CITY OF FREEPORT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
430 North Brazosport Boulevard, Freeport, TX
Tuesday, July 14th , 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

FEDC BOARD MEMBERS: Quorum Present

Directors:	
Mark Parker	President
Sandra Loeza	Vice President
Ken Tyner	Treasurer
David McGinty	Secretary
Ronnie Martin	
Ron Bachman	
Gary Guerrieri	

Robert Johnson: Executive Director
Jerry Cain: City Liaison
Dr. Danielle Kelly: City Manager
Loren Smith: EDC Attorney
Rachael Cohen: EDC Staff

I. Call to Order
Mark Parker called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m. A quorum was present.

II. Invocation and Pledge
Ron Bachman led the invocation, and Ken Tyner led the pledge.

III. Citizens' Comments
This is an opportunity for citizens and visitors to make a public statement before the Board relating to only agenda items. Speakers are not allowed to make a statement regarding specific agenda items at the time the agenda item is being considered by the Board and must wait until the Citizen Comments section of the agenda to speak. Speakers are required to register in advance and must limit comments to a total of two minutes for the duration of the meeting.

IV. Consent Agenda
1. Approve Meeting Minutes for June 9th, 2026
2. Approve Financials

Gary Guerrieri made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ken Tyner seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ron Bachman made a motion to approve the Financials as presented. Gary Guerrieri seconded. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

V. Discussion and Action Items

1. Discuss and take possible action: Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget

At the request of staff, the Board postponed discussion of the proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget until later in the meeting to allow Ashlee Hurst to arrive following an awards ceremony. During the delay, Executive Director Robert Johnson reviewed significant accomplishments completed during Fiscal Year 2025-2026, including infrastructure improvements, Business Improvement Grants, sponsorships, settlement of long-standing litigation, implementation of the Wayfinding Initiative, downtown redevelopment efforts, Main Street support, and cost savings achieved through contract reductions.

Following Ashlee Hurst's arrival, the proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget was presented. Staff reviewed the Operating, Projects, and Property Funds, highlighting anticipated reductions in sales tax revenue based on Comptroller projections, proposed personnel adjustments, continued funding for Business Improvement Grants, additional Wayfinding initiatives, infrastructure investments utilizing reserve funds, and ongoing improvements to EDC-owned properties. Board members discussed reserve balances, long-term sustainability, marketing allocations, infrastructure priorities, and projected revenues before expressing support for the proposed budget.

Ron Bachman made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget as presented. Ken Tyner seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Discuss and take possible action: Contract Renewal - Retail Strategies

Megan Jimenez of Retail Strategies presented an overview of the firm's activities and accomplishments during the previous contract term, highlighting retailer recruitment efforts, trade show participation, demographic and market analysis, confidential prospect management, and ongoing collaboration with EDC staff to market Freeport for commercial development. The presentation included updates on active retail prospects, the use of mobile location data and market analytics to identify recruitment opportunities, and the continued use of the Basecamp project management platform to provide staff with real-time updates on recruitment efforts. Board members discussed the effectiveness of the partnership, communication between Retail Strategies and EDC staff, the value of maintaining a consistent recruitment strategy, and the proposed three-year contract renewal, which maintains the current annual cost of $45,000.

Ronnie Martin made a motion to approve the three-year contract renewal with Retail Strategies. Ron Bachman seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Discuss and take possible action: New Contract - ReSimplifi

John Bryant presented **ReSimplifi**, a web-based commercial property database designed to assist economic development organizations in marketing available commercial properties and providing site selection information to prospective businesses. The presentation demonstrated the platform's searchable property inventory, integration with the City's website, demographic and market data, parcel mapping, and reporting capabilities. Board members discussed how the system would improve Freeport's ability to market commercial properties, provide current information to developers and site selectors, reduce staff time spent responding to property inquiries, and strengthen the

City's economic development recruitment efforts. Staff recommended the enhanced platform, including expanded reporting and administrative features, at an annual cost of **$5,500**.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to approve the ReSimplifi annual contract in the amount of $5,500. Ron Bachman seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. **Discuss and take possible action: Business Improvement Grant Application, Premier Laundry, LLC**

   Executive Director Robert Johnson introduced the Business Improvement Grant application submitted by **Premier Laundry, LLC**, located at **1331 North Avenue I**. The applicant, Kennon Gutzman, presented plans for recently acquired commercial property improvements, including roof replacement, window repairs, exterior rehabilitation, and renovations to attract additional tenants. Mr. Gutzman also outlined plans to replace the laundromat's equipment with new commercial washers and dryers through a substantial private investment, while continuing to operate as a coin-operated laundry serving the community. Board members discussed the scope of the improvements, revised project costs, and the anticipated positive impact on both the property and surrounding businesses.

   Sandra Loeza made a motion to approve a Business Improvement Grant for Premier Laundry, LLC in an amount not to exceed $12,500. Gary Guerrieri seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **Discuss and Update: Business Improvement Grant Application, The Wash Freeport**

   Mr. Gutzman then presented a separate Business Improvement Grant application for **The Wash Freeport**, explaining that although the business operates adjacent to Premier Laundry, it is a separate property and qualified independently under the Business Improvement Grant Program. The project includes installation of new commercial laundry equipment, continued operation as a coin-operated laundromat, and additional exterior improvements, including signage and property enhancements intended to better serve customers and neighboring tenants. Staff clarified the eligible project costs and recommended approval of the requested grant assistance for property improvements.

   Sandra Loeza made a motion to approve a Business Improvement Grant for The Wash Freeport in an amount not to exceed $10,000 for eligible property improvements. Ronnie Martin seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. **Discuss and Take Possible Action: Business Improvement Grant Application, Four Corner's Shopping Plaza**

   Staff advised the Board that the application for Four Corner's Shopping Plaza was incomplete and lacked the required supporting documentation, including cost estimates, a formal request letter, photographs, and necessary permits. Staff recommended postponing consideration until a complete application could be submitted.

   No action was taken on this item, and discussion was deferred to a future meeting.

7. **Discuss and Take Possible Action: Business Improvement Grant Application, Gulf Food Mart**

Executive Director Robert Johnson presented the Business Improvement Grant application for Gulf Food Mart on behalf of the applicants, who were unable to attend due to a family emergency. Staff reviewed plans to substantially expand the existing convenience store by approximately seventy-five percent, including building additions, landscaping, utility relocation coordination with CenterPoint Energy, new fuel pumps designed to accommodate commercial truck traffic, and additional site improvements. Board members discussed the strategic location of the business near the Port of Freeport, the anticipated increase in commercial traffic, expanded employment opportunities, and the project's potential economic impact on the community.

Ronnie Martin made a motion to approve a Business Improvement Grant for Gulf Food Mart in the amount of $33,500. Gary Guerrieri seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Discuss and Take Possible Action: Business Improvement Grant Application, SPCA ReTail Thrift Store

Staff presented the Business Improvement Grant application submitted by the SPCA ReTail Thrift Store, outlining proposed exterior and interior improvements intended to enhance the appearance and functionality of the facility while supporting the organization's continued service to the community. Board members discussed the project's public benefit, improvements to the commercial corridor, and the positive impact the renovations would have on both the organization and surrounding area before expressing support for the application.

Sandra Loeza made a motion to approve the Business Improvement Grant application for the SPCA ReTail Thrift Store. Ron Bachman seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. Discuss and Take Possible Action: Purchase Request, Digital Sign

Executive Director Robert Johnson presented a request to purchase a permanent digital sign to replace the temporary electronic message board currently located near Freeport High School. Staff explained that the sign would improve community communication by providing timely announcements regarding economic development initiatives, City events, public notices, and other community information. Board members discussed the long-term benefits of permanent installation and the value of enhancing public outreach efforts.

Ronnie Martin made a motion to approve the purchase request for the digital sign. Gary Guerrieri seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Discuss and Take Possible Action: 210 W. Park EDC Owned Building, Backflow

Executive Director Robert Johnson presented a request to install a backflow prevention device at the EDC-owned building located at **210 W. Park Avenue** to comply with utility requirements and protect the City's public water system. Staff explained that the installation was necessary not only to bring the property into compliance and ensure continued water service, but also to help prevent potential backflow or infrastructure issues that could affect other properties connected to the same water line, including the neighboring EDC-owned building at **212 W. Park Avenue** and **Mama C's**. Board members discussed the importance of maintaining EDC-owned facilities, protecting surrounding infrastructure, and proactively completing the required improvement to avoid future operational or regulatory concerns. The Board agreed that the installation represented a necessary maintenance expense to preserve the property and safeguard the connected water system.

Ronnie Martin made a motion to approve the installation of the required backflow prevention device at 210 W. Park Avenue. Gary Guerrieri seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. Board and Executive Director Comments

VII. Executive Session- Adjourn into Executive Session

It is now 8:04 p.m., and I hereby recess the regular session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation meeting and do hereby convene into executive session in compliance with Texas Government Code: Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), and 551.087 (Economic and Community Development Matters).

1. Discuss and Update: Project GER
2. Discuss and update on possible upcoming projects related to Economic and Community Development Matters.
3. Update on ongoing litigation: Realty World and A&T

Reconvene into an Open Session

Board President's statement:
It is now 8:24 p.m., and I hereby close the executive session of the Freeport Economic Development Corporation and do hereby reconvene the regular open session and take possible action on items mentioned in the executive session.

VIII. Adjourn

Ron Bachman made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Gary Guerrieri seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Mark Parker adjourned the board meeting at 8:25 p.m.