

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, April 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Freeport Police Department Municipal Court Room, located at 430 North Brazosport Boulevard, Freeport, TX, for the purpose of considering the agenda items.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT: Quorum Present

Trey Sullivan- President
Kenny Hayes
Mingo Marquez
Marinell Music
Jeff Pena
Ed Garcia

Tim Kelty: City Manager
Chris Duncan: Attorney

Visitors in Attendance:

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Sullivan opened the meeting at 6:00P.M. A quorum was present. Trey Sullivan, Mingo Marquez, Jeff Pena, Marinell Music, Kenny Hayes and Ed Garcia.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Mr. Sullivan announced the opportunity for any visitors present to address the board.

Ms. Oldham, via video conference, said she had a couple of comments she wanted to make on agenda items number ten and eleven.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION-ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

It is now 6:57 p.m. and I hereby recess the regular session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation April 21, 2020 meeting and do hereby convene and 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)

In Accordance with the Texas Government Code:

- A. Section 551.087 (Economic and Community Development Matters)
 - 1. Project Realty World

Reconvene into Open Session

It is now 7:30 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 ACTION

A) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REALTY WORLD AGREEMENT

MOTION to approve Second Amendment as presented to the board was made by Mr. Hayes, **seconded** by Mr. Marquez. Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

V. DISCUSSION AND ACTION

A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING

(1) CITY WI-FI IN DOWNTOWN, PARKS AND OTHER AREAS

Mr. Pena said the items that were going to be discussed are items that have been talked about since summer of 2018. Mr. Pena stated putting the free Wi-Fi in downtown memorial park at the historic district is kind of a proof of concept for the greater free Wi-Fi in downtown. Mr. Pena said the concept as part of the whole mission statement of EDC is to spur economic interest but also chance the perception of Freeport. Mr. Duncan said that Mr. Pena had mentioned

before that by having public Wi-fi if someone logs in and the agreement is accepted an informational page will be pulled up. Mr. Duncan said this can be used to give information to visitors or people that are using the free Wi-Fi in the City of Freeport. Mr. Pena said the homepage visitors and residents will be able to find all the local businesses and also important news that the City of Freeport would want to share. Mr. Pena said he volunteers his building to host so the hardware is on the roof and it can capture the whole park, the back of the museum and maybe also city hall. Mr. Sullivan asked what were Mr. Pena's thoughts on the maintenance if there were internet issues and also who would be the one to maintain that. Mr. Pena said he would volunteered to be the one to maintain the Wi-Fi. Mr. Pena also stated that the board members can also set up a time table to how long they would want to see this last. Mr. Sullivan said he does not think this is a bad idea but he would like to see the transparency of a presentation to be clearer. Mr. Marquez said he would also like to see more on how much this will actually cost on a monthly basis as well of how much the software will cost because he would dislike to get into something that is out of the budget. Ms. Music said she does not mind helping Mr. Pena get this information to have a more detailed presentation. No Action.

(2) DEVELOPMENT OF BRYAN BEACH ENTRY AND POSSIBLE LONG-TERM GOALS.

Mr. Pena said he wants to focus on the beach entrance at Bryan beach and improve it. Mr. Pena said he had been talking to Mr. Holman regarding the potholes on the beach entrance and to be able to get them paved with concrete it will be around \$35,000. Mr. Pena said also the idea is to have a booth at the entrance. Mr. Sullivan said they are other priorities and one of them is debt obligation. Mr. Sullivan asked the board if this is something they would really want to talk about. Mr. Marquez said yes that a lot of people are going to the beach on the weekends and the EDC board is not taking advantage of being able to promote Freeport. Mr. Marquez stated that the EDC does have a lot of debt obligation but it is time for the board to do more to promote Freeport. Mr. Duncan said he would recommend to create a subcommittee to look at the land the EDC owns, how long it would take to go thru the GLO, how long it would take to do permits and the subcommittee to come back with information and a timeline.

MOTION to make a subcommittee (Jeff Pena-Chair, Mingo Marquez, Ed Garcia and Alternate- Marinell Music) to look into Bryan beach development was made by Mr. Marquez, **seconded** by Mr. Garcia. Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

(3) MEMORIAL PARK FOUNTAIN OPERATIONAL STATUS

Mr. Pena said this item has to do with the two fountains in downtown Freeport one in front of the Museum and the other in front of Lucy Goose. Ms. Music stated these fountains have not been working in almost two years. Mr. Duncan stated the fountains are part of the Memorial Park therefore they are supposed to be maintained by the Parks Department. Mr. Duncan said the proper way to address this would be to address the City Council or talk to the City Manager. Mr. Kelty said the City has been working on this issue and actually have one estimate that has been received for the repair of the fountain on the north end of the park and one of the issues with that is the fountain is broken in some way that it does not hold the water as it is supposed to. Mr. Kelty stated the City had been working on this issue already. No Action.

(4) DOWNTOWN STREET/BRIDGE LIGHTING OPERATIONAL STATUS DUE TO NEW INVESTMENT FORTH COMING BY ACTIVE DEVELOPERS

Mr. Pena said the downtown street/ bridge lighting is two different parts. The downtown historical area they are those old antique street lamps running down second street from City Hall at the intersection of second and cherry street that are standing but are not lit. Mr. Pena said that he was told the power supply to them are connected to the old buildings that are there. Mr. Pena also stated that he was thinking if possible to run an extension cord from his building just so some light will be there. Mr. Sullivan asked Mr. Duncan if this is also a City issue. Mr. Duncan replied to Mr. Sullivan and said yes, it is a City issue. Mr. Duncan said to actually be able to get results is to assign some of these items on the list to the existing subcommittee for projects which they will need to go out and get the information with proposals and once that is done they can take to the EDC board. Mr. Sullivan said this project can also be added to the subcommittee that is in charge of looking into Bryan beach development.

MOTION to add this item to the subcommittee that will look into Bryan beach development (Jeff Pena-Chair, Mingo Marquez, Ed Garcia and Alternate- Marinell Music) was made by Mrs. Music, **seconded** by Mr. Pena. Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

(5) REGARDING OVERPAYMENT OF SALE TAX TO EDC

Mr. Holman said the night before at the Council meeting the Council directed Mr. Russell the Finance Director to obtain more information from the Comptrollers Office to see if the payment can be differed to a longer time frame other than twenty-nine months to a longer time frame at zero percent interest rate payback. Mr. Sullivan said the last time Ms. Russell presented the EDC board was projected twenty percent below budget amount for sales tax

revenue. Mr. Sullivan stated in regards to the overpayments and to the Comptrollers the EDC will follow as to what the City will do. No Action

(6) WINDOW SIGNAGE/STOREFRONT CAMPAIGN FOR BOARDED UP BUILDINGS. THE EDC PRINTS SIGNAGE AND OFFERS OWNERS WINDOW DRESSING SIGNAGE OF RENDERINGS OF SHOPS, BETTER THAN BOARDED UP WINDOWS.

Mr. Pena said being a business owner in the downtown he feels the windows can be covered with advertisement and said Mr. Holman told him he has done this in other places. Mr. Holman said that one of the cities he came from he said they had the idea to create street scrapes that were also put up in the windows. Mr. Holman stated if there was a broker trying to rent the unit for the property owner an agreement was made with the property owner to put the street scrape into the window with a broker sign. Mr. Duncan asked if Mr. Holman knew of someone or hire someone that could possibly produce them. Mr. Holman said in this area he does not know of any one. Mr. Duncan said some businesses in Angleton are able to do this or also Pearland Town Center they always have something nice in the empty shops so it does not look like a completely vacant place. Mr. Duncan said to act an individual or a subcommittee should take on this project to follow through and get on the information how this will be done.

MOTION for window signage/storefront campaign be appointed to the Special Projects Committee headed by Mr. Duncan was made by Mr. Marquez, **seconded** by Mr. Pena. Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

(7) COMMUNITY OUTREACH TO BUSINESSES TO VOLUNTEER FOR TOILETRIES AND SUPPLIES DRIVE. EDC SPONSOR TOILETRIES DRIVE...VOLUNTEER EFFORT WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES/ RESTAURANTS ...A CHANCE TO HELP PROMOTE THEIR BUSINESSES AS GOOD NEIGHBORS AS WELL AS ALLOW THEM A CHANCE TO GET MORE VISIBILITY. BUDGET REQUEST FOR \$5K

Mr. Pena said this agenda item is more of a community outreach effort to help the image of the EDC. Mr. Pena said he knows of several distilleries in the area and county that are creating hand sanitizer and are providing those for first responders and this would be a really good effort on the EDC part. Mr. Pena said if the EDC has never interacted with first responders he believes this would be a really good time to do so. Mr. Duncan said the only idea he can come up with is having to go to a restaurant and sign up for a day and publicize it, tell the public the EDC board will be out on a certain day helping the restaurant pass out food because they may not have a drive thru window. Mr. Duncan said he likes the idea of having a more visible presence in the city and let the city know the EDC

board is there to help. Mr. Duncan stated that he thinks giving the time and being seen is much more effective than just writing a check and spending money. Mr. Duncan said as far as spending money the EDC does not think the board can spend money for charity or donations. Mr. Hayes said as a member of the EDC board he believes the time should be spent supporting Mr. Holman in economic development. Mr. Sullivan said as board members and public servants all give back to the community individually speaking and encourages the board to keep giving back and help those in need. Mr. Sullivan stated for the board to take the lead for agenda item number seven and nine it does not look like it is in the round for the EDC at the moment. Ms. Music said since new businesses will be in town she believes some type of event should be made including having the newspapers and media and show the support to come out and join welcoming the new businesses. Mr. Holman said also to do a ribbon cutting the board can go through the Brazoria Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to assist in getting people there. No Actions.

(8) INITIATE DISCUSSION FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF EDC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Sullivan said that he does not believe that any city employees have gone through the reviews being that the pandemic is going on. Mr. Pena said that the annual review of the one-year anniversary is coming up in June and wants to make sure that as a board to start collecting job performance material. Mr. Duncan said Mr. Holman sent him a form that was used to review his performance previously. Mr. Duncan stated he can take the form Mr. Holman gave to him and take other examples and can start emailing those so the board can review it. Mr. Duncan said this review information should not be discussed with others. No Actions.

(9) LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM- DISCUSS PROGRAM USED BY OTHER CITIES THAT ARE PROVIDING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL BUSINESSES

This was discussed with Item #7. No Action.

(10) PROVIDE AND DISCUSS ALL CURRENTLY ACTIVE 380 AGREEMENTS TO ASSESS COMPLIANCE AND MILESTONES

Mr. Pena said he wanted the board to be aware of any and all current, active and past 380 agreements. Mr. Pena asked Mr. Sullivan if he knew of any 380 agreements. Mr. Kelty said the only 380 agreement that he is aware of is the one with Mr. Wong and the City. Mr. Sullivan asked Mr. Holman for next board meeting to have a list of contracts and 380 agreements. Mr. Sullivan stated this item will be on the next board meeting. Ms. Oldham asked Mr. Duncan if the public can do a public information request and request all the current actively 380 agreements and if it is open to the public. Mr. Duncan replied to Ms. Oldham

and said she can submit an open records request to the EDC and request for their agreements as she would for the City for their agreements also. Mr. Duncan stated generally speaking contracts are open to the public to review. Mr. Sullivan asked Mr. Duncan how much the open requests cost to the public. Mr. Duncan replied to Mr. Sullivan and said it is ten cents a copy and if the employee goes over a certain number of hours that can be also charged but it is usually very low dollar amount. No Actions.

(11) PROVIDE LIST OF ALL CURRENT OUTSTANDING GRANTS/PROJECTS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES TO ASSESS STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

Mr. Pena said the purpose of this to have the executive director on the monthly report have an updated section for agreements, contracts, status updates of any grants that are active and also any projects that the EDC is pursuing. Mr. Holman said a lot of what he is doing at the moment is private and confidential information and would not want to provide that information in open session till such time it is allowed to do so. Mr. Holman stated he does not have any grants that are pending or outstanding that he knows of. Mr. Duncan stated the subcommittee projects are not confidential but the ones with third parties that are giving out confidential information about their business are confidential. Mr. Pena said this is just to help do organizing so the board does not have things fall through the cracks agreements and or projects that will require additional cost. No Actions.

(12) PROVIDE LIST OF ALL CURRENT MARKETING CAMPAIGNS AND INITIATIVES TO ASSESS STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

Mr. Pena said when Mr. Holman came on board one of the big pushes that he had was promoting Freeport in different trade magazines. Mr. Pena said he wants to make sure that the board stays on top of promoting Freeport and know where the money is being spent. Mr. Sullivan said he wants to applaud Mr. Holman because he sees him all the time at community functions throughout the county, carries himself well and is representing the EDC board. No Actions.

B. DISUCSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON LIVING BRAZOS THE FOG ON THE RIVER PROJECT

Ms. Music said she had been talking to Mr. Duncan for several months regarding this project. Mr. Duncan said they received a bid from a company that has the equipment that can do this project and it also a very well-known company in Houston that is known for a lot of known for digital media projects. Mr. Duncan stated this company told him to do a proof of concept type of test that will cost about \$3,500 to rent the equipment and for the time for this come down and to the

test. Mr. Duncan said he will get additional bids from other companies before asking for action on this item.

C. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON BOX POP A CONTAINER RETAIL VENUE

Mr. Marquez said this is one of the projects that was discussed back in the July of 2019 with the potential projects that were presented to attract more people to Freeport. Mr. Music said Mr. Duncan and herself went to meet with Ms. Phyllis Saathoff from the Port a couple of months ago to see if they had any resources for getting some twenty-foot shipping containers possibly donated or for a really cheap price. Mr. Duncan said he was hoping to get the Port to donate these containers and put some emblems on them showing they were donated by them. Ms. Music said she will have more information regarding this on the next EDC meeting. Ms. Music said she would want these containers to be able to be moved around and staged in different events. Mr. Duncan said once all the expenses and a firm dollar amount proposal it will come back and a big presentation will be made to explain to everybody what it is going to look like. No Actions.

VI. ADJOURN

MOTION to adjourn was made by Mr. Hayes, **seconded** by Mr. Pena. Motion **PASSED** unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.



Mingo Marquez - Secretary