

WHARTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Minutes - Regular Meeting

October 9, 2023 12:00 P.M

President Freddie Pekar called the Meeting to order at 12:02 P.M.

Board Members Participating: Freddie Pekar, Michael Wootton, Michael Roberson, Russell Machann
Alice Heard-Roberts

Board Members Not Participating: Andrew Armour and Larry Pittman

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

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

WEDC Attorney Participating: Ashley Tegler-Kleiman

Visitors Participating: Gwyn Teves, Joan Andel, Paula Favors, Larry Sitka, Barrett Davis,
Russell Baird, Marylou Gaona, Brandon Berry, Mohammed Uddin,
Anu Kharadkar and Ameya Moghe

Staff Member Present: Joshua Owens and Louisa Jimenez

Public Comments: President Freddie Pekar asked if there were any public comments. Barrett Davis of James Burr Harrison, LLC addressed the board and made a funding request for a store front upgrade to the property located at 200 Milam Street. Mr. Davis stated the building needs new windows, trim and painting. Mr. Davis's goal is to restore the property to the early twentieth century look. The board thanked Mr. Davis for his efforts in downtown revitalization. No action taken.

Election of Wharton EDC Officers for FY 2023-2024. Director Michael Wootton made the motion to retain the current Wharton EDC officers. Director Russell Machann seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Appoint Directors as signatories to conduct business on the Wharton EDC's Accounts and Expenditures and adopt Resolution 2023-05 appointing those signatories. (A) Checking/Savings Accounts-Director Russell Machann made the motion to retain current signatories. Director Michael Wootton seconded the motion. All voted in favor. **(B) TexPool Account-**Director Freddie Pekar made the motion to retain current signatories for TexPool. Director Michael Wootton seconded the motion. All voted in favor **(C) Adopt Resolution No. 2023-05 Approving Signatories on the Wharton Economic Development Corporation's Accounts and Expenditures-** Director Michael Wootton made the motion to approve Resolution No. 2203-05. Director Russell Machann seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Appoint a director or directors to assist the Executive Director with Project Negotiations. Director Alice Heard-Roberts made the motion to retain Directors Michael Wootton and Russell Machann in assisting the Executive Director. Director Michael Roberson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Day and time for Regular Wharton EDC's Meetings- Director Michael Roberson made the motion to keep Wharton EDC's Regular Meetings on the third Monday of the month at 12:00 noon and also be available via the internet. Director Michael Wootton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Wharton EDC's Policies and Procedures (A) Investment Procedures (B) Investment Policy and Resolution No. 2023-06 (C) Fund Balance Policy and Resolution No. 2023-07- Director Michael Roberson made the motion to approve the current Investment Procedure. Director Freddie Pekar seconded the motion. All voted in favor. **(B) Investment Policy and Resolution No. 2023-06-** Director Michael Wootton made the motion to approve the current Investment Policy and Resolution No. 2023-06. Director Russell Machann seconded the motion. All voted in favor. **(C) Fund Balance Policy and Resolution No. 2023-07-** Director Russell Machann made the motion to approve the current Fund Balance Policy and Resolution No. 2023-07. Director Michael Wootton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 21, 2023. Director Russell Machann made the motion to approve all minutes as presented. Director Michael Wootton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Utility Extension request for 1532 N. Richmond- Brandon Berry, owner of Titus Express Car Wash, and City of Wharton Director of Planning & Development Gwyn Teves, addressed the board regarding the request for a utility extension. The request is to extend the services and upsize the current waterline to provide appropriate fire safety and water supply services to Titus Express Car Wash and future businesses. The cost estimate to extend the waterline is \$135,240. No action taken.

Presentation by Aztron Technologies, LLC-Ms. Anu Kharadkar and Mr. Ameya Moghe, of Aztron Technologies, LLC, addressed the board with a business plan for the property located at 7397 N Hwy 59. The request is for 1.93 acres of Wharton EDC's Industrial property. The intent is to construct a 5,000 to 6,000 sq. ft. building for the purpose of innovation and developing R&D capability to deliver environmentally friendly chemistries to solve industry's toughest problems. No action taken.

Demolition request for 1125 W. Spanish Camp. Director Alice Heard-Roberts recused herself from participating in the presentation. Mr. Mohammed Uddin is requesting assistance with the demolition of the store structure and the demolition of the concrete slab below the structure only, located at 1125 W. Spanish Camp. No action taken.

FY 2023-24 funding to the Wharton Chamber of Commerce. Executive Director of the Wharton Chamber of Commerce Ron Sanders addressed the board regarding the request for FY 2023-24 funding to the Wharton Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Sanders reported that Wharton Chamber of Commerce is the go-to-source, the front door, for Wharton. Wharton Chamber has launched the Wharton County BBQ trail and the Billie H. Jones Leadership Academy. Mr. Sanders stated continued support is offered to the community through their collaboration with the Career Development Task Force and the Friends of Caney Creek Watershed. With the continued support of Wharton EDC, the Wharton Chamber of Commerce will continue to connect businesses and customers. No action taken.

Report from Executive Director and discussion of:

A. Monthly Sales Tax Report. Mr. Owens reported sales tax to be down for the month of September, with August sales tax to make up for the dip. Mr. Owens encouraged everyone to shop locally.

B. Required PFIA 2256.023 Report. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the required PFIA showing the distribution of assets. Mr. Owens reported that Wharton EDC will reduce the amount of funds in the checking, saving and money market accounts and shift those funds to the TexPool accounts to gain a slightly higher return.

C. Balance Sheet/Commitments. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the current Balance Sheet stating WEDC's total assets were \$2,466,903 and the total liabilities were \$399,025.25, net equity being \$2,067,877.75. WEDC's 2022-2023 commitments are \$399,025.25.

Mr. Owens reported the following:

Nelson Pleitez-Los Charritos Mexican Grill- Wharton EDC has issued the final payment to close out the grant.

Wayfinding Project, OakBend Medical Center Project, Downtown Master Plan-Commitments are coming to fruition.

D. Statement of Revenues and Expenditures. Mr. Owens provided the Board with copies of the statement of Revenues and Expenses as of September 30, 2023, and reported that Wharton EDC maintained within all envelopes for all budgeted items.

E. Strategic Goals. Mr. Owens reported the following:

- 1) **Website-**performance of website is still low. Wharton EDC has engaged with Trade and Industry Development to run a website promotion campaign to try to bump numbers to manufacturers wanting to relocate.

Director Michael Wootton 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 12:52 P.M.

A. §551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.

1. **Negotiations on Sites.** No action taken.
2. **Business Retention and Expansion.** No action taken.

B. §551.072 - Deliberation regarding Real Property

1. **1532 N. Richmond Rd.** No action taken.
2. **7397 N. Hwy 59.** No action taken.
3. **1125 W. Spanish Camp.** No action taken.

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

A. §551.087 - Deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations.

1. **Negotiation on Sites.** On a motion made by Director Russell Machann and seconded by Director Michael Wotton the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that the funding request be approved for \$9,340.00 towards the store front upgrade to the property located at 200 Milam Street. Funding will be contingent upon the completion of the project and the applicant providing paid receipts for the full amount of \$18,680.00. All voted in favor.

On a motion made by Director Russell Machann and seconded by Director Michael Roberson the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that the FY 2023-24 funding request to the Wharton Chamber of Commerce be approved for \$25,000. All voted in favor.

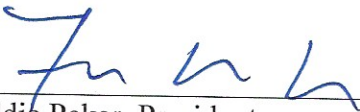
2. **Business Retention and Expansion.** No action taken.

B. §551.072 - Deliberation regarding Real Property.

1. **1532 N. Richmond Rd.** On a motion made by Director Michael Wootton and seconded by Russell Machann the following resolution was unanimously approved: Resolved that the funding request in the amount of \$135,240.00 be approved for the purpose of upgrading the utilities. All voted in favor.
2. **7397 N. Hwy 59-**On a motion made by Director Michael Roberson and seconded by Director Alice Heard-Roberts the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved that an exclusive negotiation agreement with an end date of April 9, 2024 be offered to Aztron Technologies, LLC. All voted in favor.

3. **1125 W. Spanish Camp-**No action taken.

With no further business to discuss, President Freddie Pekar thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 1:41 P.M.

By: 
Freddie Pekar, President
10.9.2023

Attest: 
Andrew Armour, Secretary