

City of Rowlett
Economic Development Advisory Board

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

8:30 A.M.

Electronically by Zoom Meeting ID #884 2102 2679

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairman Mick Donnelly called the Rowlett Economic Development Advisory Board meeting to order at 8:32 A.M. on August 18, 2020 held via teleconference. In attendance: Tammy Dana-Bashian, Shelia Hair, Mick Donnelly, Chris Kizziar, Michael Gallops, Robert LaCroix, Barry Young, Larry Glick, Brian Funderburk, Jim Grabenhorst, Lexie Woodward, Susan Nix, Jeremy McConnell (Oncor) and Chris Coble.

2. PUBLIC INPUT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM.

There were no speakers.

3. CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 21, 2020 MEETING.

A motion was made by Tammy Dana-Bashian and seconded by Sheila Hair to approve the July 21, 2020 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

4. BOARD MEMBERS SHARE TOPICS AND IDEAS RELATED TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

There was a detailed discussion regarding sales tax and how the rates are affected by DART. There was also discussion related to Rowlett's sales tax numbers in comparison to Rockwall. Brian shared information regarding sales tax, specifically related to on-line sales and how this affects the City.

5. BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION (BRE) UPDATE.

Lexie Woodward provided an update on BRE activities, both those related and unrelated to COVID-19. Regarding activities related to COVID-19, Lexie briefly went through the

COVID-19 Business and Workforce resource webpages as well as the Shop Local ads put out on Economic Development's social media pages as well as in the City's Friday @ 5 e-newsletter. Regarding business retention and expansion activities unrelated to COVID-19, Lexie reported she had three business site visits, three phone call check-ins/retention conversations, assisted four businesses in various matters, that one business has permanently closed, and that she emailed businesses regarding two grants, Dallas County Emergency Business Assistance Program (EBAP) and a Main Street grant. In addition, Lexie reported the interactive itinerary builder for Village of Rowlett Downtown website was live, as well as the third quarter "By The Numbers" report.

6. CITY KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING ITEMS.

a. Economic Development Department Update: Jim Grabenhorst provided information on the Economic Development Department activities. He presented information regarding sales tax revenue. Jim talked about the City's forecasts in comparison to the actual numbers. He stated that our sales tax revenue has increased during COVID compared to what was forecasted. He presented a list of national retailers that are deemed high risk. He gave an update on the 24-Hour Fitness relating to their bankruptcy and said that he will keep the Board updated as more information becomes available. Jim gave an update on Sapphire Bay. He stated their main focus is on infrastructure and their plans are to pour the first phase of streets in the next seven (7) to ten (10) days (weather dependent). He also mentioned that they continue to work with TXDOT to stay on track with the IH-30 improvements. Chris Coble with Black Label gave an update on North Shore. He discussed the marketing techniques that have been launched. The focus on social media, a direct email campaign and a digital newsletter. He gave details of each of these platforms and mentioned that the social media has already been implemented. He discussed the type of businesses and brokerage firms that we are targeting. Jim gave a brief update on the COVID business assistance funding. He mentioned the Rowlett ROBUST Stimulus additional funding was approved by Council. Jim reported at the request from the last EDAB meeting on the status of the PGBT east extension to IH-20. Based on conversations with TXDOT, at this time no additional progress has been made and that project is currently on hold.

b. Rowlett Chamber/Chamber Foundation Update: Sheila Hair provided the Rowlett Chamber update. She stated the Chamber held several committee meetings this week. She mentioned some events will have to be modified due to COVID. She stated that Treasured Blossoms is the Business of the Month and Life Message is next month. Michael Gallops offered details of the Chamber's presentation that was provided to City Council this year. He explained that they significantly improved advocacy and communication to businesses and not only Chamber members but the entire business community. He stated

they have had to cancel over forty (40) events this year and that they are now scheduling most events virtually. Michael Gallops provided the update for the Chamber Foundation. He said they approved a sign grant for Parkway Car Care.

c. GISD Update: Larry Glick gave the GISD update. He mentioned that school started last Monday and was completely virtual. In-person learning will start on September 8th. Larry stated the percentage of the students that will be on campus versus virtually learning and stated that none of the campuses will be over capacity. He mentioned that the Tax Ratification election was approved and will be held on November 3rd. He gave some details on tax rates and explained how the Tax Ratification election will benefit the district.

d. Knowledge Topic – Public Works Dept: Community Investment (CIP) Updates: City Engineer Tom Harris provided a Community Investment Project (CIP) update. He discussed the Miller Road project and explained that they are working with Dallas County on acquiring the Right-of-Way's. He presented photos of the location and explained details of the improvements and different options. He also gave a brief description of the Chiesa Road project and explained the acquisition it will involve. Tom then briefly discussed several other infrastructure projects. He explained that the Merritt Road project has been designed and is waiting for funding. There was some discussion regarding different options for funding, one being the Dallas County Major Capital Improvement Program (MCIP) grant program. Public Works Director Gary Enna stated there are some regional implications and flood plain mitigation that caused it to score very high in the Dallas County MCIP program.

7. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AND/OR STAFF MAY MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF LOCAL CIVIC EVENTS. NO MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR COMMISSION MAY DISCUSS NOR TAKE ANY ACTION WITH REGARD TO THE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Brian reported that the City of Rowlett budget was submitted on August 4th and there will be a Public Hearing tonight, August 18th on the proposed tax rate and budget. The final Public Hearing to adopt the budget will be next Monday, August 24th. Brian said they are proposing to reduce the tax rate by a penny and the water rate by 5%.


8. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD MAY REQUEST TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDA MEETINGS. NO MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR COMMISSION MAY DISCUSS ANY OF THE REQUESTED SUBJECTS UNTIL SUCH MATTER HAS BEEN PROPERLY PLACED ON A POSTED AGENDA.

Brian requested that the final tax rate be shared with the Board at the next meeting.

Mick Donnelly requested feedback from the surveys that were received from the businesses.

9. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Mick Donnelly at approximately 10:49 A.M.



Mick Donnelly, Chairman

10/29/20



Jim Grabenhorst, Assigned City Staff

Date Approved