



Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation (FEDDC)
Meeting Minutes of July 12, 2022
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. Rebecca Hillenburg, President; Elmer "Bubba" Johnson, Vice President; Alton Todd, Member; Ron Cox, Member; Paul Marx, Secretary/Treasurer; and Dr. Patrick McGinnis, Member

Staff members present: Steven Rhea, Assistant City Manager; Aubrey Harbin, Director of Community Development; Karen Horner, City Attorney; Jil Arias, Director of Engineering

Councilmembers: Sally Branson, Robert Griffon

Absent: Arden Trey Hill, member

2. Citizen comments

No public comments.

3. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from June 14, 2022, will be considered at the next monthly meeting on August 9, 2022.

4. Business Items

A. Discuss and take possible action regarding the RFP 2022-10 FM 518 Illumination installation.

Rhea recapped on the history of the Request for Proposal (RFP) explaining that the downtown lighting was recommended in the Lauren Griffin Downtown Improvement Plan that was established in 2018. The lighting plan discussions began soon after in January 2019 and staff, along with the board members, have given presentations to City Council, Friends of Downtown Friendswood Association (FDFA), and the Rotary Club to keep them up to speed on what is being proposed. Staff has had numerous discussions with Downtown business owners, who were all very positive and very interested. Original estimates received for the total project exceeded funds available. The RFP had a budget of \$2.5 million that was set by the board and the current fund balance is just over \$2.7 million.

Rhea recapped the options from the RFP as following: Option 1. Installing all 32' street and 18' pedestrian lighting from Castlewood Dr on both sides of FM 518 to FM 2351 but excludes the area in front of Friends Church. The major reasons behind this are there is no pedestrian walkway installed in front of the church plus conflict with the trees in front of Friends Church. Option 1 would be \$2.35 million dollars. Option 2. Installing all 32' street and 18' pedestrian lighting from Castlewood Dr on both sides of FM 518 down to FM 2351 and installing 32' streetlights in front of Friends Church, completing the street illumination which would not leave a dark spot down FM 518. Option 2 would be \$2.48 million. The difference of cost between option 1 and 2 is \$130,000; both options include infrastructure, conduit, foundations, fixtures, and luminaires. Spreadsheets were provided by the vendor that detail line items for each option.

Hillenburg thanked Rhea and asked the board if there were any questions.

Marx questioned the spreadsheet as it did not specify labor and materials and wanted reassurance it is included in the price. Arias stated that it was not listed on the spreadsheet, but that labor and material were included on the original RFP.

Marx also questioned the design of the drill shafts; the spreadsheet shows the same size for the 32' pole as well as the 18' pole, and he is concerned with paying for the larger size drill shafts when it is not needed for the 18' poles. Arias stated that the engineer recommended the shaft size as at 8' deep is typically done by Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) in right of ways. He added he would follow up with the vendor for verification.

McGinnis asked if Friends Church were aware of the two possible options. Rhea stated that he only had original feedback which was the church wanting security for the trees. The church was positive and on board with the original lighting plan that was in place.

McGinnis questioned if up-lighting would be installed in front of the church. Rhea stated that up-lighting was not in the original plans and he would confirm if the installed conduit would accommodate the up-lighting.

Cox stated that TXDOT installed the conduit under the trees but was concerned drilling foundations for the poles would be more invasive. He questioned what was being done to protect the trees on behalf of the church and the community and asked how many bases would be in front of the church. Rhea stated that the standard practices on how to protect trees and root beds would be used and believed there are 3-4 lights in front of the church.

Cox asked how it is determined on whether or not more protection for the trees is needed. Arias stated that, in general, it is determined by the drip line of the trees. He said if there is indication that more protection is going to be required, a tree arborist could be contacted to help give reassurance that the work being done is not negatively impacting the trees. He added that the easiest option would be to avoid working under the drip line.

Cox questioned if the light poles could be adjusted in front of the church, if need be. Arias stated that adjusting the lights is an option, however if it is going to result in the light pole being too far away then that may affect the foot candles on the ground, but in this instance in dealing with the trees, he does not see that moving the lights would be an issue. Marx asked that a closer look be taken at the luminaires as he believes some lights will be above or in the canopy and it will ultimately affect the height of the lights.

Hillenburg questioned if the board voted for option 1, which does not include the area in front of Friends Church, can the board return at a later time and add lighting back into the plan after information on the trees and lights is gathered. Rhea stated that the electrical wiring and anything located underground would be installed in front of the church and lighting could be added back in the plan, but it would have to be priced out again. He added whichever option the board votes on, staff can always come back with a recommendation on an arborist to make sure the trees are taken care of.

Cox questioned if it was possible to approve option 2 with the option of not installing the lights in front of Friends Church if obstacles occur. Rhea stated that the problem with that would be the warranty on the poles that were purchased would run out in a year and the city would have to store the poles. Hillenburg questioned how long the prices were good for. Rhea stated that the price is valid until August 1, 2022. Arias advised he did want to advise the board of an 18-20 week lead time on poles. McGinnis questioned if drilling would be going through the roots of the trees. Arias stated that more than likely drilling would be going through the roots. Johnson was concerned there is no possible way to get around the tree roots and suggested the board plan on getting an arborist.

Hillenburg stated to the board that there are 2 options; Option 1- excludes the property along Friends Church, Option 2 -includes the property.

McGinnis motioned to approve Option 1. Johnson seconded the motion.

Hillenburg confirmed a motion to authorize city staff to negotiate an agreement for Option 1 of the illumination installation project.

The vote was 6-0. Motion passed.

Cox recapped that he does not want to give up on the trees and wants it noted in the minutes that money will be spent on an arborist to look at the trees in phase two. Cox also questioned if the money that is being saved by not illuminating the property in front of Friends Church could be used towards the area between Castlewood and Whispering Pines. Rhea stated that the savings would be much less than the cost for lighting between Castlewood and Whispering Pines which is 1.5 million dollars.

5. Reports

A. Receive and discuss the TxDOT Curbs, Ramps, Sidewalks and Traffic Signals Project Report.

Rhea recapped that the majority of sidewalks are complete, the mast arm and signals are still being installed and the important gas line repair between W. Shadowbend and FM 2351 is still being worked on which is causing a delay in the last two driveways. Once the gas line work is complete the two driveways will be installed which would complete the sidewalks and driveways.

McGinnis questioned if the old mast arms would be removed once the new ones are installed. Arias informed the board that TXDOT is having some supply issues and the last update, being three weeks ago, was TXDOT is 3-4 months out. It will still be a while before TXDOT will be back out and working. Marx questioned if TXDOT would be installing street signs at that time. Arias stated that the street signs would be installed when the mast arms are completed. Cox questioned if the old mast footing would be removed as well. Arias stated that typically TXDOT removes the footings below ground level.

Cox asked if something could be sent out via city news outlets about all the projects that are in the works. Rhea stated that he would have something put together and sent out.

Todd asked if all the material for signage was ready to install. Rhea explained that the larger signs would be installed on the mast arms by TXDOT. The smaller street signs are currently in the sign shop awaiting installation. He added that he is currently getting prices on new powder coated stop sign poles to match the mast arms and that is why the smaller street signs have not been installed. Hillenburg questioned if the cost for the new stop sign poles would come out of FDEDC's budget. Rhea stated that, depending on the delta, staff may have to bring an item back to FDEDC regarding pricing for stop sign poles.

B. Receive and discuss the Friendswood Downtown Economic Development Corporation Financial Report for June 2022.

Rhea presented the updated financial report with a \$2,685,275 Beginning Fund Balance for June 2022 with added revenue of \$55,901 and no expenditures other than \$1,334 for staff/admin. Ending fund balance is \$2,739,842. Rhea added that the sales tax that has been generated in the last few months averages \$55-60 thousand a month.

6. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m.