



**CITY OF FRIENDSWOOD
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 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, JUNE 2, 2021, AT 4 PM AT 910 S. FRIENDSWOOD DRIVE, FRIENDSWOOD, TEXAS WITH THE FOLLOWING PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM;

CHAIR JENNIFER WHITLEY
COMMITTEE MEMBER SUSAN ASIMAKIS
COMMITTEE MEMBER DEREK BROWN
COMMITTEE MEMBER JUDY WIGGINS (VIRTUAL) – ENTERED AT
4:05PM
COMMITTEE MEMBER PAULINE MOORE (VIRTUAL)
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER STEVEN RHEA
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUBREY HARBIN

ABSENT: VICE CHAIR BLAISE GUZZETTA
ALSO PRESENT: BRENT ERENWERT, CITY COUNCIL LIAISON

2. Communications from the Public

None

3. Approval of Minutes

- A. Consider approving the May 5, 2021, Community and Economic Development Committee meeting minutes

Derek Brown motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Susan Asimakis. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and Possible Actions

- A. Discussion and take possible action regarding the creation of a business tool kit program. Chairman Whitley appointed Judy Wiggins as the chairperson of the Business Tool Kit subcommittee and Pauline Moore as a member. A third position is vacant until a position is filled on the committee.

Chairman Whitley explained that the minutes of the last meeting regarding the tool kit reflected her opinion and takeaways from the Sugarland visit, and she asked Member Asimakis to explain her viewpoint. Asimakis explained that she learned that an organized tool kit can be provided to local, small businesses and tag City in social media messages. She also felt that offering small businesses a work shop on how to use the tool kit and social media tools maybe 3-4 times a year would be beneficial to some business owners.

Chairman Whitley explained that the sample provided from Sugarland is a marketing tool kit, but the Friendswood plan could be different or include different components. She stated that including crisis management tools that could be used during hurricanes, storms, or a pandemic might be beneficial. She also stated that the name of the plan could be changed.

Asimakis stated that she thinks the goal of the plan needs to be established. She explained that showing that the City cares about its businesses and their livelihood is important, and business owners could use all or part of plan. She agreed that crisis management tools and communication would be beneficial.

Steven Rhea explained that the City can host workshops with groups. During disasters or significant events, the City can share state and federal government information. The City's Social Media Coordinator could help with the workshops to explain how social media tools, such as a hashtag, work. Commenting, liking or sharing private business pages is prohibited per the City's Social Media Policy. CEDC does have a Facebook page. He stated that the kit could also include information regarding who to call during certain situations or events and other useful information for business owners.

Asimakis agreed that is all good information and that it could serve as a tool to not only retain existing businesses, but also welcome new businesses.

Wiggins asked if there are any other limitations similar to the City not being able to like and share pages that could come up. She stated that she sees this as building a community of users and not necessarily using City resources to share pages, etc.

Steven Rhea explained that most of the limitations will probably be resources and that funding would be the most likely limitation.

Subcommittee will meet in the next month at their convenience. Asimakis stated that completing or launching the program during a national business event, such as Small Business Saturday, might be beneficial. Wiggins looked up small business month, which is the month of May.

- B. Discussion and take possible action regarding the creation of a liaison schedule

It was decided that it would be beneficial for CEDC to have liaisons to the following boards/committees for the purposes of collaboration and communication, and the appointed members will attend and report back any pertinent information:

Friends of Downtown Friendswood Association (FDFA) – Susan Asimakis

Chamber of Commerce – Derek Brown

Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation (FDEDC) meets the 2nd Tuesday at 4pm – Jennifer Whitley will attend the next meeting; need a member for this

Asimakis asked if there were any thoughts of an annual meeting of all groups focused on business growth. She stated that in the future, there may come a time for collaboration and sharing among those groups. The intent could be to share goals of each organization to avoid overlap and fill gaps. Steven Rhea explained that annual reports are provided to City Council each year by boards/committees. Wiggins said that she likes this idea and it could be like a business expo, but not like the expo already hosted by the Chamber. Steven Rhea stated that maybe just leaders or chairmen could be included to avoid quorum issues.

5. Reports

- A. Receive the Friendswood Independent School District (FISD) Update
None
- B. Receive the Staff Business Report
None

6. Comments

- A. Receive staff comments

Steven Rhea reported that Friendswood Development is looking to develop the commercial parcels on FM 518 and West Boulevard in West Ranch. They approached the City about partnering in a marketing analysis. Steven Rhea explained that CEDC might be a more appropriate partner representation of the City since it is mainly for West Ranch and only that portion of the City would benefit from the study. He explained that maybe July presentation to CEDC to allow them an opportunity to explain their development plans and ideas.

- B. Receive committee member comments

Asimakis asked about the Texas Department of Transportation sidewalk, curbs and ramps project and the impact it will have on local businesses. Steven Rhea explained that the project will be linear and that it will start at Whispering Pines Drive and work their way to FM 2351.

Asimakis asked if any new businesses – April occupancy permits

Jennifer Whitley stated that the property search on the City web site needs pictures. Steven Rhea explained that the data is obtained from Office Space and that he has been in contact with them. Office Space pulls from a database and they were considering switching. Another option would allow realtors and brokers to upload their own information but would require the City to host the site. He explained that he is looking into options to update.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:59 PM.