



ORANGE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES

July 6, 2020

The Board of Directors of the Orange County Economic Development Corporation convened in a Regular Meeting at 10:00am, Monday, May 4th, via Zoom call.

Members Present:

Robbie Hood, City of Pinehurst
Randy Branch, City of West Orange
Terri Gauthier, City of Bridge City
Jay Trahan, City of Orange
Commissioner Robert Viator, Pct. 4
Keith Wallace, Port of Orange
Dan Mohon, City of Pinehurst
David Jones, Gopher Industrial
Shawn McAlpin – Orangefield ISD (post roll call)

Members Absent:

Commissioner Johnny Trahan, Pct. 1
Mike Stelly, City of West Orange
Dr. Tom Johnson, Lamar State College Orange
Jerry Jones, City of Bridge City
Ida Schossow, GOACC
Stephen Lee, First Financial Bank
Daniel Moreaux, Moreaux Transportation Services
Ann Galassi, Sabine River Authority
Shawn Sparrow, The Houseman Companies

Others Present:

Jessica Hill, Executive Director
Megan Romero, Business Development Manager
Chris Leavins, Legal Counsel

Official Notice of the meeting detailing the time, date, place and purpose (Agenda), was posted on the Orange County Economic Development Corporation website and Orange County Administration Building on July 2, 2020.

1. **Convene Meeting.** President Hood opened the meeting at 10:05am.
2. **Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call of Directors Present.** Mayor Mohon led the invocation and Member Wallace led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Hood led roll call.
3. **Recognize Guests.** Leigh Anne Dallas, City of Orange
4. **Open the floor to members of the public or of the Board of Directors of the Governing authority for inquiries about a subject not listed on the Agenda.** Speakers shall be requested to limit their remarks to three (3) minutes or less. Specific factual information, or existing policy, may be stated in response to an inquiry. Any Deliberation or decision about the subject of the inquirer shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on the Agenda for a subsequent Regular or Special Board Meeting.

No Comments

5. **Discussion and possible action to approve Minutes for any previous Meeting(s).**

Motion was made by Member Gauthier to approve the May meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Member Wallace. Motion carried.

6. **Discussion and possible action on financial matters including the financial report and bills for payment.**

(A.) Director Hill reported we have collected all membership dues and will be receiving the third installment from the County's remaining balance of \$175,000 this month. Total revenues to date \$342,719. Nothing significant to report with regards to expenditures, other than travel and training that has not been spent due to Covid. Total expenditures to date are \$298,510. Member Wallace motioned to approve the report. Member Gauthier seconded the motion. Motion carried.

(B.) Director Hill presented the bills for payment totaling \$37,959. Member Gauthier motioned to approve the report. Member Wallace seconded the motion. Motion carried.

7. **Discussion and possible action regarding approval of the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget.**

Director Hill presented first draft of 2020-2021 budget broken down by line. No Action.

8. **Discussion and possible action regarding amendments to the 2021 Orange County Abatement Policy.**

Abatement policy needs to be renewed in November. Director Hill presented current abatement policy as well as other comparable communities' policies to review with the board. Chairman Hood acknowledged his appreciation for including the guidelines for potential projects to use local workforce, suppliers, and businesses as much as possible.

No Action.

9. **Discussion and possible action regarding amending the Orange County Economic Development Corporation Board Policy, Membership Structure and By-Laws, including election of officers from representatives of advisory members.**

Director Hill presents the current OCEDC membership structure and explains that Legal Council has drafted some proposed language to clarify the number of representatives permitted per entity on the OCEDC board. Member Wallace added that he thinks the OCEDC should not limit themselves to who they allow as members and should be open to accepting anyone who is willing to pay the membership fee to be a member. Commissioner Viator added that if the City of Orange wants a second vote on the board, they should join as a per capita member. Member Jones added that Mr. Childs has the ability to join the board as an advisory member the way that he is through his business, although he does not have a vote, his voice and input can still be valuable to the conversation. Director Hill adds that Commissioner Trahan has spoken out about this topic from the county's perspective and as the majority funding source of the EDC allowing other entities to come on with the same number of votes as the county for significantly less.

The second part of this agenda item regarding members other than a per capita member to hold office on the EDC board. Chairman Hood spoke regarding his position as Chairman on the EDC board but his new position in Vidor possibly limiting him from being able to serve as an officer since Vidor is not a per capita member. He asked if the board had any input whether there would be the opportunity to allow advisory members to serve as officers or not. Member Jones added that as an associate member generally, those that are able to vote on the board have some type of accountability through a voting structure through the community and that should allow you to be a voting member on the board. Director Hill suggests that if the board decides to allow advisory members to be officers, then perhaps we should consider additional benefits to the per capita members. Member Wallace suggests waiting until all per capita members are present and involved in the discussion until any changes are made.

Commissioner Viator made a motion that any governmental entity or agency that is subject to the approval of its actions by another governmental entity, including

but not limited to the appointment of its members shall not constitute a separate governmental entity for purposes of membership on the OCEDC board of directors. Mayor Mohon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

10. **Discussion and possible action regarding a request for accounting services proposals.**

Director Hill requests permission from the board to send out RFP for accounting services for next fiscal year. Member Wallace makes a motion. Motion seconded by Member Gauthier. Motion carried.

11. **Discussion and possible action regarding request for audit services proposals for fiscal year 2020-21.**

Director Hill corrected the agenda item to 2019-2020, the audit will be for this fiscal year. Requesting permission to send RFP for audit services as well as a multiyear agreement for auditing services moving forward. Legal Counsel recommends just doing a one year agreement since audits are only done every other year. Motion made by Member Wallace. Seconded by Commissioner Viator. Motion carried.

12. **Executive Director's Regular Report.**

Director Hill presents a small business grant program requested by the judge as assistance to small businesses impacted by Covid 19 should funds be available from the county. This is just a proposal of how the program would be structured and awarded should the businesses meet the requirements and program be approved. Next, Director Hill presents an Intermediary Relending Program. This would be a revolving loan fund available to rural businesses in the county. Currently looking into this as a possibility and if it would be worth taking on. Then she went through the Chmura report of potential economic impact from Covid. The study included estimate GDP numbers and impact to Orange County and gives us an opportunity to show us where we can focus some of our efforts moving forward. She shared some of the pipeline report including one new prospect, two that were on hold and of course the CP Chem project.

Megan gave an update on the BRE database and the software trial as well as a preliminary survey to help establish a baseline for our local businesses and their needs.

13. **Closed Meeting to Deliberate 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, or to Deliberate the**

offer of a financial or other incentive to such a business prospect, under Section 551.087 of the Act, regarding any current, confidential OCEDC Projects.

Entered closed session at 11:05am.

14. **Discussion and possible action resulting from Closed Meeting under Agenda Item No. 9.**

Returned from closed session at 11:22am
No Action

15. **Discussion and possible setting of date, time and place of any presently anticipated Special Meeting to be held prior to the next Regular Meeting.**

No Action

16. **Discussion and possible action regarding possible changes to the date, time and/or place of one or more particular Regular Session(s) if any of such factors are presently anticipated to be changed from standard Board Policy.**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be Wednesday, September 9th in Commissioner's Courtroom.

17. **Adjourn Meeting.**

Member Wallace motioned to adjourn. Chairman Hood seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:25am.

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