

**WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**Minutes - Regular Meeting**

**May 30, 2023 12:00 P.M**

President Freddie Pekar called the Meeting to order at 12:13 P.M.

Board Members Participating: Freddie Pekar, Andrew Armour, Michael Roberson and Alice Heard-Roberts

Board Members Not Participating: Michael Wootton and Russell Machann

Advisory Members Participating: County Judge Phillip Spenrath, City Manager Joseph Pace, Ron Sanders and Marilyn Sebesta

Advisory Members Not Participating: City Mayor Tim Barker, County Tax Assessor Cindy Hernandez, Dr. Michael O'Guin, Betty McCrohan, Donald Smith, Abby King, Joe Freudenberger and Kent Hill

WEDC Attorney Participating: Ashley Tegler-Kleiman

Visitors Participating: Larry Pittman

Staff Member Present: Joshua Owens and Louisa Jimenez

**Public Comments:** President Freddie Pekar asked if there were any public comments. No public comments.

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting held April 17, 2023, Minutes of the Special Meeting held on May 9, 2023, Minutes of the Budget Meeting held on May 15, 2023 and Minutes of the Personnel Meeting held on May 15, 2023.** Director Andrew Armour made the motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 17, 2023 and Director Michael Roberson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Director Michael Roberson made the motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on May 9, 2023, as presented, and Director Andrew Armour seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Director Andrew Armour made the motion to approve the minutes of the Budget Committee held on May 15, 2023, as presented, and Director Michael Roberson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Director Michael Roberson made the motion to approve all the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on May 15, 2023, as presented, and Director Andrew Armour seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Presentation by Amy Morales of Kapeesh Marketing.** Amy addressed the Board and provided a presentation on the marketing materials needed to implement the strategic plan for Wharton EDC. No action was taken.

**Presentation by Neon Cloud Productions.** Executive Director Josh Owens stated that an agreement has not been reached and item will be tabled. No action 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 April sales tax was up by 20% over the budgeted amount and encouraged everyone to continue to shop local.

**B. Required PFIA 2256.023 Report.** Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the required PFIA 2256.023 as attached. Mr. Owens stated distribution is on point in terms of the public funds investments act reporting. TexPool and TexPool prime are in full effect, certificates of deposit's are cash flowing and all accounts are as they should be.

**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 \$2,465,777 and the total liabilities were \$331,627, net equity being \$2,134,150 WEDC's 2022-2023 commitments were \$331,627.

**D. Statement of Revenues and Expenditures.** Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the Statement of Revenues and Expenses as of April 30, 2023, and said the budget was well on track across the board.

Director Josh Owens reported the following:

- 1) **Wharton EDC website-** stated a proactive strategy is needed in order to get it in front of decision makers
- 2) **HDL Sales Tax Report-**trends show Wharton EDC is \$50,000 ahead in comparison to FY 2022. The sales tax report shows an incline month to month. Retail continues to be the largest contributor of sales tax.
- 3) **Strategic Goals-**Mr. Owens is in communication with the representatives of Del Campo Square. The representatives are very interested in marketing the land. Mr. Owens attended ICSC Las Vegas and received positive feedback from retailers. Mr. Owens continues to work with WCJC and the education taskforce team on strengthening the school to jobs pipeline. The education taskforce team, in conjunction with WCJC, have been diligently working at setting up a certificate program in Industrial Maintenance. The goal is to focus on Industrial Maintenance and getting individuals into Wharton's primary sector employers through internships and on-the-job training. There are several other infrastructure projects in development to support economic development. Wharton EDC is looking forward in working with City of Wharton on the downtown master plan. Wharton EDC continues to provide support in the upkeep of downtown.

Director Michael Roberson 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 12:46 P.M.**

- A. **§551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.**
  1. **Business Retention and Expansion.** No action taken.



**B. §551.072 - Deliberation regarding Real Property**

1. **135 W. Burlison.** No action taken.

**C. §551.074 - Personnel Matters**

1. **Review of Wharton EDC Personnel.** No action was taken.

**The Board returned to Open Session at 1:45 P.M.**

**A. §551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.**

1. **Business Retention and Expansion.** On a motion made by Director Andrew Armour and seconded by Director Michael Roberson the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that the proposal received from Kapeesh Marketing Director Amy Morales be approved for \$11,700 for Brand Identity Discovery & Design. All voted in favor.

**B. §551.072 - Deliberation regarding Real Property**

1. **135 W. Burlison-**No action taken.

**C. §551.074 - Personnel Matters**

1. **Review of Wharton EDC Personnel-** Director Michael Roberson made the motion to approve Director Josh Owens' management contract, accepting the proposed salary, bonus, car allowance and adding a week of vacation to total four weeks, all effective May 30, 2023. Director Andrew Armour seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Approval of FY 2023-2024 Annual Budget.** Mr. Owens provided draft copies of the FY 23-24 Annual Budget as proposed by the Budget Committee. After reviewing the budget, Director Andrew Armour made the motion to approve the budget as presented. Director Michael Roberson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. A copy of the approved FY 2023-2024 Budget is attached.

With no further business to discuss, President Freddie Pekar thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 1:57 P.M.

**WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

By: 

Freddie Pekar, President

05.30.2023

Attest: 

Andrew Armour, Secretary