

**CITY OF FREEPORT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

200 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Freeport, Texas 77541

**MEETING MINUTES**

STATE OF TEXAS                    )  
  )  
COUNTY OF BRAZORIA            )  
  )  
CITY OF FREEPORT                )

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Economic Development Corporation of the City of Freeport met on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Freeport Police Department Municipal Court Room, located at 430 North Brazosport, Freeport, TX, for the purpose of considering the agenda items.

**FEDC BOARD MEMBERS:** Quorum Present

Directors:

Mingo Marquez	President
Josh Mitchell	Vice-President
David McGinty	Secretary
Jeff Pena	Treasurer
Shonda Marshall	
Melanie Oldham	
Sandra Loeza	

Tim Kelty: City Manager  
Chris Duncan: Attorney  
Jerry Cain: Council Liaison  
Kaytee Ellis: EDC Assistant

**Visitors in Attendance:**

Kacey Roman  
Jason Hayes

**Viewers via Live Stream:**

Octavio Tijerina Jr	Jul Arev
Luis Hernandez	Ricky Sparks
Robert Bacon	Paul Crow
Landis Adams	Raymond Gore Sr
Joel Carrillo	Mario Muraira
Eddie Dean Norris	

**I. Call to Order**

Mingo Marquez called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. A quorum was present.

**II. Invocation and Pledge**

Shonda Marshall led the invocation and David McGinty led the pledge.

**III. Citizens Comments**

There were no citizen comments.

**IV. Consent Agenda**

**1. Approve Meeting Minutes for February 15, 2022**

**2. Approve Invoices**

**3. Approve February Financial Statement**

Jeff Pena asked what the EDC gets in return for the \$6000 to the Economic Development Alliance for Brazoria County and asked to table this invoice until the next meeting.

Melanie Oldham asked if this was already included in this year's budget.

Mingo Marquez said it does not list specifics but he feels it is important for FEDC to be a member. Mingo Marquez said the Alliance markets their members very well and Freeport would not be included if the EDC does not participate.

Sandra Loeza said she agrees with Mingo but would also like to know what the membership includes.

Jeff Pena made a motion to table the invoice from the Economic Development Alliance for Brazoria County. There was no second.

Sandra Loeza said she would like to pay the invoice but asked to find out what the membership includes and report back to the board.

Jeff Pena said he feels like this \$6,000 could go further.

Melanie Oldham said she is familiar with the Alliance and knows they market land, jobs, advertise the EDC and much more. Melanie Oldham agrees with Mingo Marquez and thinks the FEDC needs to be a member.

Jeff Pena said he agrees with the need to be a member but would like to be clear on what the \$6000 is for.

Mingo Marquez said he does not see the electrical work invoice in the packet.

Cathy Ezelle responded it was not included as this invoice was received after the packets were made.

Mingo Marquez said he would like to review the invoice payment policy. Mingo Marquez said he feels it isn't fair to the small mom and pop shops to have to wait a month or more for a check. Mingo Marquez asked if City Council approves their invoices the same way as the EDC.

Cathy Ezelle responded no, herself and Tim Kelty review them. Cathy Ezelle said the invoices were previously approved by the EDC Director weekly. Cathy Ezelle said the board can assign someone or a committee to approve weekly and she can provide the board with a monthly report on paid invoices.

Mingo Marquez said he likes the idea of approving them this way.

Cathy Ezelle said the board could choose to approve the electrician invoice today if they so choose.

Mingo Marquez asked Cathy Ezelle to present the invoice as well as send a copy of the policy for the EDC to adopt.

Cathy Ezelle said the invoice is for His Power Electric for the amount of \$3,300.

Jeff Pena explained this invoice is for having a breaker box installed on the 8.8 acres property. Jeff Pena said this is to power six light poles along the riverfront. Jeff Pena said this is the preliminary invoice and we will get another once all of the work is complete.

Mingo Marquez said he has seen the invoice and the price is very reasonable for the work being done.

Melanie Oldham thanked Jeff Pena for his work on getting the lights back on.

Mingo Marquez added that it as not just Jeff Pena, Kaytee Ellis has worked hard to get this done.

Mingo Marquez asked if there were any more questions over the invoices.

Cathy Ezelle reviewed the EDC Financial Report.

Chris Duncan asked if there was a way to flag large sales tax payments in order to avoid overpayments as experienced recently.

Cathy Ezelle responded yes.

Jeff Pena asked how often overpayments happen.

Cathy Ezelle said she has had two in the past two years.

Chris Duncan asked if the numbers are confidential or if there was a way to find out who is responsible.

Cathy Ezelle said she can find out but is not legally allowed to share.

Jeff Pena asked the percentage of the average refund.

Cathy Ezelle said she did not have a percentage but said that of the last \$500,000 paid, \$400,000 was paid back.

Mingo Marquez asked Treasurer Jeff Pena to get with Cathy to create a system for this.

Jeff Pena made a motion to approve all consent agenda items with the exception of the invoice from Economic Development Alliance for Brazoria County. There was no second.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Jeff Pena seconded.  
**MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

## **V. Presentation**

### **1. City of Freeport Building Official Kacey Roman and Fire Chief Chris Motley**

Kacey Roman introduced herself as the City's building official and Chris Motley as the Freeport Fire Chief. Kacey Roman thanked Shonda Marshall for inviting her to speak at the meeting. Kacey Roman said this is an exciting time for Freeport as new businesses are coming in and new housing being built. Kacey Roman commended the board on their dedication to Freeport businesses and trying to improve to appearance of the City. Kacey Roman said she and Chris Motley try to promote the EDC while doing their inspections and let the businesses know the EDC can help. Kacey Roman said they would like to work together with the EDC and make it an easy process for the businesses and contractors. Kacey Roman presented the board with the building permit application and the Fire Department application and asked they be included in the grant packet as well as a stipulation that the EDC receive a paid for building permit or an email from Kacey stating one is not needed. Kacey Roman said she and Chris are just wanting to make the process a little smoother for everyone.

Chris Motley said he keeps Kaytee Ellis' business cards next to his and encourage new businesses to reach out to the EDC. Chris Motley said most buildings were built in the seventies and eighties and are due for an update or modifications that are often required safety modifications. Chris Motley said most businesses are renting the space and not the actual business owner and it is important to build a relationship with these people and educate them. Chris Motley said his door as well as Kacey Romans door are always open and once the ice is broken it makes the process easier. Chris Motley asked the board to keep in mind Kacey Roman and himself are here to help Freeport grow as well.

He said there has been talk that they are hindering the city, but they also have a minimum standard they have to follow. Chris Motley said there are a lot of projects in the works for Freeport. Chris Motley said they also work with the properties insurance to make sure the business is being protected.

Melanie Oldham said the handouts provided stated 2015 Code and asked if this is the most recent code or if this the City gets to pick which code they use.

Kacey Roman responded to Melanie Oldham and said this is the code currently adopted by the City of Freeport. Kacey Roman said the code changes every three years and there is a 2018 and a newly released 2021. Kacey Roman explained it is common practice for a city to skip every other code. For example, Alvin went from 2012 to 2018 and skipped 2015. Kacey Roman said these codes are very cumbersome and take a lot of effort and are over 2000 pages to learn and review. Kacey Roman said the City of Freeport will be adopting the 2021 code within the next six months to a year.

Melanie Oldham asked if there are typically a lot of changes.

Kacey Roman said it really varies and that is a big part of what takes so long to adopt a new code is figuring out what had changed and what hasn't but the code will underline a change. Kacey Roman said both herself and Chief Motley have to sit down and go through the code and there is a lot they have to sort through before they bring it to Council to be adopted by the City.

Chris Motley said a lot of the changes have to do with what is going on in the world. For clubs, the occupancy and size regulations changed because of the nations overcrowding, use of pyrotechnics, and things of this nature. Chris Motley said he brought a video that will get into how coding isn't just about fire sprinklers and means of egress, but really goes back to the health and safety issue.

Sandra Loeza asked if they have anyone within their department that is bilingual to help translate .

Kacey Roman responded yes, the building department clerk, Yvette, is bilingual and all of the forms are in both English and Spanish. Kacey Roman said this is because over 50 percent of the City speaks Spanish. Kacey Roman said all phone calls are also funneled through her so that people aren't having to spend so much time calling around to figure out what they need and who they need to speak to.

Sandra Loeza asked if this is a new process they are implementing because they are all wanting to streamline to process. Sandra Loeza said the form states six months.

Kacey Roman said yes, the permit is good for six months, but that timeline renews with each inspection. Kacey Roman said both departments have been making improvements to try and streamline and gave emails as an example, for permits instead of trying to figure out which person they need to go to, they are emailed to [permits@freeport.tx.us](mailto:permits@freeport.tx.us) and it goes to everyone in that department.

Chris Motley said the departments are going digital as well to have documents online and trying to get rid of paper files so that everyone can communicate easier.

Mingo Marquez said he wants to open up for questions but he knows there are a lot of questions the board has since so many businesses come to EDC with their problems and questions. Mingo Marquez said a big issue is time, like the permits taking six months and that seems like a long time to wait to him.

Kacey Roman said if someone were to call and ask for an inspection, they only have to wait 24-48 hours. Kacey Roman stated the majority inspections are done in the 24-hour time frame as long as the requests are made appropriately.

Mingo Marquez said because of time restraints he would like to set up a workshop so the EDC board can be better educated. Mingo Marquez said that he get a lot of questions from businesses that he cannot answer so once the business makes it to coding they are furious, not just a the building department but at the EDC and he wants to be able to help and reduce this. Mingo Marquez said most of the buildings in Freeport are old and people aren't wanting to spend the money to bring the businesses up to code and a big question with this is if they can be grandfathered in. Mingo Marquez said another issue he gets complaints on is that it takes too long to get permits and too long to get inspections.

Chris Motley said he wanted to add that the six months stated on the permit is that the permit is valid for six months, this doesn't mean it takes six months to get the permit, and that as long as you are getting inspections, that permit will keep renewing.

Mingo Marquez asked about business plans.

Chris Motley said he often sits down with businesses and will help them review their business plan before submitting to a banker or things like that to make sure they are including any necessary building information and will have a complete packet. Chris Motley said they usually get piece meal information and he cannot give an honest answer by the code, if he doesn't have all of the necessary information. Chris Motley said as for the question on existing buildings, there is a separate existing building code.

Melanie Oldham said she wanted to add that when the gentlemen with the distillery came to the EDC meeting he mentioned he had not heard back on what he needed to do

in regards to his parking lot. The next day Melanie Oldham spoke to Kacey Roman and come to find out he had not even reached out, but once he did, they were more than willing to get out there.

Kacey Roman said she actually just received his plans yesterday morning and they have had three predevelopment meetings with them as well as different City staff. Kacey Roman said there have been a lot of emails and questions back and forth but never received plans until yesterday.

Melanie Oldham said she believes everyone is on the same page and is encouraging new businesses to come in, but its important not only to streamline things but make sure they are done safely.

Jeff Pena said he has a couple of questions. Jeff Pena asked if every business that comes in needs to fill out both the building permit application and the fire departments application.

Kacey Roman answered only if there will be anything fire related, but most often there is. Kacey Roman said there are a thousand different scenarios and this is usually determined during the predevelopment meeting and they will be instructed which forms to fill out.

Jeff Pena said it seems to him there is always a fire issue so would it be safe to say they always need to fill out both forms.

Chris Motley responded no; it depends entirely on the scope of work. For example, he is reviewing a nail salon which does not need the form. Chris Motley assured the board their questions were valid, but they also like to keep the paper trail to gather information up front and try to keep it short and simple. Chris Motley said these are two systems that are currently being merged together and they are working it out.

Jeff Pena said it would be helpful is to just say if you're doing these particular items, you don't need any of these permits or applications. Jeff Pena said he thinks it needs to be made clear because the process is intimidating. Jeff Pena said he is getting messages that businesses do not want to touch Freeport right now because they have no confidence in the building department. Jeff Pena said maybe there is a reason we are not at the peak of businesses coming into Freeport and maybe it can be fixed with this. Jeff Pena asked if it was possible to get a list together that says if you are wanting to do these things, you don't need a permit, don't even call us.

Chris Motley asked the board to keep in mind that the majority of this was laid out by previous administration and they are trying to recover from that and they are trying to rebuild from five to ten years ago.

Mingo Marquez said he wanted to touch on what Jeff Pena was saying about people turning away from Freeport. Mingo Marquez said he had a meeting with two different citizens who had a list of business interested in coming to Freeport but since they would require \$30,000+ for sprinkler system, they went somewhere else. Mingo Marquez said this is discouraging because he always thought people just weren't coming to Freeport to do business but in fact they are, our buildings are just too old.

Shonda Marshall said she wanted to thank Mrs. Roman and Mr. Motley for coming to talk at tonight's meeting. Shonda Marshall said she did sit down with Kacey Roam and have a meeting to address some of the concerns the board is expressing. Shonda Marshall said she listened to Mrs. Romans presentation at City Council the night before and can tell she is putting a lot of new things in place and Shonda appreciates this. Shonda Marshall said she thinks it will take some education on the EDC so that they are better equipped to answer questions from the public. Shonda Marshall said her vision was to be able to help and to be able to help the citizens navigate the process and to be able to work hand in hand with the City. Shonda said she would also like to be able to utilize the EDC website and link the documents Kacey Roman has provided.

Jeff Pena asked if the 24-48-hour timeline for inspection requests was a new rule or existing rule.

Kacey Roman said this is an existing rule and she often times people don't know they need to call and have Yvette schedule the request. They will call and say "I need to talk to Bob" and leave a voicemail when he may not be in or may not even be the person that needs to hear the request when if they said "I need an inspection" it can be scheduled.

Jeff Pena asked if they were moving to a digital process where these could appointments could be made online.

Kacey Roman answered yes, this would be presented at the next council meeting.

Jeff Pena asked the commercial plan review timeframe was.

Kacey Roman said in a perfect world it would be 10 business days. However, they are never submitted to her complete and there is usually additional information needed and a lot of back and forth conversation.

Jeff Pena asked if there was a follow-up policy in place.

Kacey Roman responded no, this is something they need to work on.

Jeff Pena said he wanted to share a text message he received.



Mingo Marquez said when he talks to people they do not have business plans, are scared to make one, and are intimidated by the City and this is something we all need to work on.

Jeff Pena read the text following message and said one issue we need to work on is the perception:

*I just really don't want to deal with that chick trying to open any type of business in Freeport. She needs to educate everyone and nothing is her responsibility.*

Jeff Pena said at last night's Council meeting Kacey Roman said there would need to be some education and people are thinking there is going to be even more of a learning curve.

Kacey Roman said this is why they have created that big rotating rack with all of the forms and are going digital and trying to beat the learning curve and better serve the citizens. Kacey Roman said she believes a lot of the issue is a history of misconception.

Jeff Pena said he thinks the rack was a good idea and a step toward the right direction.

Melanie Oldham said she has researched Kacey Roman and Chris Motley and also knows that the majority of Freeports building are old and unique and have been neglected. Melanie Oldham said she would not with a good conscious want a business to come in and inhabit a building with health and safety issues and she thinks a business coming into that building would want to know the issues in the building as well.

Kacey Roman asked to play the provided video.

The video would not work so Kaytee Ellis would email it out to the board.

Mingo Marquez thanked Kacey Roman and Chris Motley for coming to speak to the board and said he would like to work together and to set up a workshop.

## **VI. Discussion & Action Items**

### **1. Discussion and possible action on business directive**

Shonda Marshall said this was discussed with the Presentation. Shonda Marshall said she would like to come up with a business plan and start working more closely with City officials.

### **2. Discussion and possible action on Way Finding Signage**

David McGinty asked the board for a new scope of work on the signs. David McGinty said his suggestion is to fix the existing signs around town and then come up with a design for new and better.

Mingo Marquez agreed with David McGinty. Mingo Marquez asked why the invoices listed 8 signs.

David McGinty said this is because the signs are front and back, the main sign coming into the city, one downtown by city hall, and one by the football field.

Mingo Marquez said the invoice seems much cheaper than he thought it would be.

David McGinty said it is just cleaning up the existing signs and the graphics have yet to be decided.

Jeff Pena questioned the invoice stating no on-site removal and install.

David McGinty said that is correct. He would be removing and installing the signs himself.

Mingo Marquez made a motion to approve the invoice for \$2280 from Art's Signs. Jeff Pena seconded. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **3. Discussion and possible action on New Business Grant Program**

Melanie Oldham said she wanted to bring this item back up. Melanie Oldham said it is important for the EDC to promote new businesses and could be done in the form of advertisement and grand openings. Melanie Oldham said she agreed with what Sandra Loeza said at the last meeting; a standard should be set and apply to all new businesses.

Josh Mitchell said the current grant program extends to new businesses as well.

Melanie Oldham said only for certain things. Melanie Oldham said right now the grant does not cover marketing or a grand opening.

Mingo Marquez said the marketing committee met on this and will discuss more in subcommittee updates.

Jeff Pena suggests hosting grand openings in partnership with the Brazoria County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Jeff Pena said the EDC can always promote via social media. Jeff Pena said he would like to initiate a Business Safety Grant type of program in which the EDC assist with sprinkler systems in various businesses around town. Jeff Pena said this has been a source of "cold feet" for businesses coming to Freeport. Jeff Pena suggested adding a community service provision to the grant programs that would require grant recipients to attend specific EDC or City events.

Melanie Oldham said another issue to revisit is the EDC has awarded a possible \$20,000 to buildings owned by Percy Beacroft. Melanie Oldham questioned how buildings sit so

long without being brought up to safety standards. Melanie Oldham said she is interested to see what the marketing committee has come up with for this.

Shonda Marshall said the sprinkler grant is a great idea and asked how this can be created.

Mingo Marquez said the grant committee can meet and come up with ideas for the next meeting. Mingo Marquez encouraged the board to bring their ideas to the next meeting as well.

Josh Mitchell suggested adding a “New Business” subsection to the current grant packet to avoid having too many documents.

#### **4. Discussion and possible action on Outrigger’s Ribbon Cutting**

Josh Mitchell said it is important to celebrate new businesses coming to Freeport.

Mingo Marquez said he felt it is important to discuss the subcommittee item prior to the Ribbon Cutting and would circle back later in the meeting.

#### **5. Discussion and Possible action on Spring Market Days Sponsorship**

David McGinty said there are some update handouts in addition to what is provided in the agenda packet.

Melanie Oldham asked how much the museum is asking for this event.

David McGinty answered \$2500 to be split between two market dates.

Jeff Pena said this event is hosted a total of five times throughout the year. Jeff Pena said he is all for supporting local events but wants to be careful how the EDC spends money.

Melanie Oldham asked what the \$5,000 budget covered.

David McGinty read the provided budget aloud.

Shonda Marshall asked if this event would be advertised outside of Freeport.

Mingo Marquez said he would like to see at least one market a month and believes it is money well spent.

Jeff Pena said he would like to make sure there is enough marketing and a pronounced EDC logo on materials.

Mingo Marquez said Kaytee Ellis could provide the EDC banners to the museum so they can be present at the event.

Jeff Pen made a motion to approve the \$2500 sponsorship to the Museum for the market events. Sandra Loeza seconded. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

## **6. Discussion and possible action on Subcommittee Updates**

### Riverfront:

Jeff Pena said they are working to get the lights powered on and working on the dock prep for the fish market and Outriggers' Grand Opening

### Marketing:

Josh Mitchell said the marketing committee has come up with a program for promoting new businesses to include advertising on Facebook and the EDC website

Mingo Marquez said he reached out to the chamber for help and he recommends posting on the EDC Page, the business page, and at least two other pages to market. The subcommittee has allotted approximately \$50 per page for a total of about \$250 per grand opening for promoting and would start one week prior to each opening or event.

Josh Mitchell added that this program would start off with the grand opening of Outriggers Bar and Grill.

Tim Kelty suggested taking a picture at each ribbon cutting to use on social media and EDC marketing materials.

Shonda Marshall asked if the EDC has a relationship with Brazoria County Chamber of Commerce.

Tim Kelty responded the city is a member. Tim Kelty stated the Brazoria County Chamber of Commerce has participated in a few ribbon cutting ceremonies around town but is looking to participate more.

Mingo Marquez added that Courtland Holman stressed establishing working relationships with the Chamber.

Jason Hayes said the Grand Opening is scheduled for March 19<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to midnight.

Josh Mitchell made a motion to move forward with this program starting with Outriggers.

Jason Hayes asked the board about the usage of the dock. Jason Hayes said he has spent a lot of money on the grand opening so far and is now being told he will not be able to use the dock for the kid's fishing tournament.

Mingo Marquez said he has been on the dock and does not feel it is that bad.

Melanie Oldham asked who evaluated the dock.

David McGinty responded he did.

Jason Hayes told the board at one point he had insurance on the dock and is tired of the back-and-forth argument on it.

Jeff Pena said this is what happens when there are too many hands in the cookie jar. Jeff Pena said he has a contractor working to put rails on the dock.

Mingo Marquez asked what the rails are for.

Jeff Pena responded the kid's safety.

Melanie Oldham asked who decided to install the rails.

Jeff Pena said himself and David were tasked with this project but he would tell the contractors to extend the railing to the rest of the dock.

Jason Hayes said the railing would limit access by boat.

Jeff Pena stated the kids can always fish from the riverfront.

Jason Hayes stated fishing from the riverfront is more hazardous than fishing from the dock.

Mingo Marquez agreed with Jason Hayes.

Melanie Oldham asked if there was a total cost to make the dock safe. Melanie Oldham said the dock is owned by the EDC and should be their responsibility. Melanie Oldham said she is disappointed to hear about this event for so long to now being told it is not safe.

Mingo Marquez said he uses docks daily without railing.

Jerry Cain said another thing to think about is that he has three kids. He would feel comfortable with his 11-year-old on the dock but not the younger two children.

Jason Hayes said he will have notices posted stating a parent must be present with any child on the dock.

Tim Kelty said he requested a quote on the dock repair about 6 weeks ago and has not yet received it. Tim Kelty said the contractor did recommend concrete removal and reestablish the entry way as this was the main issue.

Jeff Pena asked what would Kacey roman say in regards to the safety of the dock

Tim Kelty asked if signage saying adult supervision would be sufficient.

Chris Duncan said it is the responsibility of the EDC to provide a warning for dangerous conditions. Chris Duncan said he has not looked at the dock and it would be difficult for him to judge what is safe and what is not.

Melanie Oldham asked if there was a subcommittee for this.

Jeff Pena responded himself, David McGinty and Mingo Marquez.

Jason Hayes added that no other docks around the City have railing.

Jeff Pena responded that these are now EDC property.

Josh Mitchell said the total cost of the ribbon cutting and advertisement would be \$360.

Mingo Marquez made a motion to approve the ribbon cutting and advertising promotion starting with Outriggers Bar and Grill. Jeff Pena seconded.

Shonda Marshall asked how future businesses can get this award.

Mingo Marquez said they just need to approach the EDC and Marketing committee.

Josh Mitchell suggested adding to the grant packet and EDC website.

Melanie Oldham said she feels bad Outriggers grand opening is a week away and now the plan is changing. Melanie Oldham said she feels it isn't fair the EDC is talking businesses into paying for EDC property.

Mingo Marquez said the marketing committee agrees the website needs to be improved. Mingo Marquez said they will view other websites and get with Kaytee on how to improve.

Mingo Marquez called for a vote.

**MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Riverfront/Community House:

Josh Mitchell said Gensler would like to come on the 22<sup>nd</sup> for a possible special meeting and give a presentation as well as view the property before the meeting.

Melanie Oldham asked what the community house was.

Mingo Marquez said this development is for the 25 acre property the community house is on by the splash pad.

Melanie Oldham said she thought this was for the 8.8 acres owned by the EDC.

Josh Mitchell responded no the discussion on the 22<sup>nd</sup> would be for the splash pad area.

Melanie Oldham said she thought the previous discussion was about the EDC property.

Josh Mitchell responded they have discussed both. Josh Mitchell said he would reach out to the subcommittee to see if they would like to meet.

Mingo Marquez added to invite city officials as well

Melanie Oldham asked what the scope of work was for the firm to look at.

Josh Mitchell said the river front in general but starting with the EDC property. Josh Mitchell said they would like to discuss ways to fund the project so that it is not just another plan.

Melanie Oldham asked if we are initially asking them to look at just the 8.8 acres and if this is what the \$25,000 was for.

Chris Duncan said they specialize in city branding and developing a comprehensive plan, so they will be looking at the entire riverfront and see what would make the most sense. Chris Duncan said the \$25,000 was for something for the fish market. Gensler would look at overall city development and make a recommendation as to what makes the most sense.

Melanie Oldham asked if the EDC as a whole decided on this.

Chris Duncan responded yes.

Training:

Shonda Marshall said she put together a survey for the training with Mike Barnes and asked the board to complete it. Shonda Marshall also reminded the board to complete the Public Information Act and Open Meetings act training.

Mingo Marquez asked how long the training was good for.

Chris Duncan responded two years.

Mingo Marquez added he really enjoyed the training with Mike Barnes.

Shonda Marshall asked when the EDC travels for a seminar, what fees are covered and how will they pay. Shonda Marshall said from experience the company usually pays travel, lodging, and per diem.

Mingo Marquez said this is how it has been done in the past except no per diem but meals were paid for.

PopBox:

Mingo Marquez said Justin Dupree has moved in to the PopBox and will need a ribbon cutting event also and he is excited to get open. Mingo Marquez said he was interested in presenting an idea to City Council for more Popboxes/Food trucks.

**VII. Board Comments**

**1. President Mingo Marquez:**

Mingo Marquez said he really appreciates the board and their great working relationship. Mingo Marquez said he was really impressed with the Business Expo and made great contacts. Mingo Marquez thanked Tim Kelty and Chris Duncan for attending the training as well as councilmen Pena and Muraira. Mingo Marquez said the training went really

really well. He felt it was the most educated training the board has ever received. Mingo Marquez reiterated the importance of improving the website.

**2. Vice President Josh Mitchell:**

Josh Mitchell thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Josh said it was nice to see shirts with the EDC logo while out at the Mardi Gras event. Josh Mitchell said he is happy to see the board moving in the right direction and “setting a better mouse trap.” Josh Mitchell said he had some notes for the website: digitizing the grant process, including links or code enforcement papers, and something for creating a business plan

**3. Secretary David McGinty:**

David McGinty said he appreciates everyone picking up his slack while he was working out of town. David said the city relies on the EDC’s ability to work together. David McGinty said he did have a meeting with VT Enterprises, the EDC’s mower and expressed the cost concerns. David McGinty said the holes at western Seafood have been repaired.

**4. Treasurer Jeff Pena:**

Jeff Pena said the Expo was awesome and he appreciates everyone who participates. Jeff Pena said the EDC will need a bigger float for next year’s Mardi Gras parade. Jeff Pena said he appreciates the training also. Jeff said he wanted to make note for the board to be sensitive of quorums. Jeff said he realizes there was a quorum at his recent town hall event and he will get with Kaytee Ellis to post notice in the future.

Melanie Oldham added that when a quorum was met at the townhall event, she did get up and leave.

Mingo Marquez said the most important thing is to avoid dialogue; the board can send information but not discuss.

Melanie Oldham said subcommittees need to be working together not just one member doing the work.

**5. Shonda Marshall:**

Shonda Marshall thanked everyone for their participation at the training and said she was not ready to leave. Shonda Marshall said she felt it was very informative and enjoyable. Shonda Marshall said the business expo was great and thanked Kaytee Ellis and the board for representing. Shonda Marshall said she is ready to see some EDC projects grow.

**6. Melanie Oldham:**

Melanie Oldham said the Business Expo went really well and Jeff Pena did great speaking. Melanie said the Mardi Gras event had a good first start

**7. Sandra Loeza:**

Sandra Loeza said the Mardi Gras event was rally cold, wet, and windy but it was fun and a great turnout. Her suggestion in the future would be to buy three times as much candy. Sandra Loeza said she wanted to thank Kaytee Ellis fir her work on the parade and for the Business Expo.



### **VIII. Executive Session- Adjourn into Executive Session**

Executive Session Disclosure Statement: The FEDC Board of Directors reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personnel Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices) and 551.087 (Economic Development).

It is now 8:45 p.m. and I hereby recess the regular session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation March 8, 2022 meeting and do hereby convene an executive session, said executive session authorized under the following sections of the Texas 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney.)

#### **In Accordance with the Texas Government Code:**

**Section 551.087 (Economic and Community Development Matters) 551.074 (Personnel Matters),**

- 1. Discussion on Hiring Full Time EDC Office Professional**
- 2. Discussion on EDC Project 2022C**
- 3. Discussion on Project 2022A**

#### **Reconvene into Open Session**

##### **Board President's statement:**

It is now 9:46 p.m. and I hereby close the executive session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and do hereby reconvene the regular open session.

### **IX. Discussion and Possible Action**

#### **1. Discussion and possible action on Hiring Full Time EDC Office Professional**

No action taken

#### **2. Discussion and possible action on EDC Project 2022C**

David McGinty made a motion to hire an appraisal company to appraise the land for this project. Jeff Pena seconded. **Motion passed** unanimously.

#### **3. Discussion and possible action on Project 2022A**

No action taken

### **X. Adjourn**

Motion to close board meeting made by Jeff Pena and seconded by Shonda Marshall. **Motion passed** unanimously.

**It is now 9:47 p.m. and I hereby close the board meeting.**