

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA1

CITY OF LAKE JACKSON

BE IT KNOWN that the Lake Jackson Development Corporation of the City of Lake Jackson met in Regular Session on Thursday, January 7, 2016 at 12:00 p.m. at Lake Jackson City Hall, 25 Oak Drive, Lake Jackson, Texas, with the following present:

Gary Rodgers, Chair  
Gerald Roznovsky, Vice Chair  
Jason Chavez  
Lisa Pauls  
Heather Melass, Council member

William P. Yenne, City Manager  
Alice A. Rodgers, City Secretary  
Michael Coon, Asst. to City Manager  
Sherri Russell, City Attorney

Stephanie Garza, The Facts

#### VISITORS COMMENTS

There were no visitors present.

#### DISCUSS AND CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED BY CARLTON SCHWAB OF THE TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL:

- a) Hiring an Economic Development Director
- b) Amending current 4b Sales Tax ballot language to allow for additional uses as allowable per state law
- c) Number of board positions filled by Council members

#### Hiring an Economic Development Director

Jason Chavez stated he has researched other Economic Development Corporations and found that most had a director. He felt Lake Jackson should consider this. He shared some duties from job descriptions he found on the internet. Mr. Chavez also read portions of an article from Mary Jander regarding Economic Development Directors.

Mr. Chavez stated he felt there should be a point person to be held responsible to manage the LJDC. This person would be held accountable for growing the city economically. This person would report to Bill but would be exclusively for the LJDC.

Lisa Pauls asked what the range of salary would be. Mr. Chavez stated the median income in America for economic directors is \$67,000. It ranges from \$44,000 to \$107,000. He stated he assumed for Lake Jackson it would be less than \$67,000.

Michael Coon stated that TEDC has a survey they did last year and he could pull up that information.

Mr. Mundo stated that the city did a survey and the income was somewhere around \$107,000 being the top pay. He could not remember the median amount.

Gerald Roznovsky asked if that was information from cities.

Mr. Mundo stated he pulled from the information from Gallagher Company and the survey data was for

cities between 20,000 and 75,000. This was both private and public. A lot of cities have a coordinator for this position. He said he would go back and look at this.

Jason Chavez said he did a sampling and there are all sorts of titles from coordinators, developers and directors as job titles. But this position worked on nothing but economic development.

Gerald Roznovsky said there is a history of discussions what the LJDC looked like and how the board was formed and the roles. From a council's perspective when these things were discussed the salary range was higher than what Mr. Chavez has found. Because of the way it was presented to council at the time it wasn't presented in a positive way. He does not think there is disagreement with Council that they would want to go in this direction; the challenge is how quickly we want to go in this direction. The big hurdle was council made a commitment to city employees to bring their salaries up. They have suffered since 2008 at least. We came back with a plan to try to achieve this in 5 years. The growth we have had has helped with the along with the improvement in sales tax. He said it was not something council did not want to do it just was not a priority above the commitment to the employees. This is still in the scope of council. He also thought it would be hard to go to the citizens without job duties in place. He felt we needed to define what this person's role is and the expectations.

Jason Chavez reviewed the other cities job descriptions and roles. Develop and administer comprehensive development strategies. Develop and administer a comprehensive outreach program with new and expanding businesses. Develop visitation program and conducts personal visits to city businesses to assess climate, issues and concerns. Develop and administer a prospect visitation program. Manages marketing efforts of the city. Develops and administer the small business development program. Has interest and priorities of businesses located in the city. Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of various economic development programs and efforts. Reviews and evaluates economic development proposals for feasibility and funding consideration. Establishes and maintains a database of existing city businesses and vacant commercial properties. Research possible federal and state funding affecting our local goals and objectives. Provides assistance resolving problems encountered by established business and prospects. Prepares and drafts presentations and policies and procedures.

Gerald Roznovsky said he thought those were great job descriptions and this group to present to council that this is what we want this person to do. He stated that previously there was an answer to why this person was needed. He said he felt if a more diplomatic approach was presented it might be more acceptable.

Jason Chavez stated that if this is something this board decides that we truly need this then we need to do more research and come up with a really good job description to put together a good acumen. This is an investment in our city.

Mr. Mundo stated that he thought the first thing the board needed to do was decide what the functions are the board really wants this position to do. That could help decide if a director is needed or a coordinator.

Gerald Roznovsky stated that he felt everyone could agree that we need a focused effort. We first need to decide what we want this person to do.

Mr. Yenne said that first the board needs to decide what they want to accomplish in the community in the economic area and how this person could help accomplish this. You start with a business plan and back the position into that plan.

Lengthy discussion followed on what this position could do and would it be city staff or contract.

Jason Chavez stated he still felt there should be someone to hold accountable for the economic development, other than the city manager.

Mr. Yenne stated that Council has not expressed opposition to transitioning to this over a period of time moving in incremental steps to get there. Before we make a full commitment this group needs to come up with is the “why” this needs to be done and what we are trying to accomplish and what this person would do.

Jason Chavez asked what needed to be done to start the process.

Mr. Yenne stated that at Council’s Strategic Plan on Monday Mr. Roznovsky could bring this up and it would become one of the things that is on the horizon.

Mr. Mundo said if the position does not get approved in the budget for some reason and there are functions of the job description that are important to the group that are not getting done, could that function be contracted out for one or two years.

Jason Chavez asked how we would get the money to contract out the “function”.

Mr. Yenne asked the group to not negate the progress already made. Timing is different in the public sector than in the private sector. Things are happening, the TEEEX study is ongoing, better networks are being created, working better with the Alliance and industry. He stated there is a stable group he talks to on a regular basis in the development community.

Mr. Chavez stated he is not saying that city staff is not capable of doing economic development, but he felt they already have a plate full of work to be able to dedicate the time to economic development.

Discussion followed on the TEEEX study and the hopes that it is not a cookie cutter report.

The board asked that Jason Chavez take the lead with Michael Coon on the hiring of an economic developer.

Amending current 4b Sales Tax ballot language to allow for additional uses as allowable per state law

Sherri Russell stated that the language that is put on a ballot becomes a contract with the public. When you say “we are going to have bonds to fix drainage on these streets” that is all you can spend the money on. Our ballot language was really strict. When the 4B was started, it was new and no one really knew what it was. What the city did know was it needed stuff for the Recreation Center, the Civic Center and so on. So the ballot language was strict asking to do community enhancement and also infrastructure to help bring businesses. There was an attempt two years ago to amend the ballot language to a more generic language. The proposed language was “Shall the City amend the levy and collection of the ½ cent sales and use tax within the city so that it may be used for any of the purposes authorized by Ch. 505 of the Local Government Code, as amended”. That would have opened up the use of the 4B to anything allowable. That was voted down. If we want to do this again and put it back on the ballot, we could go generic again, or maybe add another purpose or two to it and be specific. So we could say something like amend it to use the monies for economic development or a sports venue project or something like that. That would be a little more specific but give the voters an idea of what the money would be spent on.

Jason Chavez stated that the feedback he received was that people thought the city was trying to add an additional ½ cent sales tax. They did not understand that it was an amendment. Could we put something in the language that would say it is not increasing sales tax? This is already in place; we just want to use the money for something different.

Mr. Yenne stated that when the city first talked of the ½ cent sales tax people thought you could give out grants and loans. So Council made the ballot language restrictive to alleviate those concerns. The reason this began was Mayor Williams asked Mr. Yenne to find a way to do quality of life projects without raising taxes. Modesto Mundo had gone through this in Euless and brought the idea forth. This was to build the youth sportsplex, the recreation center, the civic center and the outdoor pool. Ultimately it was used to build the golf course. We have been using it for the downtown projects. We used it for true infrastructure on the Dow Project. If you want to make a run at the voters again, you will have to do a better job of explaining it to them. The problem we have as a city is we cannot promote anything. We can only give them the information.

Sherri Russell stated that the board could promote this individually but not as the board.

Jason Chavez stated that the election process is a popularity contest and whoever sees enough signs that says vote yes on this, they will vote yes on it. We would have to have a group of concerned citizens to market this.

Council member Roznovsky stated the group could go to other organizations to give presentations.

Mr. Yenne stated that it would have to be explained to the public why we want to change the language and what we hope to accomplish.

Council member Roznovsky stated he felt you had to educate the public on what the 4B monies can be spent on versus other city funds. The public sees it all as tax dollars. They want to know why their house tax would be used to hire someone for economic development.

Sherri Russell stated she could add the wording of amend the current ½ cent sales and use tax. That may solve the problem of the public thinking it is an additional tax.

Jason Chavez asked if City Council has to approve everything then the board could not just hire several people without council approval.

Council member Roznovsky stated that the board needs to decide if this is what they want to do for 2017. Then they need to find a group in the community to promote it so that by the 2017 election the public will be informed. If this is what we want, then we need to start working on a plan.

Mr. Yenne reminded the group that the quality of life projects paid for out of these funds such as the recreation center and civic center are nearing 20 years old and will need some attention soon.

Council member Roznovsky asked if the board wanted to target 2017.

General consensus was to move forward with this.

#### Number of board positions filled by Council members

Mr. Yenne stated that the by-laws currently call for two members of Council.

General discussion followed on business members versus council members. State law calls for 7 member boards.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER AMENDING THE CHAPTER 380 AGREEMENT WITH HEB TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT HEB BUILD A PUBLIC ROAD TO CONNECT WINDING

WAY WITH GRAPEVINE TURN

Discussion followed on amending the 380 agreement with HEB to remove the requirement that HEB build a public road to connect Winding Way with Grapevine Turn. HEB would like to change the requirement from a public road to a private road. A private road does not have to be built to city standards.

On motion by Gerald Roznovsky second by Jason Chavez approval was granted for the amendment to the HEB 380 agreement to remove the requirement for a public road connecting Winding Way and Grapevine Turn.

ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

Michael Coon stated that the meeting with Bill Banta for next week is cancelled.

Mr. Yenne stated that Denny's will open this month. The building permit for Courtyard will be released this month. Staybridge is still moving along and may be ahead of LaQuinta. Velasco Drainage District has put requirements on LaQuinta that were not required before. The city staff helped lift that requirement for LaQuinta. Mr. Sondock is trying to sell the Randall's property.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Lake Jackson Development Corporation adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

These minutes read and approved this, the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Rodgers, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alice A. Rodgers, City Secretary