

III. Citizens Comments

Wade Dillon, Freeport Historical Museum Manager, informed the board of the first annual ghost walk taking place downtown. Wade Dillon encouraged the EDC and all other property owners downtown to decorate their businesses and participate in this event.

Melanie Oldham said there are no supporting documents posted for the agenda. Melanie Oldham said she submitted a Public Information Request to Kaytee Ellis yesterday morning for tonight's agenda. Melanie Oldham said posting these documents would be helpful to the public and enable them to make an educated comment on agenda items.

Pam Dancy said the minutes for the last three meetings have not been posted on the website. Pam Dancy asked the board why these are not getting posted.

IV. Consent Agenda

- 1. Approve Meeting Minutes for September 13, 2022**
- 2. Approve Meeting Minutes for September 22, 2022**
- 3. Approve Meeting Minutes for October 1, 2022**
- 4. Approve September Financials**
- 5. Approve Invoices**

Josh Mitchell made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Ken Tyner seconded.

George Matamoros questioned the invoices provided by Chris Duncan. George Matamoros asked why these invoices are six months behind.

Sandra Loeza said she has questions about this as well.

Chris Duncan responded That he typically sends his invoices quarterly,

Kaytee Ellis said the invoices provided were received on August 19th.

Shonda Marshall asked what timeframe would be sufficient.

George Matamoros stated two months max.

Mingo Marquez called for a vote on the consent agenda.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. Discussion & Action Items

- 1. Discussion and possible action on Brazoria County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce membership renewal**

Dania Moreno with the Brazoria County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce presented to the board the membership levels available.

Mingo Marquez asked what the current membership level is.

Dania Moreno responded that the memberships have since been changed to be more cohesive, but it would align similarly to the amigo level. Dania Moreno said she would suggest moving up so that the Hispanic Chamber could better serve the EDC.

Ken Tyner asked what the added benefit would be to move to the \$1000 level.

Dania Moreno said this level included sponsorships, so the chamber would not be coming back to the EDC for sponsorship of multiple events.

George Matamoros said he does not mind sponsoring but he felt the Café Y Pan Dulce event was left empty and there was not enough “bang for the buck”. George Matamoros suggested the \$750 level

Dania Moreno asked the board what benefit they were looking to get from the chamber.

George Matamoros responded networking, more publicity, and tangible items.

Ken Tyner asked what amount we pay for the Brazosport Chamber of Commerce.

Kaytee Ellis responded that the EDC is not currently a member of the Brazosport Chamber.

Ken Tyner proposed moving forward with the silver level sponsorship for \$1000.

George Matamoros said he would be okay with this.

Ken Tyner made a motion to move forward with the silver level sponsorship. Josh Mitchell seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Discussion and possible action on Brazosport Chamber of Commerce membership

Mingo Marquez said the Brazosport Chamber of Commerce reached out to follow up on the presentation previously made to the board.

Ken Tyner said the EDC needs to join the Brazosport Chamber. Ken Tyner said the Brazosport Chamber is at least four times larger than the Hispanic Chamber

Shonda Marshall asked if board members can serve on committees.

Mingo Marquez responded yes and there are a number of difference committees.

George Matamoros asked how the board would utilize the mailing labels and the flier add on for the additional \$175. George Matamoros said he does like the option to add a link on their website.

Mingo Marquez said the board could come up with an ad to submit in the flyer. Mingo Marquez said previously the ad was \$1000.

Sandra Loeza said she thinks the \$100 for advertisement is a good deal.

Mingo Marquez said they have a pretty good active membership they can share with the EDC as well.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to move approve the \$250 membership, \$75 weblink, \$75 Mailing labels, and advertisement for \$100. Josh Mitchell seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Discussion and possible action on EDC Properties

George Matamoros said he added this to the agenda mainly for the downtown properties. George Matamoros said 208 is disturbing and the city is recommending demolition. George Matamoros said the board needs to decide on what we are going to do. George Matamoros said the board needs to take action on these very soon before the value depreciated too much and the EDC loses any more money. George Matamoros said reviewed the inspection report for 210 W Park.

Mingo Marquez said he does have a couple of bids to get two of the buildings to come up to code.

Shonda Marshall asked what the next step would be.

Josh Mitchell said the project was put on hold while the board awaited a director to ensure everything was being done properly.

Josh Mitchell said during his first meeting, it was decided to fix up the building and lease out.

George Matamoros said the former Lucy Goose building at 212 is in the best shape. George Matamoros said it is his opinion he does not want the EDC to be a landlord. He would prefer to put the buildings up for sale and let the buyer make the repairs. George Matamoros said 301 W. Brazos is in need of a new staircase. George Matamoros said he recommends doing this now and getting new bids for the downtown buildings.

Shonda Marshall said her concern is there is nothing going on downtown and no one are trying to make moves in this area; if the EDC has buildings downtown, we need to do something quickly and show the City we are wanting to invest in downtown. Shonda Marshall asked if the bids we have on the properties align with the inspections.

Mingo Marquez responded yes, but they may change due to the cost of material going up.

George Matamoros said he is asking the board to rebuild the steps on the 301, get new bids for 210 and 212, and to get quotes on demoing 208.

Shonda Marshall asked if there is any interest in these buildings.

Kaytee Ellis responded yes

Mingo Marquez said he would like to get a cost of repairing 208, he does not think it would be a pretty sight to have a hole in this spot.

George Matamoros said this open spot may appeal more to a developer.

Mingo Marquez said there has been interest in turning it into outdoor seating for a restaurant.

Shonda Marshall asked what the next steps are because the board has been talking about this for a long time.

Mingo Marquez said the building committee of himself, David McGinty, and Josh Mitchell will meet and bring back proposals.

Mingo Marquez made a motion to move get bids for the step repairs, fire extinguishers and a new quote for the downtown buildings. George Matamoros seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Discussion and possible action on Business Retention and Expansion Project

Shonda Marshall said she wanted to follow up on this. Mike Barnes was asked to put together a program for the Freeport EDC and the information is in the packet.

Mike Barnes said he would look for some guidance as there has been a talk of the BRE in three categories, events, networking with larger employers. Mike Barnes said he was tasked with creating a job description for the position as well and took a combined approach to combine BRE and Marketing. Mike Barnes said 2 calls a week and 100 visits would leave room to assist with other projects. Mike Barnes said he would like the executive director to help craft this position, now that one has been selected.

Shonda Marshall said she agrees with Mr. Barnes on including the director on how the position will be set up, her concern is making sure the funds are allocated in the budget. Shonda Marshall asked if the board budgets anything over \$10,000 for this, do they need to take this to City Council for approval. Her belief is that this is the cost of doing business.

Tim Kelty said the board has allocated \$100,000 to marketing and the funds could come from here.

Sandra Loeza asked if the budget needs to include half of the salary as well as the events funding.

Mike Barnes responded yes.

Sandra Loeza asked if any other cities are utilizing this that works.

Mike Barnes responded yes, Waco.

Shonda Marshall said Pearland and just about every other EDC as well.

Mingo Marquez said he feels \$9000 is too little and he would like to wait or a director.

George Matamoros said the EDC needs to adopt this program and asked if they could use marketing funds to do this.

Mingo Marquez said himself, Shonda, and Kaytee has put quite a bit of work into this and would like to wait for the direction from the new Executive Director.

5. Discussion and possible action on Business Improvement Grant Project

Mingo Marquez said with the new year, the Grant Project needs a new public Hearing and to be taken back to council. Mingo Marquez recommends doing the same \$150,000. Mingo Marquez reviewed the current grant options available.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to have a public hearing for the grant project. Shonda Marshall seconded.

George Matamoros asked how many grants have been issued for landscaping.

Kaytee Ellis responded one.

George Matamoros asked if the board could lower the cap for landscaping to \$2500. He thinks \$10,000 is excessive.

Ken Tyner says he agrees with this.

Mingo Marquez asked how much a palm tree costs.

Kaytee Ellis said this covers outdoor lighting as well that more businesses are adding.

Shonda Marshall suggested leaving the amount at \$10,000 and reassessing next year.

Ken said keep in mind, we do not have to use the maximum amount.

Shonda Marshall said one concern from Council was that in the application packet, is there a requirement for business plan and projected financials. Shonda Marshall asked if the business plan is a part of the packet.

Mingo Marquez said no it is not, but it can be added.

Mike Barnes suggested adding a clause “other documents may be requested as necessary.”

Jerry Cain said the MEGA grant states it is to be given to a business in the downtown boundaries as laid out by the comprehensive plan or at the discretion of the FEDC. Jerry Cain said this is confusing language.

Mingo Marquez said preference can be given to downtown, but if there are no downtown applicants, it can be given to other parts of the city.

Tim Kelty suggested adding scoring criteria for the MEGA Grant.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to hold a public hearing for the Grant project and amend the grant packet to include “additional information may be requested as needed” and a scoring criterion for the MEGA Grant. George Matamoros seconded.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Discussion and possible action on EDC Budget

Tabled.

7. Discussion and possible action on Realty World Property Maintenance.

George Matamoros said there was a previous motion made by the EDC to buy back Realty World properties there are additional Realty World properties that are not being maintained and are becoming problematic. George Matamoros would like clarification on these additional properties and if necessary to get them added to the mowing contract; the nearby residents are currently maintaining the properties.

Mingo Marquez asked for clarification on the motion made by the EDC.

George Matamoros said the motion was made February 27, 2019. George Matamoros said it states 2 lots, but there should have been 8 that were bought back.

Chris Duncan said all 8 lots were sold by the EDC, 6 on one side to be the continuation of Avenue M. Chris Duncan said all other questions are legal questions and can be discussed in executive session.

8. Discussion on EDC Strategic Plan

Shonda Marshall said she wanted this on the agenda to get the discussion rolling and she would like the EDC to start putting together a strategic plan separate from that of the City. Shonda Marshall said there is a very detailed version of the City Strategic Plan.

Mingo Marquez said he has been with the city for many years and they have spent so much money on plans that just sit on a shelf and never get acted on.

Shonda Marshall said she is wanting to be able to have things to show for their hard work and his would be a good plan to use to act.

9. Discussion and possible action on Police Department Golf Tournament Sponsorship.

Sandra Loeza said she would like to see the EDC sponsor 2 holes. Sandra Loeza said she wasn't sure if the EDC could do this or not.

Chris Duncan said for Blue Santa it was for a team, not a hole and asked the cost for a hole. Chris Duncan said last year he sponsored a team and he is willing to do this again if the EDC would like to participate.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to sponsor 2 holes for the Freeport Police Department Golf Tournament. George Matamoros seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

10. Discussion and possible action on EDC office updates

Sandra Loeza said she added this to the agenda so that the board could get updates on businesses. Sandra Loeza said often the board is not able to get updates on people interested in the City.

Kaytee Ellis said there are a number of people interested in downtown, mainly the EDC buildings. Some of these are a coffee shop, and restaurant, a bar and restaurant combo, at least 15 people some of which have been in the meeting and expressed in person their interest.

Mingo Marquez said unfortunately the EDC buildings are not ready yet, but there is interest an all the more reason to get them fixed up.

VI. Subcommittee Updates

Mingo Marquez said the marketing committee met to go over the small business campaign. The committee reached out to Sweet T's and she would get them the materials needed.

VII. Board Comments

1. President Mingo Marquez:

Mingo Marquez said he would like to thank the committees, especially the director hiring committee, for all of the work they are putting in.

2. Vice President Josh Mitchell:

Josh Mitchell said there is a lot happening within the city and people are starting to notice freeport has a lot more to offer. Josh Mitchell said he is proud to be a part of this board and a part of this city.

3. Secretary David McGinty:

Absent.

4. Sandra Loeza:

Sandra Loeza said she attended the National Night Out and they did a great job, but the turnout was a little disappointing. She would like to see more participation with businesses and would like to help out next year. Sandra Loeza said Fright Night is October 27th and she would like to encourage everyone to come out and show their support. Sandra Loeza asked about the Churches chicken building and the IBC bank building has issues and will be costly due to asbestos and the underground tank.

5. Shonda Marshall:

No comments.

6. Ken Tyner:

Ken Tyner said he is very frugal with money and he does not understand why there is still another late fee on the bill. Ken Tyner said it takes one minute to walk from Kaytee Ellis' office to the front desk to pay the water and the electric bill had another late fee attached. Ken Tyner asked Kaytee Ellis what the deal is.

Kaytee Ellis said the bills in the agenda binder of Septembers bill and prior to the last meeting. At this time, the bills were being mailed to the properties downtown and being overlooked. The electric bills are a similar situation where they were being emailed and sitting on someone else's inbox. Kaytee Ellis said when she gets invoices they can sit for up to a week while she waits for them to be signed, once they are signed, they are given to the finance department where they can sit for a week waiting for the check to be cut, and

once the check is cut it can take another week to get the two signatures needed, so by the time the payment is submitted, it is late.

Ken Tyner said so we are just in the habit where all of our bills are being paid late.

Kaytee Ellis said at this point all of the issues have been corrected with the late payments.

Ken Tyner asked if the lights for downtown were voted to be turned off; the light bill is over 800 dollars.

Kaytee Ellis said the water bill was to be disconnected downtown and has been done, the light bill is for the electricity powering the light poles over the river front property.

7. George Matamoros:

George Matamoros said he would like to thank all who came out to the meeting. George Matamoros said someone needs to get with Mr. Kelty in regards to an office for the director and to ensure that Kaytee is nearby. George Matamoros said he would like to add to the next agenda to do some upgrades to Kaytee's office, to include a screen for presentations.

VIII. 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 8:17 p.m. and I hereby recess the regular session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation August 09, 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.)

Executive Session

1. Discussion on Hiring and Contract of EDC Executive Director pursuant to Texas Government Code Chapter, Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)
2. Discussion on Project 2021F pursuant to Texas Government Code Chapter, Section 551.087 (Economic Development)

Board President's statement:

It is now 9:09 p.m. and I hereby close the executive session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and do hereby reconvene the regular open session.

IX. Discussion and Possible Action

1. **Discussion on Hiring and Contract of EDC Executive Director pursuant to Texas Government Code Chapter, Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)**

Mingo Marquez made a motion to hire Robert Johnson as Executive Director with the terms agreed upon in Executive Session. Sandra Loeza seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Discussion on Project 2021F pursuant to Texas Government Code Chapter, Section 551.087 (Economic Development)

No Action.

X. Adjourn

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

It is now 9:10 p.m. and I hereby close the board meeting.