



**Athens Economic Development Corporation**

**Board of Directors**

**Minutes of Board Meeting**

**November 17, 2020**

The Board of Directors of the Athens Economic Development Corporation (hereinafter referred to as AEDC) held a Board Meeting at 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 in the Derek D. Daniels Room of the Athens Partnership Center located at 201 W Corsicana Street, Athens, Texas.

Directors present: Will Traxson, John Trent, Donna Meredith, and Randy Jones

Staff Present: Joanie Ahlers, Executive Director and Valerie Franklin, Office Manager

Ex-Officio: Mayor Monte Montgomery and City Manager Elizabeth Borstad

Guest: Councilmen Robert Gross, Mark Carroll, Debra Deas, Jeff and Kristy Haygood

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 A.M. by President Will Traxson for all agenda items. A quorum was present.

**Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None.

**Public Communications**

None.

**Consider discussion and possible action regarding the approval of Minutes from AEDC Board Meeting on October 20, 2020**

A motion was made by Donna Meredith to accept the October 20, 2020 minutes. It was seconded by John Trent. The motion passed unanimously.

**Consider discussion and possible action regarding the October 2020 Financials**

Randy Jones made a motion to accept the October 2020 financials. The motion was seconded by Donna Meredith and the motion carried unanimously.

**Consider discussion and possible action regarding the approval of Biomerics Draw request #12 in the amount of \$34,404.17**

Executive Director Ahlers stated we have gotten confirmation that the project is complete. These were the last payments due to Athens Steel Buildings. The total is \$950,356.00 and we have paid out 855,320.00 and a retainage of \$95,036.00. She requested that the motion, if any, include a completed inspection by Michael Climer. The private inspection has been completed by Dub Hirst.

A motion was made by John Trent to pay Biomerics Draw request #12 pending inspection approval in the amount of \$34,404.17. The motion was seconded by Randy Jones and passed unanimously.

**Consider discussion and possible action regarding Cain Center agreement**

Director Ahlers stated City Manager Borstad has reviewed the agreement and it was sent out to all the board members for review.

President Traxson emphasized we cannot support a project with funds unless we support the construction phase.

John Trent made a motion to approve \$100,000 to the Cain Center project. Donna Meredith seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**Consider discussion and possible action regarding Community Development and Business Assistance Grants Guidelines**

Executive Director Ahlers stated at the last meeting, a grant committee was appointed. The committee met and reviewed the draft guidelines. The Community Development Grant program is at \$75,000 and the Business Assistance Grant at \$50,000. Our goal is to get the guidelines approved by the AEDC board and city council. It would be run like the COVID-19 grant program. The committee met and did edits, and it was very helpful to have Councilmember Smith on the board.

John Trent asked about the preference for applicants have not received funding previously. President Traxson stated there is a point system.

Executive Director Ahlers stated the Business Assistance Grant will include the central business district which is about a block off the square and the main thoroughfares that are highly visibility properties. These businesses will receive priority. There is the facade improvement and Sign improvements.

City Manager Elizabeth Borstad talked about the council having discussed sign improvements before. When a business goes out of business and the sign is left, how will this be handled.

President Traxson and Executive Director Ahlers stated applicatns will be required to sign a participation agreement and it will state, the sign will be left on the property.

Councilmember Robert Gross stated he feels if the business goes out of business, it is wasted taxpayer money. He feels that grant money can be used for other things and not signage. He votes against it everytime it comes before the council.

There was further discussion on signage.

A motion was made by John Trent that a Grant Review Committee be formed for the Community Development and Business Assistance Grants. It was seconded by Donna Meredith. The motion carried unanimously.

**Executive Session Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 551.072 (Deliberation regarding real property; Closed Meeting) to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property:**

**AEDC Land Sale (a portion of the 59 acre tract at Enterprise St, Old Tyler Road and Wood Street)  
Future Industrial Park**

The board entered Executive Session at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened into open session at 11:09 a.m.

**Consider discussion and possible action concerning items discussed under Agenda item #9**

A motion was made by John Trent to table any discussion on purchasing future industrial park property. The motion was second by Donna Meredith. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Randy Jones made a motion to sell up to 12 acres of land for \$12,000 per acre to GVD Rent. This property is located at Enterprise Street, Old Tyler Road and Wood Street. It was seconded by Donna Meredith. The motion passed unanimously.

**Executive Director's Update**

Director Ahlers stated we are starting to roll out our branding for the new logo. Items were presented. She asked if the board was interested in logo branded golf shirts.

President Traxson stated he thought this was a good idea.

Engineering for the roadway, drainage and improvement for the industrial park committee was reconvened. The scope of work was substantial greater than our budget. The City Manager and Executive Director already had a conversation with the company LJA, and they will rework their scope and re-present it.

The website redesign will commence immediately with the new logo.

The SBI land sale is moving forward.

**Scheduling or a Work Session for the industrial park**

Director Ahlers will schedule a work session to include City Manager, Mayor Montgomery and city council.

**AEDC Board of Directors' future agenda items**

None.

**Adjourn**

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

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Randy Jones, Secretary

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Will Traxson, President