

THE STATE OF TEXAS            §  
COUNTY OF ANDERSON        §  
CITY OF PALESTINE           §

The Economic Development Board of the City of Palestine convened in a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at PEDC Office, 100 Willow Creek Pkwy, Suite A, Palestine, Texas, with the following people present: President Ben Campbell, Vice President Dan Bochsler; Directors: Joseph Thompson & Charles Drane.

Staff present: PEDC Director Christophe Trahan; Administrative Assistant Lisa Bowman

Others Present: Grady Randle of Randle Law Office Ltd., L.L.P (via zoom), City Manager Teresa Herrera

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum present, President Campbell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**B. PROPOSED CHANGES OF AGENDA ITEMS**

There were none.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

President Campbell expressed his concern about the long-term viability of the Texas State Railroad and the imperative of establishing an industrial rail park. Furthermore, President Campbell voiced strong support for the Texas Futura, LLC project, emphasizing the substantial advantages it would bring to the community of Palestine.

**D. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES**

President Campbell recused himself from all discussions regarding project Short Line & Texas Futura LLC.

**E. ITEMS FROM BOARD**

There were none.

**F. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

PEDC Director Christophe Trahan presented the board with a monthly report with the following information:

- Retail Sector Data for Local Sales & Use Tax.
- Texas Labor Market Information Data – Regional Unemployment comparison.
- Quarter 1 - 2023 - wage data
- Tahwahkaro Distillery – Ribbon Cutting / Grand Opening

**G. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

1. Consider approval of PEDC Minutes from August 8, 2023

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Thompson to approve item as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

2. Consider approval of the August 2023 Financial Report.

Board members reviewed and discussed the August 2023 Financial Report.

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Drane to approve item as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

3. Discussion and possible action regarding a presentation by Parks & Recreation Director, Patsy Smith, for a Community Development Grant application.

Patsy Smith, the Director of Parks & Recreation for the City of Palestine, delivered a presentation to the PEDC Board seeking financial support through a Community Development Grant request totaling \$40,000. The proposed project aims to undertake restroom renovations at Greens Park in Palestine, TX.

Director Dickens entered the board meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Thompson to award \$40,000 in Community Development Grant funds to the City of Palestine Parks & Recreation Department for restroom renovations at Greens Park in Palestine, TX. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding PEDC's 3<sup>rd</sup> position job description.

Director Trahan presented the board with the Business Intelligence & Marketing Analyst job description, which had been reviewed and formatted by the City of Palestine Human Resources Department. The job description's content remains unchanged from what was initially presented to the board during the July 11th meeting. The job posting will first be circulated internally for two days before being made available externally.

Motion by Director Dickens, seconded by Vice President Bochsler to approve the job description as presented for PEDC's Business Intelligence & Marketing Analyst position. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

5. Discussion and possible action regarding revisions to the Palestine EDC Downtown Grant Program.

Director Trahan presented to the board the following revisions and additions to the Palestine EDC Downtown Grant for Fiscal Year 2023-2024:

- Increase maximum grant amount to \$75,000 for all eligible improvements
- Increasing the PEDC's matching percentage from 50% to 75%
- Modifications to eligible improvements

- Microgrants of \$10,000 or less that can be approved by PEDC Board without City Council approval
- Distribution of 50% of grant award upon execution of performance agreement and 50% upon project completion

NO ACTION TAKEN

#### **H. CLOSED SESSION**

President Campbell announced the Board would go into Closed Session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D. The time was 11:03 a.m.

1. Section 551.087 deliberation regarding economic development negotiations; to discuss or deliberate regarding commercial or financial information that the governmental body has received from a business prospect that the governmental body seeks to have locate, stay, or expand in or near the territory of the governmental body and with which the governmental body is conducting economic development negotiations.

- a.) ETEX Communications, LLC. – Revenue Sharing Agreement between PEDC and ETEX.
- b.) Project W-505.

President Campbell recused himself from the board meeting at 12:20 p.m.

- c.) Texas Futura, LLC.

2. Section 551.072 deliberation regarding real property: the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property.

- a.) Project Short Line.

3. Section 551.074 personnel matters: to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

President Campbell re-entered the board meeting at 1:07 p.m.

- a.) PEDC Administrative Assistant

#### **I. RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION**

President Campbell reconvened the Board Meeting into open session at 1:17 p.m.

1. Section 551.087 deliberation regarding economic development negotiations; to discuss or deliberate regarding commercial or financial information that the governmental body has received from a business prospect that the governmental body seeks to have locate, stay, or expand in or near the territory of the governmental body and with which the governmental body is conducting economic development negotiations.

Take any action regarding:

- a.) ETEX Communications, LLC. – Revenue Sharing Agreement between PEDC and ETEX. – NO ACTION TAKEN.
- b.) Project W-505. – NO ACTION TAKEN.
- c.) Texas Futura, LLC. – NO ACTION TAKEN.

2. Section 551.072 deliberation regarding real property: the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property.

Take any action regarding:

- a.) Project Short Line. - NO ACTION TAKEN.

3. Section 551.074 personnel matters: to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

Take any action regarding:

- a.) PEDC Administrative Assistant

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Thompsom to implement a pay increase. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **J. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

Consideration of and possible action on Resolution No. R-05-23, a resolution of the PEDC declaring a project of the PEDC offering an economic development grant to incentivize Texas Futura, LLC., to expand its business operations to the City by granting certain incentives, those consisting of land and other direct cash incentives consisting of the expenditure of sales tax funds, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00, in exchange for the creation of thirty-three (33) fulltime primary jobs and a capital investment of approximately \$2.15 million within the boundaries of the PEDC's Willow Creek Business Park; authorizing the execution of a non-binding letter of intent; setting a public hearing; and authorizing and directing staff to publish notice of the same.

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Thompson to approve Resolution No. R-05-23 as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 4-0 (President Campbell abstained).

#### **ADJOURN**

With no other business to come before the Board, President Campbell adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 10th DAY OF October 2023.

ATTEST:



Lisa Bowman, Administrative Assistant



Ben Campbell, President