



**Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation (FDEDC)
Meeting Minutes of October 12, 2021
City Hall Council Chambers
910 S. Friendswood Drive, Friendswood, Texas 77546**

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m. with a quorum present.

Present: Dr. Patrick McGinnis, President; Elmer "Bubba" Johnson Member; Alton Todd, Member; Ron Cox, Member, and Rebecca Hillenburg, Member; Paul Marx, Secretary/Treasurer entered at 4:06pm.

Absent: Ardent Trey Hill, Vice President

Staff members present: Steven Rhea, Assistant City Manager; Aubrey Harbin, Director of Community Development

Councilmembers: Sally Branson, Steve Rockey

2. Citizen comments

Councilmember Sally Branson explained that the mural is complete at the Brown Museum. She also explained that the Historical Society has requested donations from all of the non-profit organizations in town, including the FDEDC. She thanked the board members for considering making the donation.

3. Approval of Minutes

Consider the approval of the minutes of the Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation Meeting held on August 10, 2021. Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Hillenburg. All in favor, motion carried unanimously (5 to 0; Marx was not yet present).

4. Election of Officers

A. President

Motion to nominate Rebecca Hillenburg for President: Ron Cox

Second: Bubba Johnson

Vote: 5-0 (Hillenburg abstained)

B. Vice President

Motion to nominate Bubba Johnson for Vice President: Rebecca Hillenburg

Second: Alton Todd

Vote: 5-0 (Johnson abstained)

C. Secretary/Treasurer

Motion to nominate Paul Marx as Secretary/Treasurer: Ron Cox

Second: Alton Todd

Vote: 5-0 (Marx abstained)

5. Discussion and Possible Action

A. Discuss and take possible action regarding the approval of the fiscal year 2021-2022 proposed budget.

Motion to approve:

Second: Hillenburg

Vote: 6 to 0

Rhea explained the projected revenue of \$678,747 in addition to the ending balance of \$2,163,789 (unaudited balance as of 9/30/2021) and total expenditures expected of \$2,842,272 leaving a projected Ending Fund Balance for September 30, 2022, of \$0.

B. Discuss and take possible action regarding a monetary donation to the Friendswood Historical Society Downtown mural installation.

Motion to approve a \$1,000 monetary donation to Friendswood Historical Society for the mural project: Hillenburg

Second: Johnson

Vote: 5 to 1 (McGinnis opposed)

Councilmember Branson explained that the mural was designed and painted by a local Friendswood resident and teacher, McKenna Harclerode Gemfortone and that the mural contains many hidden figures and presents learning opportunities for school age children visiting the museum. Councilmember Rockey explained that the mural depicts five crops native to Friendswood including figs, gardenias, strawberries, rice and satsumas. Hillenburg stated that she thinks it is important to hold on to our history and teach children. McGinnis opposed the donation stating that it is too far from the plan, and he prefers to stick to the plan and expend resources there. He was also concerned about receiving more requests for donations in the future. Cox stated that he understands McGinnis's concerns, so he suggested creating a policy for future requests.

C. Discuss and take possible action regarding the Friendswood Independent School District tree relocation.

Rhea explained that Fisd is removing mature trees from newly acquired properties near the high school and a suggestion was previously made regarding the possibility of relocating some of those trees. Fisd is open to the suggestion provided it fits within their timeline, and the trees must be placed within the Downtown District.

Hillenburg stated that she brought this up to make everyone aware of the opportunity. The houses are gone and the ISD timeline would probably not fit the time needed for this board to spend money towards this endeavor.

No action taken.

D. Discuss and take possible action regarding the Downtown Lighting Plan and TxDOT Curbs, Ramps, Sidewalks and Traffic Signals Project.

Rhea explained that the contractor is making good progress on the projects. The concrete sidewalks are almost complete to FM 2351 on the north side of Friendswood Drive. Engineering is working with Gandy Lighting and HDR Engineering regarding the engineering cost estimates. Any day a full turnkey package should be received. Regarding public outreach endeavors for the lighting project, Alton Todd presented the project to Rotary and Pat McGinnis was present for the City Council presentation. Staff will begin reaching out to downtown businesses this week.

McGinnis stated that the new sidewalks do not have any outcroppings for the foundations of the future light fixtures; Marx agreed. Rhea explained that the conduit for the future fixtures was included in TxDOT's plans so the foundations for the light poles should be accounted for.

McGinnis requested that all board members be prepared to assist in meeting with business owners in the Downtown District. He also asked if it would be beneficial to present to the Chamber of Commerce. Rhea explained that the Chamber does hold monthly meetings and that staff would be glad to assist any board members in presenting to the Chamber members. Cox also suggested that a presentation to FDFA would be beneficial.

E. Discuss and take possible action regarding the Downtown Signage and Branding.

Rhea explained that TxDOT continues to review the color schemes submitted to them; the orange color is typically viewed as a cautionary color. Staff is also working with some buy board companies to explore signage options. The new sign machine has been delivered to Public Works. They still need to receive training; the new machine can do much more detailed graphics including the street signage in the Downtown District.

Rhea also stated that more businesses are displaying and requesting the stickers in the Downtown District. Staff will continue to visit businesses and pass out stickers.

6. Reports

A. Receive and discuss the Downtown District project schedule

Rhea reviewed the timelines for the three projects in process – sidewalks, signage/branding and lighting.

B. Receive and discuss the Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation Financial Report for September 2021

Rhea presented the updated financial report with \$2,180,886 Beginning Fund Balance for September 2021 with added revenue of \$54,306 and no expenditures other than staff/admin. Ending fund balance is \$2,233,859.

7. Comments

A. Receive comments from staff members

Rhea was approached by some Planning and Zoning Commissioners regarding overhead utility lines. TXNM has provided estimates for relocating the overhead lines further from FM 518. Asked if there is any interest of the board to start conversations with the Commissioners and TxDOT to begin exploring options. Alton stated that the project is not going to get cheaper and Marx stated that physically, it will only get more complicated with the addition of communication cables. Johnson reminded the group that it has been suggested that they need to start thinking about the next phase of projects and this may be what needs to be included in the next phase. There was interest in meeting with the P&Z Commissioners and Texas New Mexico Power.

Aubrey Harbin reported that a zone change application for a Specific Use Permit to allow 30 hotel rooms on a tract within the Downtown District is currently going through the zone change process.

B. Receive comments from board members

Cox said he is glad to hear about the Banfield project. He would also like to revisit the idea of changing the bench configuration in DD as suggested by Lauren Griffith during the discovery process of the Downtown Improvement Plan.

Hillenburg thanked McGinnis for his service as president.

Marx stated that he is excited about the progress taking place.

Todd thanked McGinnis and said that his leadership has been instrumental. He also stated that Rhea is a good ambassador for the City.

Johnson thanked McGinnis for his leadership and looks forward to serving alongside Dr. Hillenburg. Moving dirt is making progress.

McGinnis thanked everyone for their nice comments. He also stated that park benches facing streets does not make sense; he would prefer recessed areas facing each other.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.