

WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Minutes - Regular Meeting

January 23, 2023

President Freddie Pekar called the Meeting to order at 12:08 P.M.

Board Members Participating: Freddie Pekar, Andrew Armour, Michael Roberson
Clifford Jackson, Russell Machann

Board Members Not Participating: Alice Heard-Roberts and Michael Wootton

Advisory Members Participating: Mayor Tim Barker, City Manager Joe Pace, County Judge Phillip Spenrath,
and Marilyn Sebesta

Advisory Members Not Participating: Cindy Hernandez, Ron Sanders, Dr. Michael O'Guin, Betty McCrohan,
Donald Smith, Joe Freudenberger, Abby King and Kent Hill

Visitors Participating: Joan Anandel, Ronnie Collins, Gwyn Teves, Christie Padula, David
Schroeder, Chris Young, Joe Southern, Terry Freese, Madison Neal,
and Megan Jimenez

Staff Member Present: Joshua Owens and Louisa Jimenez

Public Comments: President Freddie Pekar asked if there were any public comments. Director Danny Phillips of Workforce Solutions for Interfaith of The Woodlands addressed the Board of Directors and extended a thank you for allowing Wharton Workforce Solutions to operate, rent free, in the Wharton EDC conference room. By providing the conference room, Workforce Solutions was able to continue serving employers, job seekers, and meet the needs of the growing community. Danny stated Workforce Solutions has relocated to their new location off of FM 102 next to Dr. Aly and across from NanYa Plastics. Danny extended an invitation to the Board of Directors and all others interested in attending the Grand Opening celebration and ribbon cutting on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 from 10am-11:30am. President Freddie Pekar thanked Danny for his presentation and congratulated him on the new office space.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 14, 2022- Director Russell Machann made the motion to approve all minutes as presented. Director Andrew Armour seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Resolution 2023-01: Authorizing Participation in TexPool Prime and Designating Authorized Representatives. Executive Director Joshua Owens stated the Resolution is needed in order to create the TexPool Prime account. Once the account is opened, partial funds from the regular TexPool account will be reallocated to TexPool Prime. Executive Director Joshua Owens reported the benefits of the TexPool Prime account is the increase in liquidity and yield. Director Clifford Jackson made the motion to approve Resolution 2023-01: Authorizing Participation in TexPool Prime and Designating Authorized Representatives and Director Russell Machann seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Resolution 2023-02: Support of State Funding to Match Competitive Federal Rail Programs. Executive Joshua Owens explained that Resolution 2023-02 is to encourage Texas Legislature to designate matching funds for federal rail grants. The Resolution will assist TxDot in competing for federal rail funding programs for both freight and passenger rail. Director Russell Machann made the motion to approve Resolution 2023-02: Support of State Funding to Match Competitive Federal Rail Programs. All voted in favor.

Resolution 2023-03: Authorizing the Execution of a Real Estate Sales Contract. Executive Director Joshua Owens explained Resolution 2023-03 is to authorize the execution of the Real Estate Sales Contract for Cochrum Enterprises, LLC. Director Clifford Jackson made the motion to approve Resolution 2023-03: Authorizing the Execution of a Real Estate Sales Contract and Director Andrew Armour seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Retail Strategies, LLC. Retail Development Coordinator Madison Neal addressed the Board, via telephone, and provided the annual recap and update for Red River ICSC Convention. No action taken.

2023 Wharton County Job Fair Update. Wharton EDC Coordinator reported the 2023 Wharton County Job Fair will be Tuesday, February 14th from 9am-12:30pm at the El Campo Civic Center. EL Campo CDC and Wharton EDC have partnered with Workforce Solutions in recruitment of Employers, surrounding school districts and colleges. The event is free to the public and employers. No action taken.

Report from Executive Director and discussion of:

A. Monthly Sales Tax Report. Mr. Owens reported Sales Tax to be up 20% above the budgeted amount.

B. Required PFIA 2256.023 Report. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the required PFIA showing the distribution of assets. Mr. Owens stated that an additional TexPool account will be created and investments will be split between the two accounts. Efforts are being made to keep all other accounts at a lower balance.

C. Balance Sheet/Commitments. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the current Balance Sheet stating WEDC's total assets were \$3,258,093 and the total liabilities were \$345,226, net equity being \$3,603,319. WEDC's 2022-2023 commitments are \$492,333. Roberson Properties, Alamo Lumber and Wadler, Perches, Hundl and Kerlick have been added to the commitment sheet. Ali Quattom will remain on the sheet until the parcels have sold.

D. Statement of Revenues and Expenditures. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the statement of Revenues and Expenses as of December 31, 2022. Mr. Owens reported all accounts are within budget.

E. Strategic Planning. Mr. Owens stated that strategic planning adoption and review will be held at the next Wharton EDC meeting.

Director Russell Machann made the motion to approve the Executive Director's report as presented. Director Michael Roberson 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 12:46 P.M.

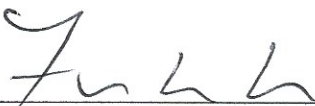
- A. §551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.**
- 1. Business Contracts.** No action taken.
 - 2. Business Retention and Expansion.** No action taken.
 - 3. Retail Report.** No action taken.

The Board returned to Open Session at 1:23 P.M.

- A. §551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.**
- 1. Business Contracts.** On a motion made by Director Andrew Armour and Seconded by Director Michael Roberson the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that Wharton Economic Development Corporation pursue Duckett, Bouligny & Collins, LLP law firm for legal representation at the fee of \$1,000 monthly retainer and \$300 hourly rate. All voted in favor.
 - 2. Business Retention and Expansion.** No action taken.
 - 3. Retail Report.** On a motion made by Director Michael Roberson and seconded by Director Clifford Jackson the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that Wharton Economic Development Corporation move forward with the professional consulting services with Retail Strategies, LLC. All voted in favor.

With no further business to discuss, President Freddie Pekar thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 1:25 P.M.

WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD

By: 
Freddie Pekar, President
01.23.2023

Attest: 
Andrew Armour, Secretary