

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, August 8, 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: Linda Dickens, Joseph Thompson, Charles Drane, Kim Willmott (via zoom).

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; City of Palestine Finance Director Andrew Sibai

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

A brief introduction was given by Grady Randle of Randle Law Office Ltd., L.L.P. Mr. Randle has become the PEDC's designated attorney with the Randle Law Firm in place of Megan Mikutis.

D. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES

President Campbell recused himself from all discussions regarding project Short Line.

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:

- Stakeholder meeting facilitated by the PEDC and located at PCD Works on 7/14/2023. The Meeting was held to generate grassroots support for PCD Works' application for the EDA Regional Technology and Innovation HUB Grant Program.
- Director's participation with city officials to meet with Congressman Jake Ellzey and the heads of TX DOT Aviation in Waxahachie, TX on 8/2/2023. The meeting was to discuss expansions at the KPSN Municipal Airport.
- NASA Columbia Scientific Balloon Facility – PEDC Hosting 2 site visits on August 11th & August 18th to introduce local legislators and leaders to the NASA facility.
- Retail Sector Data for Local Sales & Use Tax.
- Texas Labor Market Information Data – Regional Unemployment comparison.
- Suite B renovations to be completed by August 31st.

G. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Consider approval of PEDC Minutes from July 11, 2023

Motion by Director Thompson, seconded by Vice President Bochsler to approve item as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

2. Consider approval of PEDC Minutes from July 18, 2023

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Thompson to approve item as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0 (abstained: President Ben Campbell).

3. Consider approval of the July 2023 Financial Report.

Board members reviewed the July 2023 Financial Report and briefly discussed the insurance costs and investment accounts with Finance Director Sibai.

Motion by Director Thompson, seconded by Vice President Bochsler to approve item as presented. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding PEDC's Budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024.

Director Trahan presented the board with a revised PEDC Budget workbook, which included modifications for the 2023-2024 fiscal year pertaining to the following line items:

Prof/Contractual Services-

- IT Support - \$1,897.00
- Software Maintenance – \$808.00
- Insurance & Bonds – \$1,000.00
- Capital Outlay – Budgeted in anticipation of capital projects for the 23-24 fiscal year – \$55,936.00
- Pay/Escrow Agent Fees – Budgeted to accommodate the issuance cost of financing of Project Short Line - \$30,000.00
- Transfer to Fleet Fund – \$250.00

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Thompson to approve the 2023-2024 PEDC Budget. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

5. Discussion and possible action regarding a Leadership Seminar to be funded by the PEDC in conjunction with the Trinity Valley SBDC & the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce.

Director Trahan gave a presentation to the board, outlining the Leadership Seminar being organized in collaboration with PEDC, Trinity Valley SBDC, and the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce. The seminar is scheduled for September 28, 2023. Trahan provided the board with a proposed budget for the program totaling \$8,050.00. This budget allocation would be sourced from the Business Retention/Expansion & Marketing Funds budget line items.

Motion by Vice President Bochsler, seconded by Director Dickens to approve the funding by PEDC for the Leadership Seminar to be held on September 28, 2023. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

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

Director Trahan presented the following revisions for the board to consider for the PEDC Downtown Grant program:

- Increase maximum grant amount from \$25,000 to \$75,000.
- Decrease the applicant match requirement from 50% to 25%.
- Consider funding improvements for mixed-use properties.
- Issuing microgrants of less than \$10,000 in accordance with Texas Local Government Code, Section 505.158.
- Awarding grant recipients 50% of their grant upon execution of their performance agreement and the remaining 50% upon project completion.
- Enforcing project completion timelines with performance agreements.

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 11:07 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.

President Campbell recused himself from the board meeting at 11:09 a.m.

- a.) Project Short Line.
- b.) Palestine Mall redevelopment.

President Campbell re-entered the board meeting at 11:38 a.m.

Linda Dickens exited the board meeting at 12:32 p.m.

Kim Willmott entered the physical quorum of the board meeting at 12:51 p.m.

- c.) Prospect# 1061.
- d.) Prospect# 1065.

I. RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION

President Campbell reconvened the Board Meeting into open session at 1:43 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.) Project Short Line. – NO ACTION TAKEN.
- b.) Palestine Mall redevelopment. – NO ACTION TAKEN.
- c.) Prospect# 1061. – NO ACTION TAKEN.
- d.) Prospect# 1065. – NO ACTION TAKEN.


ADJOURN

With no other business to come before the Board; Motion by Director Drane, seconded by Secretary/Treasurer Willmott to adjourn the meeting at 1:44 p.m. Motion passed.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 12th DAY OF September 2023.

ATTEST: 

Lisa Bowman, Administrative Assistant



Ben Campbell, President