MINUTES

GROVES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER

GROVES CITY HALL

DECEMBER 18, 2023

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rhonda Dugas, Paul Oliver, Pete Konidis, Letha Knaus, Sidney Badon,

Lamar Ozley, Bandon Monk, Kevin Carruth

ABSENT:

Mark McAdams, Derek Theall

President Rhonda Dugas called the meeting to order.

Prayer and Pledge given by President Rhonda Dugas

President Rhonda Dugas welcomed guest and news media.

ITEM V:

Rhonda Dugas asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2023 Groves Economic Development Corporation Meeting. Take a record Vote. Motion was made by Pete Konidis and a second by Sidney Baden. Vote was taken, motion passed, none opposed.

ITEM VI:

Citizen Comments. There were no citizen comments.

ITEM VII:

Rhonda Dugas asked for a discussion on business updates, new business,

potential business and information on existing structures. Ms. Dugas asked Mr. Carruth if he spoke to Mr. Smith about the fencing around the hospital property. Mr. Carruth did not have an opportunity to speak with Mr. Smith but did notice the property had been mowed. The Dollar Store is open again. Mr. Baden commented Mr. Smith is a personal friend of his and Mr. Baden noted Mr. Smith had been very busy with the holiday season cooking and catering for many of the Groves people. Ms. Dugas noted that when Mr. Smith came to the City Council meeting, he

would be starting some improvements in the new year of 2024. Mr. Carruth inquired as to the property location. Ms. Dugas stated Mr. Smith is planning to put Senior Living homes on the property, tiny homes, and the front of the property would be a retail project. Mrs. Knaus said that Queen Nails would be opening at the location on the corner of Lincoln with a ribbon cutting on the 10th.

ITEM VIII:

Rhonda Dugas asked for a discussion on present, review, and discuss Financial Reports which are Budget Report and Sales Tax report. Mr. Ozley gave the Reports. Mr. Ozley passed out the reports before the meeting began. Mr. Ozley said that November 2023 was a very good month. It was noted the sales tax was approximately $1000 less than last year. We are on target for $3 million in sales tax for this year. The Budget Report is an interactive report which shows reimbursement for the individual business applications approved by the board, transfers to be made approved by the board, and the balance of the EDC account. Transfers for the Fire Department, the yearly administration fee $75,000, and this year $150,000 to be used for employee insurance. Revenues and Expenditures for each month. Fire Department transfer is $579,850. The $74,028 is 1/3rd of the sales tax, $222,084.03.

NOTE: Each company is listed on the budget report and the amount of money given to each company is listed. The applications for each business are emailed to the board and shows what category or categories the reimbursements are given from. The board has this information in every agenda email.

ITEM IX:

Discuss dates for 2024 GEDC meetings. Ms. Dugas called for a motion and a second. A motion was made by Sidney Badon and a second was made by Pete Konidis and Letha Knaus. Mr. Badon suggested the city council meetings are lasting a longer period of time we should discuss meeting on a different night. He stated Nederland, Port Neches and Port Arthur meet on separate nights from their council nights. Ms. Dugas stated she made the list so the board would know when the next meeting would be held and could tell anyone that asks. It would give you a perspective and these dates coincide with the council Meeting dates. Ms. Dugas said she would put it on the agenda for a discussion. Ms. Dugas asked for the motion to be amended to put on the agenda a discussion for the 2024 dates of the EDC meeting.

ITEM X:

Discuss ad campaign for the Chamber of Commerce Magazine. Ms. Dugas asked for a motion and a second. A motion was made by Paul Oliver and a second was made by Pete Konidis. Ms. Dugas provided each board member a copy of the ad to see if they wanted to make any changes. Ms. Dugas listened to a recording of the meeting and how each board member would like the ad to appear. Mr. Konidis emailed to Ms. Dugas a picture that was discussed to be the backdrop of the ad. There was some photoshopping done to remove unwanted background wires etc. The ad has relative contact information for the EDC. Ms. Dugas said there was some grammatical changes to be made. Mr. Oliver said he liked it. The board was pleased with the ad. No vote was taken.

ITEM XI:

Discuss and appoint Directors to the GEDC Board. Rhonda Dugas 1 year, Paul Oliver 1 year, Mark McAdams 2 years, Pete Konidis 2 years. Ms. Dugas asked for a motion. Mrs. Knaus made the motion and Mr. Oliver seconded the motion. Ms. Dugas explained this had been voted on December 4th at City Council, however EDC’s part for the appointment would be made now. Mrs. Dugas called for a Record vote. Each board member voted yes to the appointment. None were Opposed. The motion passed.

ITEM XII:

Review and approve grant reimbursement for Texas Proud H20. Grant was in the amount of $1,490 for signage. Ms. Dugas asked for a motion, Mr. Badon made the motion, a second was made by Mrs. Knaus. Ms. Dugas asked if everyone knew Mr. Varella and since Mr. Konidis did not know him Mr. Varella spoke about how he started the company and what Texas Proud could provide their customers. Ms. Dugas spoke of the Chamber of Commerce and suggested Mr. Varella join. Ms. Knaus spoke how Groves Chamber would be conducive for Texas Proud and Mr. Varella would not be required to put in time to join, however the benefits would be helpful to Texas Proud. Mr. Varella gave Mrs. Knaus his business card. Ms. Dugas introduced Mr. Varella to Mr. Carruth the city manager. Mr. Oliver suggest Mr. Varella give Mr. Carruth is business card. Ms. Dugas called for a record vote. Each Board member voted yes and none were Opposed. The motion passed.

ITEM XIII:

Review and approve grant reimbursement for Classic Finds, Mrs. Melissa Hoyt. The reimbursement is in the amount of $417.63 for advertising. Ms. Dugas asked for a motion. Mrs. Letha Knaus made the motion. A second was made by Mr. Oliver. Mrs. Hoyt was represented by her mother-in-law. Mrs. Knaus stated that the grand opening for Classic Finds would be January 17. Mrs. Hoyt’s mother-in-law was the first female officer in Groves, Texas. Ms. Dugas called for a record vote. All board members voted yes and none opposed. The motion passed.

ITEM XIV:

Review and approve grant reimbursement for Stacked Cake and Confection Company. Grant reimbursement is for $2,285.72, advertising and signage. Ms. Dugas called for a motion. Motion was made by Mr. Konidis. A second was made by Mr. Badon. Mrs. Emily Daniel was present. Ms. Dugas asked for the motion to be amended because of a charge on one of the invoices that was for the inside of the business. Mr. Konidis amended the motion to be a reimbursement of $1,86l.34 total. Mr. Badon made the second. Ms. Dugas took a record vote and All Board members vote in favor of the motion. None opposed. The motion passed.

ITEM XV:

Ms. Dugas called for member comments. Mr. Badon asked for a report that would give totals for the year for businesses that have received reimbursements. Ms. Dugas said the information is on the budget report. The report is in the agenda Email. Pete Konidis said he had not read all the guidelines and policies and asked if all the grants does the signage stay with the property. Rhonda Dugas said yes, the signage is supposed to be permanent to the property Sidney Badon said he wanted a discussion about outside improvements and the items that EDC has given a 40% reimbursement on should stay with the property and used for the city and should not leave the property. Even if the landlord says they have to leave. Mr. Badon want the rules to change so the business owner cannot take the items/property with them when they leave. It needs to stop. Rhonda Dugas said they do get a percentage of the money they have spent. Mr. Oliver said to look at it he had no control over it. If they shut down and not move elsewhere in the city then that would stay with the city. Rhonda Dugas said we are supposed to change the rules only one time a year, September. Dugas said we need legal advice from Mr. Monk for this because even if the EDC reimburses the business who really owns the property.

Mrs. Knaus commented that the Chamber is working on a couple of things. One thing is purchasing pecans for business owners to put in front of their business to support Groves. Mr. Oliver suggested a

3-foot squirrel holding a pecan. Mrs. Knaus talked to Mr. Carruth and found another city that uses the pecan. Sinton Texas. Cost would be $150 and made up of concrete. Mrs. Knaus also talked about the next project the Chamber is sponsoring which Is Love on Lincoln. It will be a Saturday and she stated that Lincoln street Has everything a person would need for their wedding. Love on Lincoln is designed to show perspective brides all the services available. T-shirts are available and so are coffee mugs. Love on Lincoln is Saturday February 17th.

Rhonda Dugas said she and Mrs. Knaus had talked about something in

October. Mrs. Knaus said she is in contact with a company that would like

to add a pickle ball court in Groves behind the senior building and this

company would pay for the entire building of it.

Ms. Dugas brought the frames ordered for the Proclamations the EDC

will be giving out.

Ms. Dugas Adjourned the meeting at 6:32.