

WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Minutes - Regular Meeting
February 21, 2022

Vice-President Michael Wootton called the Meeting to order at 12:04 P.M.

Board Members Participating: Michael Roberson, Clifford Jackson, Michael Wootton
Andrew Armour and Freddie Pekar

Board Members Not Participating: David Schroeder and Russell Machann

Advisory Members Participating: City Mayor Tim Barker, City Manager Joe Pace, Marilyn Sebesta
Ron Sanders

Advisory Members Not Participating: Kent Hill, Billie Jones, Dr. Michael O'Guin, Betty McCrohan,
Judge Philip Spenrath, Joe Freudenberger, Abby King, Mark Castillo and
Cindy Hernandez

WEDC Attorney Not Participating: Kari Lutringer

Visitors Participating: Joe Southern, Joan Andel and Gwyn Teves,

Staff Member Present: Joshua Owens

Consultant Present: Karen Heintschel

Public Comments: President Freddie Pekar asked if there were any public comments There were no public comments.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting held December 20, 2021, minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 24, 2022 and minutes of the Special Meeting held January 31, 2022. Director Clifford Jackson made the motion to approve all of the minutes as presented with the correction of removing Director Freddie Pekar's name from the names of Board Members not participating in the January 31, 2022 minutes as Mr. Pekar did attend the meeting. Director Michael Wootton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Presentation of Wharton EDC's FY 2021 Annual Audit by Mr. Steve Van Manen with Harrison Waldrop and Uherek. Mr. Steve Van Manen CPA, with Harrison Waldrop and Uherek, provided copies and presented the 2021 Fiscal Year Audit. Mr. Van Manen explained the audit and reported that their opinion was a clean audit, which is the highest degree of certainty that can be given, said Wharton EDC's financials were accurate and offered to answer any questions. Director Michael Wootton made the motion to approve the Auditors report as presented. Director Clifford Jackson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. A copy of the 2021 Audit is attached.

Recap of the Annual Wharton County Job Fair by Mrs. Louisa Jimenez with Work Force Solutions. Mrs. Jimenez addressed the Board and stated that this year's Job Fair was a great success and that many people were involved in coordinating and facilitating the event. She gave a PowerPoint presentation and reported that there were forty-nine in person employers, twenty-one both in person and virtual employers and 10 virtual only employers.

Mrs. Jimenez reported that there were eighty-one in person job seekers compared to forty last year and sixty-five total job seekers compared to fifty-eight last year. She also said that area high school seniors were invited to attend

and that there were ninety-three from Wharton compared to seventy-five last year, seventy-five from El Campo compared to one last year and twenty-one from Louse compared to thirty-six last year. Mrs. Jimenez reported that the employers were very impressed with the job seekers and students and said that several employers were able to find potential employees. The Directors thanked Mrs. Jimenez for her report, her work on the Job Fair and for her work with WorkForce Solutions. No action was taken.

Proposal Guidelines. Mr. Owens provided the Directors with draft copies of the Proposal Guidelines for the properties located at 135 West Burlison and 108 East Elm Streets. The Directors agreed to discuss the guidelines in executive session. No action was taken.

Raw Land Contract and Performance Agreement. Mr. Owens stated that Wharton EDC Attorney, Kari Lutringer, was in the process of finalizing the documents and that they would be presented for consideration as soon as possible. No action was taken.

Report from Executive Director and discussion of:

A. Monthly Sales Tax Report. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the Monthly Sales Tax Report and said the February sales tax was up by 26% over the budgeted amount.

B. Required PFIA 2256.023 Report. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the required PFIA 2256.023 as attached.

C. Balance and Commitments Sheet. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the current Balance and Commitments Sheet stating WEDC's total assets were \$2,923,370 and the total liabilities were \$231,153, net equity being \$2,691,217 WEDC's 2021-2022 commitments were \$231,153.

D. Statement of Revenues and Expenditures. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the Statement of Revenues and Expenses as of January 31, 2022, and said the budget was well on track.

Mr. Owens mentioned that web site visitors remained constant and that he was continuing to work on the new web site. He stated that he had received two additional proposals on the Industrial Foundation property and that he had site visits with two different prospects. Mr. Owens said the Galantine's Day was a great success and that he was working with Mr. Donald Smith, Dean of Vocational Instruction, at WCJC to enhance communications between WCJC and Wharton EDC. He also said that the TX Dot infrastructure at FM 1301 and Hwy.59 was moving forward.

Director Michael Wootton made the motion to approve the Executive Director's report as presented. Director Andrew Armour seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Executive Session: According to Texas Government Code (Chapter 551, Open Meetings), the Board may conduct a closed executive session for the following reasons: Consultation with attorney §551.071, deliberation regarding real property §551.072, deliberation regarding prospective gift §551.073, personnel matters §551.074, deliberation regarding security devices §551.076, deliberation regarding economic development negotiations §551.087. Final action, decision, or vote, if any with regard to any matter considered in Executive Session shall be made in Open Meeting.

The Board went into Executive Session at 12:40 P.M.

- A. **§551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.**
 - 1. **Negotiations on Sites.**
 - 2. **Business Retention and Expansion/Retail.**

- B. **§551.072 - Deliberation regarding Real Property**
 - 1. **129 South Fulton Street.**
 - 2. **133 South Fulton Street.**

- C. **§551.074 - Personnel Matters**
 - 1. **Wharton EDC Personnel.**

The Board returned to Open Session at 1:25 P.M.

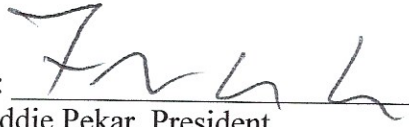
- A. **§551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.**
 - 1. **Negotiations on Sites.** Director Andrew Armour made the motion to approve the draft Proposal Guidelines and draft application as amended. Director Michael Roberson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. A copy of the Approved Guidelines for Proposals and application are attached.
 - 2. **Business Retention and Expansion/Retail.** No action taken.

- B. **§551.072 - Deliberation regarding Real Property**
 - 1. **129 South Fulton Street.** On a motion made by Director Clifford Jackson and seconded by Director Michael Wootton the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that the application from Haley Hobbs, be approved for \$10,000 for façade and signage improvements as the Board finds that it will enhance the property located in Wharton and will promote the future expansion of business in Wharton. Funding will be contingent upon the completion of the project and the applicant providing paid receipts for the full amount of the façade and signage improvements. All voted in favor
 - 2. **133 South Fulton Street.** On a motion made by Director Michael Wootton and seconded by Director Andrew Armour the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that the application from Haley Hobbs, be approved for \$10,000 for façade and signage improvements as the Board finds that it will enhance the property located in Wharton and will promote the future expansion of business in Wharton. Funding will be contingent upon the completion of the project and the applicant providing paid receipts for the full amount of the façade and signage improvements. All voted in favor

- C. **§551.074 - Personnel Matters**
 - 1. **Wharton EDC Personnel.** No action was taken.

With no further business to discuss, President Freddie Pekar thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 1:30 P.M.

WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

By: 
Freddie Pekar, President

Attest: 
Andrew Armour, Secretary