

March 16, 2020  
Conference Room – 11:30 AM  
City Hall

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE YOAKUM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**PRESENT:** Gery Maneth..... President  
Whitney Boone..... Vice-President  
Arthur Hermann..... Secretary  
Tommy Barre..... Director  
Anita R. Rodríguez..... Director  
Elorine Sitka..... Director  
Terry Stokes..... Executive Director  
Kevin M. Coleman..... City Manager  
Theresa A. Bowe..... City Clerk

**ABSENT:** Zenith Stevens..... Director

President Maneth called the meeting to order at 11:35 AM.

Motion by Director Sitka to adopt the minutes of the meeting of February 17, 2020 as presented. Second was made by Director Hermann and motion carried unanimously.

Review was held of the Sales Tax Comparison Report received based on numbers from the Texas State Comptroller. Discussion was held.

Under the Executive Director report, information was presented regarding the proposed process for developing the YEDC's 2020 Strategic Plan. Details were provided to the Board for consideration. After review and discussion, Vice-President Boone made a motion to approve the final draft of the Proposed Process for Development of the YEDC's 2020 Strategic Plan and authorize the Executive Director to proceed with the project. Motion was seconded by Director Sitka and carried unanimously.

A report was provided on the Texas Economic Development Council's 2020 Winter meeting. Educational information received from the conference and provided to the Board for review detailing workforce development, national security, primary needed fields of education, small town development discussion, sales tax changes that are being proposed, and a schedule of upcoming conferences. Information was also presented from meetings held with local stakeholders and concerns that were identified from those meetings including demographics of the community, downtown revitalization, community branding, the upcoming sidewalk renovation project, the drain of youth from the community, ordinance and code enforcement, family entertainment, the building of family values, and the shortage of day cares. Community concerns regarding the closing of the local Bealls store was addressed. Mayor Rodriguez has sent a letter to the Bealls headquarters in Houston, Texas in an effort to convince the store to remain open in our area. The entity is trying to hold on

to the overall company, but are not currently interested in maintaining the Yoakum store at this point. Executive Director Stokes will aggressively market the location in an attempt to match the property owner with entrepreneurs. A list of the Professional Development webinars that will be available for the remainder of 2020 through the IEDC and the TEDC were presented and an invitation extended to the Board to attend with the Executive Director. Travel plans were reviewed. Preliminary information regarding the YEDC's Grant Program resulting from the creation of the Historic District was presented for discussion. A fifth program was recommended to coincide with the Historic District designation as an incentive to those that are intending to use the tax credits that are now available through that designation. Executive Director Stokes will be distributing economic development related information on a case by case basis to receive feedback including beneficial activities being implemented throughout the State that may be of benefit to Yoakum. Additional information was presented regarding regional Hurricane Harvey recovery activities. Memberships to the Association of Rural Communities in Texas, the Central Texas I-10 Community Alliance, and the Texas Downtown Association were discussed and will be brought back to the Board for consideration after additional research has been conducted by the Executive Director.

Under the City Manager's Report, information was presented regarding the Historic District Project. The District has been approved through the necessary State agencies and staff has received documentation. Rebecca Borchers will return to complete the process.

City Manager Coleman presented Financial Reports. Written reports were provided and questions were posed and addressed. After review, Director Sitka made a motion to accept the February Financial Report as presented. Motion was seconded by Director Hermann and carried unanimously.

President Maneth announced that the Board would enter into Executive Session at 12:31 PM to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property (V.T.C.A., Gov. Code, Sec. 551.072). The meeting reopened to the public at 1:03 PM with no action resulting from Executive Session.

Discussion topics were outlined for presentation at the Joint City Council/YEDC Bi-Annual meeting. Items to be listed on the agenda include parking, Executive Director's Report as listed, ordinances associated with the upkeep of properties, planning and zoning and the enforcement of the ordinances. Additional items to include the YEDC Strategic Plan and the grant process.

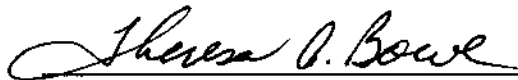
Under the President's Report/Discussion, President Maneth provided a recommendation to create an executive Board consisting of the President, Vice-president, and Mayor to narrow the focus of marketing ideas and projects. Executive Director Terry Stokes would take on the responsibility of drafting revisions to the by-laws for consideration. Motion was made by Director Hermann to move forward with construction of an Executive Board with a second by Director Rodriguez. Motion carried unanimously.

A report was provided regarding the COVID-19 Coronas Virus. A Declaration of Local Emergency for the City of Yoakum has been established as a protection resource. The next two weeks are critical in stemming the spread of the virus. The City is following the Center for Disease Control guidelines; changes have been implemented to the City Hall and other City facility hours and building access. The basic message to the public is to think about what you do from day-to-day and not take any unnecessary trips. The Health Department is monitoring the situation closely.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:37 PM.

  
Gery B. Maneth  
President

ATTEST:

  
Theresa A. Bowe, City Clerk

