

Larry Weber, President  
Ben Campbell, Vice-President  
Linda Dickens, Secretary-Treasurer  
Michael Page, Director  
Charles Drane, Director  
Suzanne Eiben, Director  
Kim Willmott, Director



Lisa Denton, ED Director  
Terry Johnson, ED Project Manager

Minutes from May 20, 2021 Regular Board Meeting  
Palestine Economic Development Board of Directors

The Economic Development Board convened in a combined virtual and in person meeting on Thursday, May 20, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers. PEDC Board members present inside Council Chambers: Ben Campbell; Linda Dickens; Charles Drane, Suzanne Eiben, and Kim Willmott. PEDC Counsel, Chris Nichols via Zoom. Board Members absent were Michael Page and Larry Weber. Others present in chambers: Economic Development Director Lisa Denton; Interim City Manager Teresa Herrera, Economic Development Project Manager Terry Johnson, and Interim Finance Director Andrew Sibai.

- A. **CALL TO ORDER** – With a quorum present, Ben Campbell called the meeting to order at 11:33 am.
- B. **PROPOSED CHANGES OF AGENDA ITEMS** – none
- C. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – none
- D. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES** – none
- E. **PUBLIC HEARING** – The public hearing to consider ratification of a project to fund certain infrastructure repairs of the Texas State Railroad opened at 11:34 am. No one spoke in favor, or against, the ratification and public meeting was closed at 11:35 am.
- F. **ITEMS FROM THE BOARD** – none
- G. **April 2021 DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – The April 2021 Director's Report was part of the meeting packet. Additional information included:
  - Mention of the Palestine Herald Press article concerning PEDC efforts over the last 12 months. PEDC was involved in projects totaling 324,424 square feet either constructing or occupied, which includes the Overlook Apartments project. This equates to \$129,227,000 in capital investment, with 206 jobs created or retained. Six downtown grant projects totaled \$486,531 in capital investment.
  - Broadband partnership with Etex continues to go well, and has a total of 37 signed contracts, with 99 proposals out to Palestine businesses.
- H. **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**
  1. Consider approval of PEDC minutes from April 15, 2021 and April 19, 2021 – Linda Dickens made motion to approve; seconded by Kim Willmott. Motion carried 5-0.
  2. Consider approval of April 2021 Financial Statements – Linda Dickens made motion to approve as presented; seconded by Kim Willmott. Motion carried 5-0.
  3. Discuss and take action to approve lease between PEDC and City of Palestine Police Department, for 100 Willow Creek Parkway, Suite A-1- Linda Dickens made motion to approve the lease, with the following changes: Term: 36-months, with option to renew in

36-month extensions thereafter, and 60-day cancellation notice by either party. Motion seconded by Suzanne Eiben; Motion carried 5-0.

4. Discussion and possible action on items related to Willow Creek Business Park:

a. Landscaping – the 2021 winter freeze has killed or stunted numerous trees, and all Indian Hawthorne, lining Willow Creek Parkway inside the business park. Due to the fact the trees were planted over the existing utilities, a recent water line break caused three trees to have to be removed. Staff is working with landscaping contractor to secure bids for tree removal and trimming. While all trees ideally need to be removed, it is recommended we tackle in phases, due to costs associated with the project. Linda Dickens made motion to approve up to \$25,000 to initiate dead and stunted tree removal; seconded by Kim Willmott. Motion carried 5-0.

b. Monument Signage – Texas Health and Human Services has requested space for signage at the entrance of our business park. Since the shrubs and trees must be removed due to freeze, PEDC Board recommends Lisa Denton collect bids for placement of a monument sign to represent all tenants of the Willow Creek Business Park. This item will be brought back for board consideration.

5. Discuss and take action regarding PEDC Action Plan – Charles Drane made a motion to approve the final Action Plan, as presented; seconded by Linda Dickens. Motion carried 5-0.

6. Discuss and take action to enter a finding that the project for infrastructure repair of the Texas State Railroad promotes new and expanded business development for the City of Palestine, TX – This project was funded in 2019, however proper protocols were not followed. A 60-day public notice has now been published in the Palestine Herald Press, and the required public hearing was held at the beginning of this meeting. The PEDC Board now needs to adopt a finding that that the October 2019 grant to the Texas State Railroad, in the amount of \$50,000, was appropriate in that it promoted new and expanded business development. Linda Dickens made the motion; seconded by Suzanne Eiben. Motion carried 5-0.

7. Discuss and take action to ratify the Board's prior October 2019 act, approving the Community Development Grant to Texas State Railroad and authorizing the \$50,000 expenditure to Texas State Railroad for infrastructure repair. Suzanne Eiben made the motion to ratify the Board's prior act, approving the Community Development Grant to Texas State Railroad and authorizing the \$50,000 expenditure for infrastructure repair. Charles Drane seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

**I. CLOSED SESSION – 12:08 pm**

The Board will go into Closed Session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D.

1. Section 551.072 deliberation regarding real property: the purchase, sale, exchange, lease, or value of real property:

- a. Palestine Mall
- b. ResultsCX
- c. Business park Property

2. Section 551.087 deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations:

- Prospect 1015
- Prospect 1028
- Prospect 1038

**J. RECONVENE INTO REGULAR SESSION – 1:00 pm**

1. Take any action necessary regarding real property: the sale, purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property

a. Palestine Mall – Linda Dickens made motion, seconded by Suzanne Eiben to approve the 6<sup>th</sup> amendment to the purchase and sale agreement of the Palestine Mall between the city of Palestine and PEDC, and PEDC and John Christon, and authorize the President to execute the documents. Motion carried 5-0.

b. ResultsCX – no action

c. Business Park Property – Linda Dickens made a motion to approve the Letter of Intent to sell lot 1R-1, located in the Willow Creek Business Park, for the benefit of Prospect 1038; Seconded by Suzanne Eiben. Motion carried 5-0.

2. Take any action necessary regarding prospects:

a. Prospect 1015 – no action

b. Prospect 1028 – no action

**K. ADJOURNMENT – 1:02 pm**



Ben Campbell, Vice-President

14 June 21

Date



Lisa Denton, ED Director

6/14/21

Date