

October 14, 2019  
Conference Room – 5:30 PM  
City Hall

JOINT MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND  
YOAKUM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESENT: Anita R. Rodriguez ..... Mayor/YEDC Director  
Elorine Sitka ..... Mayor Pro-Tem  
Billy Goodrich ..... Councilmember  
Glenn Klander ..... Councilmember  
Kevin M. Coleman ..... City Manager  
Kenneth E. Kvinta ..... City Attorney  
Theresa A. Bowe ..... City Clerk  
  
Gery Maneth ..... YEDC President  
Whitney Boone ..... YEDC Vice-President  
Arthur Hermann ..... YEDC Secretary  
Tommy Barre ..... YEDC Director  
Zenith Stevens ..... YEDC Director  
  
ABSENT: Carl O'Neill ..... Councilmember

MAYOR Rodriguez called the City Council meeting to order at 5:47 PM and President Maneth gave the invocation.

DED Dart presented the YEDC Annual Report for review. Information was presented regarding the Sales Tax Report from the Texas State Comptroller's office; a review of the awarded grants from the past year was presented; information was presented regarding the receipt of a GVEC Power Up Grant for assistance with the purchase of Christmas lights for the downtown area; a reminder was provided regarding the appointment of DED Dart to the Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission's Workforce Development committee; and an update was provided on the grant request submitted to the Texas Department of Agriculture for sidewalk replacement in the downtown area. After review and discussion, Mayor Pro-Tem Sitka made a motion to accept the YEDC Annual Report as presented. Second was made by Councilmember Klander; motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION was presented by YEDC President Maneth regarding the current grant programs available to the businesses and civic groups in Yoakum. The grants are small but have a significant impact for the small business and groups that they assist. Discussion was held regarding the potential to develop an incentive program for the downtown property owners to improve the appearance of the exteriors of the buildings; exterior maintenance and repair and façade improvements are both legitimate uses of economic development funds.

DISCUSSION was held regarding the retired army reserve facility. The YEDC indicated a desire to coordinate a joint meeting with the Yoakum Independent School Board to determine to determine needs and assess workforce training options at the high school level that the YEDC Board may be able to assist with.

INFORMATION was presented on the Yoakum Commercial Historic District project. The nomination was sent back earlier this year for corrections and modifications. The issues have

been rectified and the nomination was resubmitted for consideration in September of 2019. The National Park Service begins the review process and begins the 45 day window. Results should be received mid-November. The designation will give the City additional alternatives to design street signs, place plaques for historical buildings, as well as additional benefits. The goal of the project is create interest in the downtown area.

THE company awarded the Wayfinding sign contract, Sign Crafters of Victoria, Texas, will be in Yoakum on October 23<sup>rd</sup> to tour the City and review the locations and guidelines for the placement of the signs. The project should be complete by the end of 2019.

FUNDING restrictions were discussed for YEDC participation in local housing. Property owners have expressed interest in creating lofts in some of the buildings in the downtown area. State statute limits housing assistance for Type B Sales Tax Funds to affordable housing. Discussion was held regarding how to identify affordable housing and options that are left available to the YEDC to assist with housing in the area.

REVIEW was held of the brochure, job posting, and recruitment strategy for the Director of Economic Development from The Next Move Group. Applications will be received through November 1, 2019.

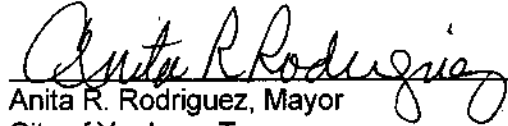
CITY Manager Coleman provided information regarding the sidewalk improvement grant program through the Texas Department of Agriculture. The scope of work is outlined from the alley located at the 400 block of Lott Street moving north to the 300 block of Lott Street; traveling west on May Street for roughly half of the block, and traveling east on May Street for the same distance. Matching funds have been committed by the City Council in the amount of \$70,000. Staff is confident that the City will score well and has a good chance of receiving funding.

ADDITIONAL funds are being sought through the Texas General Land Office for FEMA funds that are available to assist communities affected by Hurricane Harvey. Funding is meant to identify and correct infrastructure that suffered during the storm. Among the issues to be reviewed will be Kennedy Ditch, emergency generators for the Fire Station, and surgical improvements to the electrical system. Langford Community Development has been contracted as the consultant for the submission of the grant applications. The company has submitted five separate applications to ensure that if one application does not qualify the others may as separate projects.

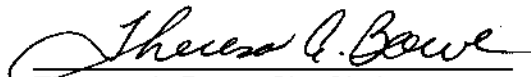
RETAIL development discussion was held. Ideas were requested from the group to fill the downtown buildings. Bealls will be changing names and the store will remain in Yoakum. Information was presented on the restaurant that had expressed interest in moving into the vacant portion of the Stanley Center building. Parking in the downtown area is still an issue. Ideas were presented to utilize the Front Street Railroad Park for a parking area. The need for housing was reviewed and suggestions were made to seek out developers that would be interested in building in the community. Information was presented regarding a recent proposal from the Yoakum Little League for assistance with the fields in the Municipal Park. The group will gather information including a prioritized list of improvements along with cost estimates and timelines. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of partnering with the Yoakum Independent School District to determine the feasibility of providing trade-school alternatives for non-college bond graduates; the conversation should include the reasons behind the discontinuance of the vocational classes that were once offered at a high school level in our area.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for April of 2020 with an exact date to be determined.

THERE being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

  
Anita R. Rodriguez, Mayor  
City of Yoakum, Texas

ATTEST:

  
Theresa A. Bowe, City Clerk

