into Executive Session

It is now 7:42 p.m. and I hereby recess the regular session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation July 13, 2021 meeting and do hereby convene an executive session, said executive session authorized under the following sections of the Texas Government Code: (1 Government Code, Section 551.087 (Economic and Community Development Matters), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)

In Accordance with the Texas Government Code:

Section 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property)

- 1. Discussion and action to sell, lease or other regarding the FEDC properties or buildings.**

Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney)

- 1. Realty World Development**

Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)

- 1. Annual Review of Executive Director**

Reconvene into Open Session

Board President's statement:

It is now 9:10 p.m. and I hereby close the executive session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and do hereby reconvene the regular open session.

Discussion and Possible Action

- 1. Discussion and action to sell, lease or other regarding FEDC properties or buildings.**

No Action

- 2. Realty World Development**

No Action

- 3. Annual review of Executive Director**

Ed Garcia told Mr. Holman he needs improvement.

VIII. Director's Report

IX. Adjourn

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

It is now 9:12 p.m. and I hereby close the board meeting.