

Larry Weber, President
Kurt Herrington, Board Member
Roy Finch, Board Member
Michael Page, Board Member
Ben Campbell, Board Member
Linda Dickens, Board Member
Charles Drane, Board Member



Leslie Cloer, City Manager/Acting ED Director
Terry Johnson, ED Project Manager

Minutes from January 21, 2020 Special Board Meeting
Palestine Economic Development Board of Directors

The Economic Development Board convened in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 11:30 am, at 100 Willow Creek Parkway, Suite A, Palestine, TX with the following people present: Chair Larry Weber, Board members Kurt Herrington, Charles Drane, Michael Page, Ben Campbell, Linda Dickens and Roy Finch. There were no absences from the PEDC Board.

Others present: City Manager and Acting Economic Development Director Leslie Cloer, Finance Director Jim Mahoney, Tourism Marketing Manager Mary Raum, Economic Development Project Manager Terry Johnson, and local Palestine resident Peyton Williams.

A. CALL TO ORDER – With a quorum present, Larry Weber called the Regular Meeting to order at 11:37 am.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES OF AGENDA ITEMS – There were no proposed changes.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any citizen wishing to speak during public comments regarding an item on or off the agenda may do so after completing the required Request to Speak form. All comments must be no more than 5 minutes in length. Any comments regarding items not on the posted agenda may not be discussed or responded to by the board. – There was no public comment.

D. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES – Roy Finch will recuse himself from closed session item J3, Loop 256 rezoning project since he is a resident of the community.

E. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD – Larry Weber welcomed new PEDC Board member Kurt Herrington.

F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. PEDC recommended \$50,000 in funds to support the Palestine Parks and Recreation Department to begin the work to make our parks ADA compliant. The Palestine Rotarian group won a grant for \$6,100 to purchase ADA compliant equipment. Community volunteers spread soft-surface fall materials at Reagan Park recently and the City of Palestine set up barriers to keep the mulch inside the designated areas of the park.
2. PEDC is closing the sale of the Palestine Mall between March 1 and April 1, 2020 and our attorney is finishing up on all lease estoppels. The Palestine Mall storage area is being cleared out so that we can realize an increase in retail tenants.

3. Technology updates include an InCode software upgrade which affects our water billing system. A dedicated Customer Service email was set up to assist water bill issues. The City of Palestine is also upgrading the city phone system to a Voice Over Internet Protocol system. The new phone system will be live by 02-07-20. 911 calls will work without disruption.
4. Waste Connections delivered the 96-gallon garbage cars to residents. January 13, 2020 began the once weekly curbside garbage collection service. Call Customer Service at 903-731-8400 if you have questions about the new trash collection changes. Residents may drop off recycling at the Transfer Station located at 517 ACR 367, M – F from 8 am to 4:30 PM, AND Saturday 8 am to noon. Call Waste Connections at 903-723-4670 to schedule bulk pick up service.
5. ETCOG contracted with RAVE Mobility Systems to provide mass notifications system to 13 east Texas counties. Every member of your household and your pets can be registered with the mobile system. The database is managed by ETCOG, Our First Responders receive notices from this system. Residents should sign up via the web link: <https://www.smart911.com/smart911/ref/reg.action?pa=ETCOG>
6. City Manager, Leslie Cloer, spoke to over 200 Tyler based builders and developers at the Sell Your City 2020 event on 01-14-20. Leslie talked about our shovel ready Willow Creek Business Park, the 2019 International Economic Development Council Bronze Award for website redesign, the opening of our Willow Creek Apartment Homes in November 2019, the next project going into our WCBP, the Department of Health and Human Services project starting in December 2019. The City of Palestine is in the final steps of the official sale of the Palestine Mall, and the City is working to place 85 city owned properties back on the tax rolls in first quarter of 2020.

G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1) Consider approval of minutes from the December 19, 2019 meeting.
The motion to approve the 12-19-20 PEDC Board minutes made by Michael Page; seconded by Linda Dickens; motion carried.

H. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- 1) Consider approval of Financial Report for December 2019.
The motion to approve the December 2019 financial report with changes proposed by Financial Director Jim Mahoney made by Charles Drane; seconded by Linda Dickens; motion carried.
- 2) Discuss and take action on Connected Nation Texas Broadband Analysis Project made by Michael Page; seconded by Charles Drane; motion carried.
- 3) Update on Fikes Wholesale, our Travel Center Project.
There will be a public meeting on 01-27-20 at 5:30 pm and notice will be placed in Palestine Herald Press concerning this project to declare The Tile Factory Road area a tax reinvestment zone. City Council approved the rezoning request on 01-13-20 and PEDC has recommended a five-year tax abatement. This project will add from 3.5 to 4.5 million dollars in property values to the area.

I. CLOSED SESSION – 12:31 pm

The Board will go into Closed Session pursuant to TGC, Section 551.087 regarding Economic Development, Section 551.072 regarding deliberations about Real Property, and Section 551.074 regarding Personnel Matters.

- 1) Discussion regarding Economic Development Director vacancy
- 2) Discussion and update regarding Palestine Mall Pad Site 2
- 3) Discussion regarding Loop 256 re-zoning project

J. RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION – 2:05 pm

The PEDC Board reconvened into Regular Session at 2:05 pm and took the following action.

- 1) Mike Page made motion to support City Manager recommendation for ED Director position; seconded by Charles Drane; motion carried.
- 2) Motion to approve \$70,000 infrastructure assistance to Mall Pad Site 2 Project made by Mike Page; seconded by Charles Drane; motion carried.
- 3) Motion to publicize the rezoning of Loop 256 for economic development purposes made by Charles Drane; seconded by Linda Dickens; with Roy Finch abstaining; motion carried.

K. ADJOURNMENT – 1:26 pm


PEDC Board President, Larry Weber

Date

2-18-20

Time

12:39 pm


PEDC Project Manager, Terry Johnson

Date

2-18-20

Time

12:39 pm