



**CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021 - 4 PM**

Minutes

**MINUTES OF A FRIENDSWOOD REGULAR MEETING HELD AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD
DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS,**

STATE OF TEXAS
CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
COUNTIES OF GALVESTON/HARRIS

1. Call to Order

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WAS CALLED TO ORDER ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2021, AT 4 PM AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS WITH THE FOLLOWING PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM;

CHAIR JENNIFER WHITLEY
VICE CHAIR BLAISE GUZZETTA (VIRTUAL)
COMMITTEE MEMBER DEREK BROWN
COMMITTEE MEMBER JUDY WIGGINS
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUBREY
HARBIN

ABSENT: COMMITTEE MEMBERS SUSAN ASIMAKIS AND PAULINE MOORE;
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER STEVEN RHEA
AMBER PETREE, FISD (VIRTUAL)

2. Communications from the Public

None

3. Approval of Minutes

- A. Consider approving the April 7, 2021, Community and Economic Development Committee meeting minutes

Derek Brown motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Jennifer Whitley. The motion

passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and Possible Actions

- A. Discussion and take possible action to update the Vision 20/20 Study and FM 528 Strategy
Motion to discuss: Jennifer Whitley
Second: Blaise Guzzetta

Chairman Whitley explained that the Vision 20/20 plan was created in 1998 and that the plan needs to be updated with current economic development strategies. She would like to appoint a subcommittee of three committee members to update the plan, which Harbin explained that a subcommittee of three members does not violate the Open Meetings Act and allows for more informal discussion and then ideas can be brought back to the full committee for further discussion and action. Guzzetta asked how the new vision or plan is adopted; Harbin explained that the new plan would be presented to City Council with a recommendation from CEDC and would adopt the plan either by ordinance or resolution. Guzzetta also asked who prepared the plan in 1998 to which Harbin responded Kenneth Balk & Associates, Inc. Harbin also explained that we do not have funds to hire outside consultants at this time, but that many of the goals and objectives within the plan may still be relevant and some details could be updated to make the plan current.

Harbin also explained that the FM 528 Strategy Plan was updated in 2013 by CEDC members and staff and that the two studies could be combined. Brown asked what kind of time frame we would anticipate, and Whitley stated that she anticipates this taking about 9 months. Harbin suggested setting a goal and working towards that and also that the subcommittee may be able to set a more definite time frame once they start meeting.

Whitley stated that FM 528 has its own study and the Downtown has its own study; she suggested that the various business districts need to be identified and incorporated into one plan.

Motion to approve updating the Vision 20/20 and FM 528 Strategy Plans and appoint a subcommittee: Jennifer Whitley
Second: Derek Brown
Vote: 4 to 0

Derek Brown and Jennifer Whitley volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

- B. Discussion and take possible action to create a business tool kit program.
Motion to create a business tool kit: Judy Wiggins
Second: Jennifer Whitley
Vote: 4 to 0 (unanimous)

Chairman Whitley explained that she and Asimakis visited Sugar Land recently and met with representatives of the economic development corporation; they the benefits of a hotel tax and strong history with sugar, baseball and slaver. During the pandemic, Sugar Land and many other cities created tool kits for local businesses to encourage a symbiotic relationship between businesses and cities. Social media is a way for businesses to connect with the city. Sugar Land initiated #SLTX; social media outlets can utilize the hash tag in their posts and the city promotes the hash tag which helps them all connect with each other. CARES Act and HOT provide Sugar Land funds to also offer deals such as Sweet Cash to match purchases of gift cards, etc. The City of Sugar Land hosted both virtual and in-person meetings with business owners throughout the pandemic.

Guzzetta asked if we are intending to duplicate what Sugar Land has done and Whitley explained that she would like more of a feel-good relationship between business owners and the City of Friendswood. Guzzetta also asked how difficult it was to establish these programs and how difficult it was to obtain federal money to put towards them. Whitley explained that most of their

money for the tool kit comes from the hotel tax and she did not have that much detail about the process.

Wiggins stated that being an entrepreneur is isolating and sometimes you have friends and know where to go for assistance, but anything that could bring more cohesion would show that the City cares and opens the door for business owners and let them know where they can gain support.

Whitley also stated that she looked into other tool kits and some were just social media, not all included financial incentives.

Guzzetta questioned whether or not the City received sales tax from farmers market vendors. Harbin said that she would verify, but that those businesses most likely pay taxes to the entity where their business is registered.

Judy Wiggins volunteered to be on the subcommittee.

5. Reports

A. FISD Update

Amber Petree – reported that open enrollment has opened up, as well as community education classes for kids ages 5 and up and adults; posted on web site. FISD received a TEA State match of \$20,000 to match \$20,000 that the City shared (CARES Act funding) for technology updates. The architect will be sharing plans for Cline Elementary with the Board on Monday night. FISD will receive \$1.9 million in CARES funding which they will have three years to spend. The intention is to spend the money on additional staff positions to fill in gaps for teachers. Continuing to watch HB 1525 which if passed would affect \$1.4 million dollars in funding to the district.

6. Comments

None

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 PM.