

**MINUTES OF
THE HONDO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, (HEDC)
CITY OF HONDO
TYPE B ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**HEDC REGULAR BOARD MEETING
700 Vandenberg
Airport Board Room
Hondo, Texas 78861**

May 16th, 2024 at 4:00 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS' BUSINESS

1. Roll call to determine presence and Quorum.

Chair J. Gruber, Vice Chair Ronnie Miller, Treasurer Brett Riff, Roger Henderson, Rachel Ramirez

Absent: Secretary Ashley Lowe, Rose Mary Mares

Staff Present:, EDC Director Doug Dowler, EDC Business Retention & Expansion Sean Patty

2. Call to Order.

"President J. Gruber called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m."

3. PUBLIC FORUM

No comments were made by a visitor.

4. Consent Agenda

Executive Director Doug Dowler made a recommendation to the Board to make the following modifications to the agenda: First change was to add item 4a and change existing 4a to 4b. The amended 4a item was for the approval of a contract by Paddle Creek Design for the feasibility/cost estimate to renovate a vacant real property on 18th St.

a. Approve contract for feasibility study by Paddle Creek Design for cost estimate to renovate a real property on 18th St.

b. Minutes from the April 2024 meeting.

Action item: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

Ronnie Miller motioned to accept consent agenda and Roger Henderson promptly seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Public hearing for the 2024-2025 Annual Budget and project funding for the Hondo Economic Development Corporation

a. Open public hearing.

“President J. Gruber opened the public hearing for the annual budget at 4:10 p.m.”

i) Budget presentation

““Doug Dowler, Executive Director of the Hondo Economic Development Corporation presented the 2024-2025 Annual Budget.”

b. Call for any comments.

“President J. Gruber called for public comments. No public comments were made.”

c. Close public hearing

“President J. Gruber closed the public hearing for the annual budget at 4:15 p.m.”

6. Business Retention and Expansion Report.

Sean Patty, from Business Retention & Expansion, revisited the EDC's bylaws, underscoring the purpose of promoting, assisting, and enhancing economic development. He provided an update on the project pipeline, noting 66 projects up to April, including the active projects: Aras MRO, Capital Farm Credit and Boise Cascade, as well as four leads with the State Governor's office. Project timelines typically range from six months to two years. BRE activities were lower in Q2 due to other commitments but are expected to pick up in May with a focus on small businesses.

Sean reported on the GrowHondoTX website, which had 120 visitors and 65 engagement sessions in April, and highlighted the social media performance, showing significant growth on Facebook and LinkedIn over the last three months. He presented population data, revealing a contributing population of approximately 5,520 to 6,000, adjusting for prison population data. The total population, including the prison, is estimated to be between 7,020 and 7,520.

Sean emphasized the importance of accurate population data for economic development, advocating for strategies to attract residents through remote work opportunities, tourism, and

downtown revitalization. He highlighted the need for collaborative efforts to make Hondo more attractive for current and potential residents, businesses, and visitors.

7. Hondo Chamber of Commerce presentation for request for funds

Jena Prevo, Executive Director of the Hondo Area Chamber of Commerce presented an overview of the Chamber's recent activities and future plans. She emphasized the Chamber's role in promoting business growth and fostering community ties in Hondo. The recent "Night on 90" event had a strong turnout, with increased local engagement and tourism efforts. The introduction of the neighborhood market in February brought more visitors to the downtown area, leveraging social media to highlight local businesses.

Jena noted that San Antonio's interest in Hondo events has grown, with a significant increase in engagement from that market. Efforts to promote downtown businesses included radio and print ads, and coverage by "Best of America," which will produce a video featuring local businesses. This video will be used across social media platforms to further promote Hondo. The Chamber's EDC-funded initiatives, such as the "Lunch and Learn" sessions and the annual awards ceremony, have been successful in fostering business development and community engagement. The annual awards ceremony saw 300 tickets sold and recognized nine local businesses and community members, utilizing innovative methods to highlight sponsors.

The "Coffee with the Chamber" events and the "Small Business Week" activities, including a mix and mingle hosted by Summit Landscape, aim to strengthen business relationships within the community. Ribbon cuttings, also supported by EDC funds, provide publicity and networking opportunities for new businesses, contributing to a welcoming business environment.

Jena requested an additional \$10,000 in funding, a 50% increase, to hire a part-time administrative assistant or to increase Chamber hours to full-time capacity. She provided a breakdown of current fund usage and emphasized the need for increased funding to sustain EDC-driven events without relying solely on sponsorships and ticket sales.

Additionally, she requested an extra \$5,000 to account for inflation since the last funding increase in 2018, ensuring that the Chamber can cover basic expenses and maintain operational efficiency. The expected outcomes of the increased funding include enhanced marketing efforts, improved community support, and greater operational efficiency, potentially leading to increased tourism and local business support.

Jena highlighted the "Meet Me in Hondo" initiative, an Instagrammable tourism campaign launched at "Night on 90," which received positive feedback. She also introduced the "Summer Solstice" event, a two-day festival aimed at supporting local organizations and promoting tourism, encouraging overnight stays and shopping in Hondo.

8. Review & discuss

- a. Joint Strategic Planning Workshop – May 8th, 2024**
- b. Budget Workshop on May 14th, 2024**
- c. 2nd Strategic Planning Workshop – Scheduled for June 12th, 2024 (9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)**
- d. Board Meeting – June 20th, 2024 Funding Request Presentations**
- e. Board Meeting – July 18th, 2024**
 - i. Awards for Funding Requests**
 - ii. Final Budget Approval**
- f. City Council Presentation of Budget – August 12th, 2024**

Doug Dowler provided updates on several key topics. He expressed satisfaction with the joint strategic planning workshop, highlighting the exceptional presentations and strong participation. He thanked everyone for their involvement in the budget workshop, which offered insights into the operational requirements and focus shifts for economic development programs.

Doug announced a change in the date for the second strategic planning workshop from the 12th to June 19th. He confirmed that John Maynard and David Petr would be in attendance and proposed holding the workshop from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM, a time more convenient for the attendees.

Doug reminded the board that the next meeting would potentially involve requests for funding from the city and other agencies, although specific requests were not yet known.

He also mentioned the upcoming board meeting on July 18th, which would involve discussions on funding requests and finalizing the budget. The finalized budget will be presented for approval at the August 12th City Council meeting. Doug noted that his last official day would be July 19th.

9. Executive Director Report.

No further reports were made from Doug Dowler, Director of Economic Development.

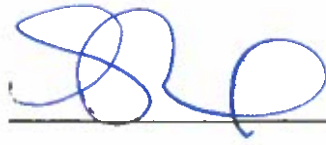
10. Directors Comments.

No further comments were made from EDC Board Members.

11. Adjourn.

Chair of the Hondo EDC Board, J. Gruber, entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:49 p.m. Ronnie Miller made a motion and Treasurer Brett Riff seconded. The motion was approved 5-0.

Attest:



Ashley Lowe

Board Secretary

On 6/27/24, 2024