

# MINUTES OF MEDC REGULAR MEETING

June 27, 2024

## MONTGOMERY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

### CALL TO ORDER

President Jeff Angelo called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Present:        Jeff Angelo – President  
                  Arnette Easley – Vice-President  
                  Ryan Londeen – Secretary  
                  Wade Nelson – Board Member  
                  Casey Olson – Board Member  
                  Dan Walker – Board Member

Absent:         Carol Langley – Treasurer

Also Present:  Dave McCorquodale, Director of Planning & Development  
                  Diana Titus, Deputy City Secretary

### CALL TO ORDER

### OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

### CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

1. Consideration and possible action regarding an on-street parking concept along south McCown on MEDC-owned property.

Casey Olson said the sidewalk goes around it. The rendering in the concept for the parking lot runs even all the way down and the parking goes up to it on the other parking places.

Jeff Angelo said there are nine parking spots and the last time they met they discussed closing down McCown and creating parking throughout that area.

Casey Olson said if they close it right there and do that now they would have to improve the entrance into the real estate block because it is kind of narrow and there is a big ditch right there.

Jeff Angelo said basically they are just closing off the access from the east side and not from SH 105.

Dave McCorquodale said there would still be access either way to this. He said he did make a note of it to extend that sidewalk.

Casey Olson said it looks like they left spaces because their property runs the whole way.

Dave McCorquodale said the reason he thought they might have done that was the intersection of John Butler. One of the things he wants to talk to him about during their engineering meeting is if there is a safety concern that they have that would not allow it. He said he does not have an issue with having those parking spots there but he is also not a traffic engineer. He does like the sidewalk in front because he never wants to put kids and people behind cars as you want them to be able to go to the front and walk around. He said he will talk with them about maximizing it because he is sure there is a cost efficiency that we ought to be mindful of if they already have a crew out there for a few more spots.

Casey Olson said he was thinking they would pick up almost 12 spots.

Jeff Angelo said it seems like they can pick up more spots. He asked why would they not put those in at an angle. Casey Olson said he kind of agrees with that too because it would be easier to get in and out. The only problem with the angle is you have to come in from one direction and go out one direction.

Dan Walker asked if they are encouraging entering at the highway on SH 105. Dave McCorquodale said they are discouraging to the point that was mentioned earlier that they do think that long-term the closure of the SH 105 access does make sense.

Casey Olson asked what would be the reason for just not closing it now. Dave McCorquodale said there really is not one because as long as they have access to the real estate office which they do there would not be any reason not to. The City Council if they wanted to could look at doing it and then just say this does not make sense it is an issue now.

Casey Olson said he knows they will have to improve the access.

Ryan Londeen and Wade Nelson arrived at the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Casey Olson said if they are going to go down there and do it because then at that point you can actually pick up another spot to the south.

Jeff Angelo explained that Casey Olson asked the staff to put some preliminary drawings together to start to develop some parking along McCown and this is what they have come up with so far. He said they were talking about how they have a lot more land and why would they not add more spaces as opposed to just nine spaces. The idea was to create a sidewalk as well from SH 105 so you can get up and down that road. He said he mentioned about maybe angling but then you can only go in one way if you angle the parking spaces. Jeff Angelo asked Ryan Londeen and Wade Nelson what their take is on this.

Wade Nelson asked if that road is always going to be in existence.

Dave McCorquodale said he thinks the long-term at least. He said the Downtown Master Plan did call for at least the consideration of closing the access to there. Wade Nelson said because you cannot get on SH 105 right. Dave McCorquodale said right.

Casey Olson said he thinks they should just present it to Council to close it, fix the sidewalk, fix this driveway into the real estate office if they do that because it is not very big, it is a narrow steep sided big culvert. He said it would be a completed project at that point, you are done, move on to the next thing instead of going back and revisiting it later.

Dave McCorquodale said to recap some of the revisions they talked about just to make sure he is going to communicate the right things he is going to start from the top of the drawing and work downward. The first is they either want the sidewalk to extend to the other parking spaces up there or if the intersection is not an issue or there is some other consideration not an issue, can they extend those parking spaces north and connect them to the existing ones right there.

Jeff Angelo said that makes more sense. Jeff Angelo asked why do they need a sidewalk at all for that little, tiny space and then you do not even have a sidewalk anywhere else. Casey Olson said it is not a sidewalk in front of these parking spaces but it is actually like a gravel path. Jeff Angelo said that makes more sense.

Dave McCorquodale said there is a sidewalk to the north of the existing parking spaces like a red stamp concrete. He said it seems to be a good idea to connect with a pedestrian way that does not involve walking in the street. If they end up wanting to take that out, again to the point of crushed granite and things like that if there is material they can use. The important thing is to not put the people getting out of the cars on the back side of the cars. As long as they can get them to the front then they know they are doing their best to make sure nobody gets run over.

Jeff Angelo asked Dave McCorquodale if why not get a drawing that would take them all the way up to the very north space right behind the museum and connect and then come all the way down as far as they can. He said he thinks Dave McCorquodale is right that these spaces should face parallel they way they are now because it does allow you to get in and out and it matches what is going on up north too. Casey Olson said he thinks they can add five or maybe even six places to that. Dan Walker said nine spaces are not that many.

Dave McCorquodale said you want to be able to go to Council and say here is an idea for this parking that does involve disclosure. You can say here are other places that this has been talked about the closure of this. If they are on board with that it will help us maximize that. He said one small point on the closure of the street there at SH 105, they would really like to talk with TxDOT into a right hand turn lane from SH 105. That intersection has always been a hang up. Essentially they are open to the conversation but the first step of the conversation is being willing to close that street there because there is just not enough room. This could also help them on other fronts.

Arnette Easley asked if it would impede emergency services for some reason or another. Dave McCorquodale said the street itself would stay open all the way down to the parking. It would be a dead end street down there but it would likely be something that was not passable by a vehicle there because if you left it open for emergency vehicles what is to say someone else cannot get in there. You do still have access from a block on either side.

Dan Walker said you would have to complete the curb.

Dave McCorquodale said yes because again he does not see a lot of people coming in and out from there. He said they are going down John Butler or up Prairie. Wade Nelson said once they get to SH 105 they made a mistake and they realize.

Jeff Angelo said the idea would be to close off the access at SH 105 and maybe push Council towards making some recommendations to TxDOT to start the right hand turn lane. We own the land right there.

Dave McCorquodale said it really comes down to what they call a stacking one. They like 700 feet or something like that. They have a minimum length they want to see and will make exceptions. It sounded like they were open to it being fine if it is a little less but the little less included the closure. Casey Olson said that is fine. He thinks it is a win for everybody.

Jeff Angelo asked how far is that from the beginning of that turn from FM 149. Dan Walker said it is only a couple hundred feet. Dave McCorquodale said somewhere in the range of 150 to 250 feet. Casey Olson said even that would make a huge difference for traffic. Dan Walker said the right hand turn absolutely.

Wade Nelson said it would be nice in addition to that to explore some ideas for that corner the City owns. He said it makes sense to protect what you own. You will never get that chance again once it is developed. It is City owned property so the advantage is you can do what you want. Jeff Angelo asked what he is thinking. Wade Nelson said he does not know. They need to start exploring some ideas of what other cities have done with land they have. Dan Walker said it is the entry way to downtown too. Casey Olson said he would love to put sprinklers in it and make it green. Jeff Angelo said it feels like they should do something such as a welcome center or something like that would be more appropriate. Dan Walker said to add pavers, a nice sidewalk, and a place to sit. Jeff Angelo added a little park area too. Wade Nelson said that may be all it is a park area.

Jeff Angelo asked if they need to vote on this item. Dave McCorquodale said they left it open that if there was action he feels like he has the direction that everyone would like to see so he can go ahead and do that. He said what he will do is rather than wait until next month as soon as he gets it he can send it out to everyone and let him know yes this is what we are thinking or this is not what we are thinking. As long as they are not deliberating on this outside of the meeting you can give your feedback to staff all day long. He will do it in a way that it does not put the Board in a bad spot but also does not have to make them wait until another month just to know if that was the right idea.

Jeff Angelo said he thinks they are definitely headed in the right direction.

Ryan Londeen said he is a little hesitant right now to spend any money because they do not know what their budget is going to be like. He said he knows they have commercial coming in and future sales but they just do not know. They have been operating off of their current budget and if it is halved in the short-term then they may want to reevaluate their priorities which he knows parking is a high priority so it may be fine. He is just a little hesitant to really make any decisions.

Casey Olson said here is how this will work. Let us look strictly at the budget and think about yes we are going to cut it in half but they have to get everything voted on by the public, which will not happen until November so this year's budget is fine and next year's budget is fine. By

the time they actually vote on it Home Depot's doors will be open and Lupe Tortilla's doors will be open. Home Depot's projection for that store was \$1 million of revenue to the City. Jeff Angelo said of which EDC gets 25 percent. Casey Olson said and then you add Lupe Tortilla and all that back in. You are not going to see much change in the budget by the time it comes back to you. That was the whole reason why they looked at it and said they will not even notice it.

Jeff Angelo said he still has the question of why do they need to double the police force. Casey Olson said they are not doubling it. They are actually cutting it out of administration and that is why they are doing this. Jeff Angelo asked then they are just cutting it out of administration but EDC is going to pay. Casey Olson said the City's tax dollars are going to pay for it. Ryan Londeen said the City owns the purse strings to a certain extent. It has to be voted on by the voters to change it.

Jeff Angelo said it seems like EDC budget continues to get carved out of. Casey Olson said as far as what is given to you, we have not touched it. As far as any projects they have asked for help on absolutely but that is why they are here as MEDC is to assist the City. You are sitting on almost \$3 million and it is not doing much. He continued we have streets that need fixing, we have sewer lines that we are tapped to our very limits that we just do not have any and we just borrowed \$3.5 million so all of our toilets flush which is important. Jeff Angelo said he totally understands, but the question is since Council is going to end up with another \$1 million too why do they need to pull from EDC. Casey Olson said they are not pulling from EDC. Jeff Angelo said not yet. Casey Olson said we are not going to pull from EDC. Wade Nelson said we are just not going to get any more. Casey Olson said EDC will maintain the income it is already getting which was very significant for what they did with it and yes, he knows they have plans but they have a water tower that at some point they will have to build which is \$18 million, they still have sewage treatment plants they have to build which are between \$14-15 million so if Council does not give EDC \$250,000 to not sure, just sit in a bank account he would be like okay. Jeff Angelo said then what you are telling us is we need to spend more money faster.

Ryan Londeen said he does not understand why they have to do it the backdoor way. In the past the City has come to them to ask for assistance for paying for water and sewer and they understand for them that is the main backbone for economic development. Why not ask MEDC for more. Casey Olson said that is the thing. They can only use MEDC funds for procurement like buying property and things like that. They cannot use if for capital projects, but the sidewalks they could because that is economic development, but to put in a sewer line they cannot. Ryan Londeen asked if they cannot spin it that way for new development running a new line down to Red Bird or whatever. Casey Olson said absolutely not that is city infrastructure. It is not economic development. He continued the police department is draining us \$2.5 million to \$3 million out of our \$5 million budget every year. If we can pull them out of there and have them take care of their own cars and you can take care of all this stuff and we have no money for capital projects. To go fix a street or fix a bridge we do not have anything as we are tapped out. Jeff Angelo asked if that will change to some degree once this tax revenue starts rolling in from these other areas. Casey Olson replied not to the extent that they need. That is the problem. Jeff Angelo asked what do you need. Casey Olson said millions. Just those projects he mentioned are almost \$30 million and we do not want to raise taxes.

Ryan Londeen said the problem is you have this new growth coming in and we are behind so it takes some time to catch up. They are pulling water and sewer before we can get tax revenue out of them and we need to get it turned back around and back into infrastructure. Casey Olson

said they have to put the capital expense in first then the houses get built and sold before they ever see one dime of any ad valorem tax. Jeff Angelo said you cannot squeeze blood out of a turnip.

Ryan Londeen said there are ways to do bonds. Casey Olson said they did a \$3 million bond and we are maxed out on what our water and sewer payments will pay right now.

Arnette Easley asked how are they going to address all the erosion problems too. He said we have major erosion problems. Casey Olson said absolutely and it takes money and money is something they are short of.

Jeff Angelo said the idea is basically to cut EDC's budget in half, take that money for the police but it is actually just going into the Council budget. Casey Olson said no it goes to the police. Jeff Angelo said it goes to the police but it absolves some of the council admin plus they are paying an admin and administrator. Casey Olson asked if he wanted the administrator's job. Jeff Angelo said yeah he is just curious as to why. Casey Olson said do you really want his job because I do not. People will rip you apart just like they do to him every single day. Jeff Angelo asked they rip who apart. Casey Olson said Gary. Jeff Angelo asked because of why. Casey Olson said because of stuff we have no control over. He said then you have Council members who for some reason have very little common sense when it comes to what we can control and what we cannot. No one can predict the 20-inch rain over a week. He is sorry if houses have flooded but they did not know it was going to flood until it flooded.

Jeff Angelo asked what about grant money. Casey Olson said they can explore grants but you have to remember because of their economics and where they are they do not qualify for much. Ryan Londeen said grants take years to get.

Arnette Easley asked did the County have money and some type of fund for the City. He said he heard Byron Sanford talking about it. Casey Olson said he is not sure. He knows the County has never been real helpful. Casey Olson said this bridge they own and made them pay for half of it. It is their bridge. Jeff Angelo asked if there were some erosion issues over there. Dan Walker said yes the one that all the rock got blown out. Casey Olson said it was about to fail and now he does not know as he has not looked at it since they redid it. Jeff Angelo asked is it Buffalo Springs. Casey Olson said yes. Jeff Angelo said it has been a headache since day one. Arnette Easley said the one right off of FM 1097 is about to go too. Jeff Angelo said they have already replaced that bridge one time. Casey Olson said no not that one, it is on the Lone Star loop. Wade Nelson said the one where they are putting all the riff raff. Casey Olson said it is where the sewer line blew out. He said there used to be a sewer line that ran through that creek and it eroded out and knocked the sewer line out and they had to aluminum pipe up the ditch for six months. They hung it off the bridge so it would not get eroded out again but they came back and redid the bridge with his cousin, literally that was his cousin's company and we paid half the bill otherwise they were not going to fix it.

Jeff Angelo said he knows the City is in a pickle when it comes to infrastructure and he knows they have budget issues but it just seems like EDC is always stuck in the mud and cannot seem to get off the ground to do anything remarkable and when they do try to do something remarkable the can gets kicked. Casey Olson said the only reason the downtown project has been kicked is because they had to fix the sewer and water lines first, which he thinks is pretty much done now. Dave McCorquodale said the sewer line is going all rehab and the water line

is ready, just not ready to start until it ties into a street project or something so they do not have to fix it twice.

Jeff Angelo said they have been trying to get traction on EDC for quite some time now almost a year, where they started with hunting for a director and that director was going to pull in grants, bigger business and corporations. We have an infrastructure problem and we do not want to spend the money problem so we decided to go with looking at retail strategies. Retail strategies comes in and they present great ideas and everything but he is not quite sure why they need more retail when the retail they have cannot even support or be supported with the community. There is nobody here. Casey Olson said that was early. The man they brought in was about five years down the road. Jeff Angelo said they need bodies that eat, drink, and live in the City before they can get more retail. He said we need people. We have houses coming in but are those people going to work somewhere else or are they going to work here. Casey Olson said they have to work somewhere else. With the price points of all the homes that are going to be built the low end is \$400,000. Jeff Angelo said they are going somewhere else to make a living. Wade Nelson said yes they are going to The Woodlands. Jeff Angelo said they need The Woodlands coming here to make a living but we do not have medical, we do not have anything. Casey Olson said medical is a catch 22 because they do not pay taxes. Wade Nelson said but they have to have them here and they cannot tax everybody. Casey Olson said he agrees as far as if they could get a specialty medical where its footprint is smaller but it is specialty. He said if they were looking at a general hospital, literally they do not have room. They would have to annex in and the only place they can annex in is to the west or to the south and they would get sued by Dobbin city water just like they are right now. Wade Nelson said those battles are being fought and they are winning against Dobbin. He said Dobbin cannot serve there is no way. The State will shut them down. Casey Olson said they have not won anything yet. Wade Nelson said Red Bird is being done, they won. Casey Olson said no they did not win. We signed an agreement saying that it does not matter do what you have to do. If Dobbin has to take your water fine, your sewer will come to us. Wade Nelson asked where is the water line coming from right now. Casey Olson said that is the thing. Red Bird is putting in the well in the water pump so Dobbin would get to take that just like if we do it we would get to take it. Wade Nelson said they need to get the right people involved because they cannot serve. There is no way they can serve. Casey Olson said it does not matter it is in the courts. They took it all the way to the Appeals Court. Wade Nelson said right they went to New Orleans and fought it and the judge kicked it out and said there is nothing here. Why are we all even here wasting time. Casey Olson said he does not know that is not the last he has heard because as far as he knows they are still in litigation. Wade Nelson said that is crazy. Casey Olson said they are very limited on their postage stamp of land so he totally agrees where he would love to have an industry or some large commercial that pay actual wages but something like that you have to have a space. Jeff Angelo said they are stuck between a rock and a hard spot.

Ryan Londeen said he does not know if it was worth debating because it is going to go in front of voters and they do not have a choice unless they want to go make a marketing campaign but he does not want to be at odds with the City either. Casey Olson said if the Board decided to do a marketing campaign against City Council none of them would be on it anymore. Casey Olson said the whole point is they are an arm of the City Council and can do things that they cannot do so if they are not on the same path as them they will find people that are on the same path as them. Wade Nelson said right but again this place will become a dump again if that is the path they want to go, go for it. He said when you dissolve a group that is trying to do things for the right reasons because you do not have the funds to support the infrastructure that needs to be here, that is counterproductive. He does not understand how that is helping anything. Casey

Olson asked if he lives in Montgomery. Wade Nelson said he does not. Casey Olson asked when your water does not work because the lines are blown out what do you think is more important the MEDC having a budget to do sidewalks, or sponsor concerts, or capital projects that allows the people that pay the taxes that live here to flush the toilets. Wade Nelson said they are not worried about sidewalks. That is at the bottom of the list. Casey Olson said he knows but that is the thing with MEDC is they are limited to what they can do. Wade Nelson said right but you have to be able to have the funds to attract business here. You have to have the funds to be able to attract the things that bring people here and if you cut it off then what are they doing and what is the point of this. Casey Olson said with the \$3 million EDC has in the bank what has been done to attract business here. Wade Nelson said they have not done anything. He said they talk about it all the time and have been meeting for a year and a half. Casey Olson said he made the deal with Home Depot and it was his cell phone that he used, not MEDC's cell phone that made the deal with Home Depot so show him some results and oh yeah MEDC is really doing something. Jeff Angelo asked Casey Olson are you not on the MEDC Board. Casey Olson said he is. Jeff Angelo asked what ideas have you floated. Casey Olson said he was here one meeting and he wanted this. Jeff Angelo said that is not generating revenue. Casey Olson said yes it is what do you think the people that want to shop downtown and want to eat downtown and going to park when they cannot park anywhere. That is a huge complaint. Jeff Angelo said he is not saying parking spaces are not needed. Ryan Londeen said they have actually talked about putting parking here. Casey Olson asked why didn't they. Ryan Londeen said because we are trying to get parking on McCown and get McCown cleaned up and we can do parking here but we did not want to turn the whole thing into a parking lot. Casey Olson said he agrees. Ryan Londeen said he does not think this is enough to solve our parking problem but maybe a little bit. Casey Olson said it is a step in the right direction. Jeff Angelo said they asked to hire a director because they are volunteers. Casey Olson said he is still in favor of the director. Jeff Angelo said they spent how many months trying to find the right person. They find the right person and then they stall around and lose him. He was fantastic and he would have already given them the vision, direction and everything else that they needed. The reason they are not spending any money is because they keep stopping and starting and then nothing ever gets done and that is what has happened here and we are tired of it just as much as you.

Arnette Easley said he also thinks from a government standpoint they need to be a Board that works. City Council should be working. The government, the City Council has to start finding ways to work individually, to work as a Council and they come with special priorities when they need it and do not say well listen they have \$3 million and we can do this. Casey Olson said we have not touched it. Ryan Londeen said we are using that money for downtown improvements because it needs improvement and McCown needs improvement. That is why it is sitting there otherwise you would be spending it more on sidewalks and connecting to different parking lots and doing parking lots like that and that is why he is concerned about doing this because they still do not have priorities on what exactly they want to do. Do we want to spend money here or do we want to spend the money on McCown. They are both needed.

Casey Olson said his understanding is when he looked at the whole concept this is part of it and this is something they can do now and it really does not affect the budget. He said it is a step and is no different than what he told the Police Chief and Mike Muckleroy. He said he knows that your first thought is to stay out of the public's way to stay out of their view. Do you know how many people constantly ask him where are their public people. We have so many of them we never see them doing anything. He said they are always busy and he was told well they try to stay out of their way. Casey Olson said when you go do something put the hard hat on, get the signs out and let them see you. He said he knows it is a bit of grand standing but it is effective.



This \$150,000 project is a peanut drop in the bucket but it is progress and is something that they have not seen in several years. Jeff Angelo said you are 100 percent about one thing and that is we need to do something. The last meeting they decided to close McCown and start working on getting that developed. They have spent he does not know how many months, years waiting on this project. Just because we keep loading up the bank account it is not for no reason, it is for a reason but they cannot seem to get any traction on.

Wade Nelson said to be honest this Council has a huge learning curve and the entire City has a huge learning curve. For everybody to walk around here and act like they know what they are doing, they do not. He said go visit Conroe, go visit The Woodlands, and visit the people that know what they are doing. They are not picking low hanging fruit. If you went to Gil Staley in The Woodlands and said I am going to take all your money he would tell you that you are crazy. Look at all the business he has brought to that area. Talk with Jennifer Shiner and tell her you are going to cut her budget by 75 percent. Casey Olson said we are not cutting your budget at all. Wade Nelson said he knows you are taking it before they get it. Casey Olson said you are going to get the same amount of money that you did before. Wade Nelson said that is blowing smoke. Casey Olson said it is the truth. Wade Nelson said it is the truth as you are taking it before it gets here. Casey Olson said if Home Depot did not show up you would have it. Wade Nelson said you are chasing low hanging fruit and that is all it is. Casey Olson said you have to start somewhere. Jeff Angelo said that is what they said when they were putting a director in over a year and a half ago. That was going somewhere and that is what they knew they needed and that is what they all agreed on and then they got all the way to the finish line and it changed to well we do not really think we need that anymore.

Wade Nelson said there is a reason why these other communities are successful because they know what they are doing. Casey Olson said Conroe is not successful with the amount of debt they carry. Dan Walker said if you look at developments like the Johnson brothers, the Johnson brothers come in on a lot smaller scale, but they are very successful in what they do. Wade Nelson said look at Woodforest as they have made a community out in the middle of nowhere. Casey Olson asked and how much money did that cost. Wade Nelson said they started with plenty of money. Casey Olson said exactly and how do you think they are going to do it if they do not have any. Wade Nelson said we have nothing now because you have taken it. Casey Olson said we can make it less and that is what he is trying to say is that they have to deal with what they have. Jeff Angelo said he is not quite sure why you are even on the Board if you are not progressing with any ideas that you actually want to see. Jeff Angelo continued you were all in favor of the directorship but then that blew up. Why are you not fighting for that. Casey Olson said because he has one vote. Jeff Angelo said well you have one mouth too and maybe you should start using it for something good like that because honestly that is what they needed. Casey Olson asked do you know how many arguments he gets in at executive session about guys we have to have the personnel to be able to get this stuff done and he gets nothing but we are not going to pay for that, these people can do it. Jeff Angelo said we already approved and agreed to it and there is nothing they did not agree to. He said he is not disparaging you and he is not saying that you are not all in favor. He knows you are passionate and understands that. The problem that they all have is that they come up with an idea that will work as they are all successful business people and have done it, got the t-shirt word out. We know what we are doing. He has run \$35 million a year companies and his own that he built from a \$500 credit card. He knows how to grow business but what he is saying is they are not day to day professionals. They are volunteers and when you say we want to put a day to day professional in that can work with Gary, now you have somebody at that level who understands how to grow a City. That is what they do and to kick them to the curb right before they are ready to rock and

roll is crazy. Casey Olson said he does not understand why it went away. He said he has no idea and thought it was a done deal. Jeff Angelo said they all did and then the next thing he knows they are talking about retail strategies and hiring a consultant. He asked who comes up with this stuff. Basically they have no say in the game. You do not get to keep your budget; you do not get to tell us how we are going to run things. Casey Olson said they are not taking away your budget. You still have a budget. Casey Olson said he is sorry so if they would not grow at all their budget would be smaller and then what. He said tell me what we would do with less if it was not available. Jeff Angelo said we are not going to have less and we all know that so let us just say the facts are the facts and we are going to more and everybody is going to do more. What it feels like is that EDC has been once again kicked to the curb and said listen you are not relevant because you do not do anything. Well we do not do anything because we cannot. Wade Nelson said nothing gets approved. Jeff Angelo said no Council approval on the director, no director. Jeff Angelo asked how long does it take to hire someone, three months, five months, 10 months. Casey Olson said they never voted on a director. He said yes the Board did but not the Council. Jeff Angelo said he understands that. Casey Olson said he did not think they had any say. Jeff Angelo said he was never presented. Casey Olson said he was never presented because the director was going to be paid out of the EDC budget so he was like why do they have a say. Wade Nelson said he thinks those things have to be approved by the City do they not. Dan Walker said anything over \$10,000. Casey Olson said it never made it to them.

Dave McCorquodale said the position to the organizational chart was budgeted for by the City Council. However, Gary realized it was not in the organization chart and given the uncertainty sometimes with less than absolutely clear information from Council, staff did not feel comfortable hiring someone without it being an official position in the organization chart. Gary's intent was to bring that to Council but the candidate backed out before he had a chance to bring it to Council. Jeff Angelo said it is because it took forever. He asked would you sit around waiting three months to get a job. Casey Olson said he will get that back on the agenda. He said he did not know it needed to be added to an org chart but thought they just bring it up and say they want to hire the person and it is done. He asked if all that has to be done is add it to an org chart then at will. Jeff Angelo said that is a great idea because here is the deal. The word director indicates direction and they do not have any direction because they do not have a director. They had a vision and feel like they know what they need to do but they need boots on the ground to push it through Council, to push it through assistant administrator, the city administrator, the mayor. Everybody has to be involved in on the same page agreed 100 percent with what you are talking about. If they can get a director to bring more economic development into the community then they can raise the revenues. Casey Olson said he does not disagree. Some staff members that have now since retired and we have a new finance person whose answer to everything is raise taxes. He has said absolutely not. We just need to bring in more business so yes he agrees 100 percent. Wade Nelson said that is the whole point and it is not to be derogatory in any way but the City has a lot to learn. This is all brand new and it is not to be insulting it is just there needs to be somebody there 24/7 and all they do is produce business. When Tesla or Samsung or someone shows up there needs to be somebody courting them and showing them what we have to offer. Arnette Easley said he thinks too that when business has an interest in the City he thinks maybe give him a tax abatement. He said he thinks sometimes the City stacks their goals too high for people to come in and compete as well. He understands protocol but thinks rules of rules make them over regulated and people do not want to come. Jeff Angelo said his understand was that Gary was supposed to be doing that and Council was going to get the rules and does not know how long it takes to do that. Casey said they are doing that. Casey Olson said they are supposed to have the temporary ones by the end of July or mid-August. Dave McCorquodale said mid-August sometime or September. Casey Olson said

sometime toward the end of summer they will have the ordinances, the temporary ordinances because they are going to rewrite their entire building commercial code. They are going to rewrite the whole thing. Arnette Easley said because if a guy has to spend \$1 million before he can make anything he is not going to be attracted to come. Casey Olson said they are going to clarify and click the button that tells you I want to build a restaurant and you click the button and these are the areas that are available for restaurants and this is what you have to do to get it. Jeff Angelo said that is good and like Wade Nelson said, they knew what they needed, scoped it out, agreed to it in their once a month meetings they finally said let us do it. They started down that path, found the right guy, dragged their feet, red tape and next thing you know nothing happens and they lose him. He asked why didn't they just tee it up again and go again if they knew that is what they need because to be honest with you Casey, without a director why are we even here. You are 100 percent right in just take all the budget because there is no reason. There is never going to be a reason to do anything. He does not have someone to direct. He can sit here all day long and say he knows what he is doing but he does not have a clue. He knows what sounds good. Wade Nelson said it is somebody with a lot of experience that knows how to go after grants, knows the tourist program, the tax abatements because you are not going to get one of those guys without tax abatements whether they want to approve that or not but hopefully they would for the right group. Casey Olson said the tax abatement they gave Home Depot was we will pay back the money you gave us. \$750,000 in cash. Wade Nelson said he is talking about like a Samsung quality type deal they bring 500 employees you work with those people any way you can and any way possible. Jeff Angelo said the minute you bring in one of those kind of corporations this City comes to life. Yes, you will have some infrastructure issues but they will help with those because they want to get their plan. You will also have restaurants who can thrive again and not go out of business on a regular basis, which is what is happening. They are all going under. He said even his restaurant it was not sustainable. You cannot work on a break even situation, which is what the City is doing and what businesses are doing. We are all in the same boat and yet here we are growing, but they need to find a way to grow in the right way. City Council can suck the money from wherever they want and however long they want but eventually that is going to suck dry too until they come up with a plan. Casey Olson said they know they have to get the people because it is the peoples sales tax that are paying for everything and their ad valorem tax. Dan Walker said if you are romancing these larger corporations like you are saying like Samsung they will go west, they will go south. They are not looking at annexation. It is just do it. Casey Olson said in order to grow realistic with what is available to them they have to have these developers that have to be able to build and they have to be able to supply infrastructure. We do not have the money to do that. They just took out a \$3 million bond to put the well back in place so they can give water to everyone and not worry about it. Jeff Angelo said they do not have the money but if they were able to bring a business in they would help with that. Casey Olson said they would help absolutely to a point. Jeff Angelo said to a point and to whatever extent they had to because they know that is going to drive development throughout the community. Every single one of us have day jobs and to find someone who can work on our behalf and we have Gary over here killing it and getting distracted a million different ways from the City, people, and citizens but they knew what they needed. They asked for it and got it and then all of the sudden it blew up and they said well that is not really what we are doing anymore. Did anybody call me and tell me they were changing their mind, no never was there a word. He just kept saying when is he starting. Then, okay he is not available. Casey Olson said the fact that they did not go back and start to try to find another one he did not understand that. Jeff Angelo said this is not an argument, this is on the record and we are exploring what happened and where it went wrong and that is where it went right. They had a plan and now they are a year down the road and nothing again. Casey Olson said what they needed to do at that point is why did they not get a director, what do we need to do to get

one, and he just found out they have to have it on the org chart, but they have to get that in front of Council to vote on it. They will pass it. Jeff Angelo said let us start with that because to him if you want to talk about progress we are never going to go anywhere until we can get somebody who can direct us in that way and understands and knows how to dig up the necessary people, places, and contacts that will drive them in the right direction.

Casey Olson said everyone on Council, at least Carol was over there, Byron is gone now, Cheryl went over there and has seen Navasota and what they have done to downtown. That was done by a good director. Wade Nelson said no doubt. You do not know how many times he mentioned for the last three years to please go and talk with this guy and have him come in and nobody wanted to. Jeff Angelo said we continue to say it. Even just talk to him. Wade Nelson said he was begging please let the guy come talk. Jeff Angelo said Wade knows him and he is willing to come just share. Wade Nelson said he has the name Bleyl on his shirt so we cannot talk to him then. Give me a break. Casey Olson said the economic developer over there is a woman. Wade Nelson said there was a guy prior to her that did all of it. Dave McCorquodale said his name was Brad Safford former City Administrator. Jeff Angelo asked if he is still available. Wade Nelson said he is still available and still will offer his services. Now he is at the City of Bryan. He has still said he will come in and talk with you all and help you out in any way he can, not on a fee basis or anything but just to consult. Casey made a comment (*inaudible*). Wade Nelson said he is super happy that he finally went over there and did a tour and talked to people. Those are the kind of things you have to do and that is why he mentioned The Woodland and Conroe, not that Conroe a great example, it is just these are cities that have figured it out.

Arnette Easley said another city that is close to them is Willis and he was at lunch with the mayor of Willis last week. They are just doing things in leaps and bounds and doing a whole lot. He said if it is going to help the city everyone is in agreement and everyone gets on board and says let us do it. There is not a lot of going back and forth and people wanting to hear themselves talk. They just do it. Wade Nelson said to just point without a director there are RFP's flowing in from the state of Texas every week, where do they land here at all, at an empty desk. He said no one is responding to the RFP's. Jeff Angelo said he gets emails that come to him and this new Barracuda network blocks half of them and he does not know which ones are real and which ones are not. They could be legitimate RFP's. He said I am serious. I do not have a clue and have never seen anything like it. Wade Nelson said you have to have someone with that experience that knows. Ryan Londeen said blocking or not they come to them and what are they going to do with it. We do not have the time. Jeff Angelo said even if they had the time he would not know where to go with it. Jeff Angelo said they needed a professional and were willing to pay for a professional and they are not that expensive not for what the upside would be. That is what you look at whenever you are growing a business. You try to get someone who has the sea legs to pull it off and go into the deep water. Wade Nelson said 90 percent the fees they are not going to qualify for but there are ones that they are missing out on. Casey Olson said he agrees, probably.

Jeff Angelo said first things first. Get the org chart amended and rather than wait another month maybe Council can direct. Casey Olson said they can do it right now. Jeff Angelo said then maybe they should do it. It is not on the agenda but they want a director. Casey Olson said the meeting will be in two weeks and we will tell Dave and he will text Gary as well and say we want this on the agenda. Jeff Angelo said if they need to come together for an emergency session to vote to do a quick vote on a director moving forward then they will do it. They have already done all this and he does not know why they have to even do it again. Casey Olson said they should not have to do it again and probably do not because they have already voted and are

going to do it. You are just waiting for the org chart and to hire the person. Jeff Angelo said exactly so tee that up again.

Ryan Londeen said back to his original point is he thinks their main priority is to get a director and with their budget being halved at some point within the next year or so he is cautious of spending money on parking because yes, it is a short-term project and it can be done quickly but he wants to make sure they have the funds available. Their primary goal is a director and not parking lots even though they need parking lots. Jeff Angelo said they could do the parking lot and have a director for the next 15, 20 years with the money they have in the bank right now so he is not worried about that. Ryan Londeen said that versus the McCown Street. The McCown Street could drain their entire fund. Jeff Angelo said he agrees. He said this right here is a pimple on the butt of humanity but it is something. Like Casey said it is at least something. Getting the director would be absolutely and they know it critical to the chance for success. Just a chance and that is all he wants. He wants to be able to say hey this guy way to go man, way to get out there and go find bird dog some things. Let us get some stuff in here that is going to actually turn some growth. Arnette Easley asked if they go back to the same guy or open up again for a new director. Dan Walker said they have to put the position out there.

Casey Olson said the next question Council is going to ask you straight off the top is who is paying for it. Jeff Angelo said they are (the Board). Casey Olson asked 100 percent. Jeff Angelo said yes it is under their budget and they are paying. Wade Nelson said as long as that budget did not disappear. Jeff Angelo said before there is any more attrition they would at least like to have a shot at doing what they set out to do which was get a director and drive some revenue. He said he knows Gary does not want to micromanage him and he understands that. He said he is free and relatively cheap and has a lot less on his plate than he used to have and is more than happy to work with him even if he reports to you guys but to work with them one on one to understand where they are going and to decide what items need to be given to you guys and he can help with that. He has some other people that can come alongside that have great experience. Wade has expressed an interest as well. Casey Olson said if you hire somebody experienced like what they want they will know what needs to go to Council. Dan Walker said lay out the direction, these are the plans, and then it is done. Jeff Angelo said it is a difference between hiring a Tom Brady and finding a first year rookie that has no clue. You want someone with experience because they are in the game now and in the level of the gam that they need to go do it and do it quick as they do not have a lot of time. Arnette Easley said if he is like him he will go find a company to keep his salary going. Casey Olson said the incentive for him is if he is not getting it done then what do we have him for. Jeff Angelo said exactly.

Jeff Angelo said he thinks they understood well back when they first started this conversation what they needed and maybe he needs to be more forceful about this and he typically does not play that way but what happens behind the scenes seems that things just change overnight and there is no communication. He did not know about it until he shows up one day and okay well we are going a different direction now. Who appointed you emperor as that was not what they decided. Casey Olson asked what direction did they change. Jeff Angelo said they went from going to have a director to now they are going to go with a consulting firm. Casey Olson said he does not know why that changed and he has no idea. Dan Walker said the information went from basically they waited too long and someone else got him. He said they did an interview process which was painful and found a guy they felt comfortable with and he was ready. Jeff Angelo said he has not heard another word about the consulting group since the last time they were all together.

Jeff Angelo said the point he is trying to make is everything gets delayed constantly all the time. It is a never ending never delay. Casey Olson said he did not know the Board's opinion because he had to leave early on the whole consulting. He said he shared it before that they were brought in way too early. They are nowhere near ready for retail. Dan Walker said it is nice to know they track our cell phones. Casey Olson said those are fantastic numbers to be able to say oh hey thanks for the information so now they know their potential, but they are not ready. Jeff Angelo said you can get that in any economic symposium at Margaritaville.

Jeff Angelo said the point is they need a director who can get some boots on the ground and let us start finding some business to roll in here that are going to leave people here and then you open restaurants and retail. There are homes that are being developed around the area where people do not have to go too far to go to work as nobody wants to go to The Woodlands if you live out here if you do not have to. We also need good paying jobs. Casey Olson said with Home Depot they are getting 150 jobs and 125 of those jobs are going to pay \$15-\$20 an hour. Jeff Angelo said they are not a quarter of a million dollar people. Dan Walker said they will probably not live here. Casey Olson said no they cannot afford to live here.

Jeff Angelo said he thinks they all understand what they need and he is going to be a little bit more boot on the ground himself because he thinks he has the time to do it now and he does not want to see EDC go down the tubes because they were not paying attention. He does not expect Gary and Dave to do everything but he does expect all of them, Council as well as the leadership here to adhere to the structure that has been put in place which they directed to get a director and that is what they want. Casey Olson said he agrees 100 percent.

Jeff Angelo said that is where they are at Dave. They want a director. If Gary wants a separate meeting one on one he will be happy to have a face off, collaborate, and come up with a plan to move forward. Wade has mentioned two or three names. Casey Olson said Gary does not have a say whether they have a director or not. Jeff Angelo said that is true. Casey Olson said he can influence, he can drag his feet, he can do the bureaucratic thing but he does not have a say. Jeff Angelo said give it to Council and let them get it on the org chart and any other obstacles there may be to getting them a director. They need to make sure they understand. Wade Nelson said if there is something they are missing that they need to accomplish. Casey Olson said if it is just the org chart well they will fix that.

Jeff Angelo asked Dave McCorquodale if it was just the org chart and if he would like to have another person by his side that is pulling the same cart that you guys are pulling. Dave McCorquodale said if he did not have to work on EDC stuff he would have a whole lot more time to work on planning stuff. Jeff Angelo said that is what he is thinking. He said they know what they need and they cannot let that ball get dropped this time. I beg you to let us stay the course and let him come alongside and help vet some of these people as he has all the time in the world to do that and they will find the right person for the job as they did the last time. They are not going to sit around waiting for them and not let them get snapped up by someone else. He said nobody waits that long for a job. He would not. Wade Nelson asked if they have the ability if they find the perfect qualified person who is young, aggressive, and has great experience that if it takes \$20,000 more to get them they can. Jeff Angelo said it is their budget and they could do whatever they want. Dave McCorquodale said it is their call. Jeff Angelo asked what he thinks it is going to cost. Wade Nelson said he does not know. Casey Olson asked how much was budgeted. Jeff Angelo said \$120,000. Wade Nelson asked was there not one they lost because they were more in the \$150,000 to \$160,000 range. Jeff Angelo said he thinks the

guy was in the \$140,000 range but was willing to take the \$120,000. Jeff Angelo said \$150,000 is spit money if he brings in multimillion-dollar businesses.

Jeff Angelo said they have direction; they know what they need and are saying as a group that is what they need. They do not need to ask for anymore they are just going to push it. He said he is going to check in on a weekly basis to see how they are coming along. Council has a meeting in two weeks and if they need him to show up he will. Casey Olson said it would not hurt and it never hurt to push your cause. Jeff Angelo said he will show up at Council and say come on guys they need this on the org chart. They have asked for it. He said he will get with Wade as he has a couple of names that are already interested in the job that have had great experience and they should get those in front of Dave. Eventually they will find someone that can relieve Dave of EDC's job and they will be sitting over there and maybe Dave could just pop in and check in once in a while to say hi. Dave McCorquodale said he will take this back to Gary and meet with him tomorrow. Again, if you will reach out to him and he will make sure the item is on the agenda.

2. Review and discussion of Wayfinding Project documents.

Jeff Angelo said EDC began a city-wide wayfinding project with Merje Design in late 2022-23. The project consultants have submitted 75 percent complete project drawing set for our review. Staff has reviewed and provided several small formatting comments to the design team that are immaterial to the project design.

One substantive comment by staff to the consultant is to select a different stone for the signs with stone veneer elements. They are of course just seeing this for the first time tonight so they probably need a day or two to review it. Currently specified is a pink granite native to the northeast. MEDC wanted something that was more like old Texas limestone as they talked about in previous meetings with a consultant. Staff had no other additional comments. MEDC Directors can review and provide additional comments to staff at the meeting.

Jeff Angelo said they did not get this until it was too late so if you all have comments and want to present them to him just send him an email and he will get it to Dave and they will make any adjustments or at least have discussion about any adjustments that they might want to make.

Ryan Londeen said he looked it over and it looks like what they had all agreed on before. Casey Olson said if they have not made changes from what you have already and this is what you want except for the stone. Ryan Londeen said yes they have limestone on here but it is just a visual. Jeff Angelo said he loves this and is very impressed. Good job with finding the right company.

Dave McCorquodale said they will have the final set at the next meeting. Concerning any comments you may have do not feel like you have to say it now or you lose it. Again, funnel those comments to Jeff and we will make sure we get them. He said it largely seems on track with what they explained and what the feedback was both from the EDC and the Council during the joint workshop. Jeff Angelo asked once they get their final approval in on this when does the project begin. Dave McCorquodale said the EDC approved was the design project for this wayfinding project and so this project is a design only. There are no construction of signs or any signs that are built into that \$69,000 or so that you approved for this project. One example of signs that has come up recently was in the presentation. The library sign on SH 105 is about a \$10,000 sign give or take as they would have to bid it out to know exactly what it was but the consultant felt like it could be a \$9,000 to an \$11,000 sign. Again, this was one of the larger two pole ones and he said the smaller ones are \$6,000 to \$8,000 each. Dan Walker said that estimate of \$6,000 that is turn key, that is done, installed, and no one comes back for more money. Dave McCorquodale said yes. Jeff Angelo asked if they would send an RFP out for multiple signage

companies. Dave McCorquodale said yes. He said once the Board likes the design and you agree yes this is a good project we approve it and accept this project, the next step is then to look at those other locations that they are recommending and say this is how much we want to allocate which is a budgeting conversation you have. Here are the three that we said were the most important to us and that is what we pay for or the five or seven or 10 signs that you want. Casey Olson asked if they could break it up so hey this year we want these and next year we want these ones. Jeff Angelo said yes of course. Ryan Londeen asked is this not a part of this plan to decide where the signs go and what they say. Dave McCorquodale said yes it is thought through like all the way. There is not a question of even what letter goes on the sign. Ryan Londeen asked if there is an overall map of the City then. Dave McCorquodale said yes. Ryan Londeen said he thinks they should just allocate a certain dollar amount every year and chip away at it every year.

Jeff Angelo said he met with Tom Hoyt today and by the way that is another volunteer. He does not know if Dave knows Mr. Hoyt very well. Dave McCorquodale said he met him a couple times and worked with him on a sign application for In Stitches Drapery which is just right in downtown by the snow cone place. He got to know him there and he did a lot with marketing and is really, really intelligent. Jeff Angelo said he was the senior vice president of CBS Radio; he was the first general manager of KRBE and Kota. He has many years of marketing experience and this guy knows his stuff. His fight was to get a sign for Fernland. Jeff Angelo said when he told him it is on their agenda tonight because he met with him today, he said listen, anything you can do to decide and he said he could not believe it happened that fast. Jeff Angelo said that is the fastest thing EDC has ever done.

Jeff Angelo said he thinks the next step will be when can they put some of these signs together that make sense and will drive people and show them the culture they have within this community. He said he loves the Welcome to Montgomery sign with the date they were born and birthplace of the Texas flag. All of that is so important too. He thinks some of these signs, the monument signs and things like that at least show the community that they are moving forward. Dan Walker said Casey made the comment start putting your signs out and put your hard hats on. This is an inexpensive way to start and get going. Jeff Angelo said exactly and they have money so they better spend it before they take it. Wade Nelson said to Casey Olson you are never going to live that down. Dan Walker said to Casey Olson I guess you understand the passion apparently. Casey Olson said yes because they are passionate on the other side. The same is the fact that when you have a bridge in front of someone's house that has a hole this big and you are saying how are we going to pay for it, maybe next year. Jeff Angelo said he does not disagree with the position and understands the position. He said he just feels like they have wasted a year and a half goofing around trying to find the right direction when they already knew what the direction was and they had it. If they had just inked it they would be far down the road by now and they may be looking at another Home Depot type deal but with a corporation that is going to put 500 to work in our area it is not that they do not know what they are doing it is that they cannot seem to get any traction ever and that is what bothers him is that it is a lot of work for nothing.

Wade Nelson said he does not want to leave it up to developers because they are going to go the cheapest route and then they are gone overnight. Casey Olson said that is another reason why they are redoing the ordinances so they can hold them to the fire.

Dan Walker said they are in the path of progress. The bottom line is a buddy of his Jack Fry used to tell them there is nothing wrong with buying a piece of dirt as long as you are in the path of progress.

Jeff Angelo said he thinks they are heading in the right direction and once they get the ordinances done and they get the director in place there is no excuse after that. He will go out on his shield and say they can do this; they just need to get more money for the City if that is



what they are going to do then they need to do it the right way. They need to bring businesses in because you cannot keep robbing Peter to pay Paul because eventually Peter is not going to have anything either. Casey Olson said that is where they are at. They are to the point where they borrow money where they cannot pay it back and are forced to raise taxes or they raise taxes. Dan Walker said a lot of your future developments the developers can participate. Wade Nelson said you make them participate. Casey Olson said and that is all of our agreements. Casey Olson said it irks him and he knows maybe they had to do it to kind of kick the ball and get going with these different agreements that when the word Kroger comes out of his mouth he just cringes and the shops across the street. They have a developer over here that built houses and they still do not have to pay any taxes. Jeff Angelo said having a good director who knows how to negotiate deals is very, very important and he thinks they are going to find someone who is going to make a difference in this community. That is what they need and they will get it but they have to get this person hired.

Casey Olson said that is the other thing. When you talk about tax abatements they can bring businesses forever but if all they do is tax abatements they are using our infrastructure for free. Wade Nelson said his point is you do that for the right one, the one that is going to bring 500,000 employees. Jeff Angelo said if they drive people here and they pay taxes and they buy products inside our City. Dan Walker said the employees can afford to live here also. Wade Nelson said they would be professional employees who could afford to live here and if they do not perform they get hit.

Jeff Angelo said he thinks there are enough people on this director platform that understand we all have different core competencies. We have businesses, developers, and engineers and we know what we are doing. We just do not have the sea legs to pull it off so we can talk about it all we want but until we get someone we can direct and get that vision aligned with the City's vision we are going to continue to go nowhere fast. Like Wade says we do not anything if we do not get some traction. We are done. We might as well start working towards that and then maybe there will not be any need to rob Peter. Maybe we will have more than enough and we can rob the Council. That would be fun.

3. Financial Report.

Dave McCorquodale said Carol did text earlier and said that she was not going to be here to deliver the financial report. Any questions you may have feel free to reach out to her or Maryann.

Jeff Angelo said he reviewed it and it looked fine to him.

4. Events Report March to June 2024

Ms. Patricia Campuzano, Events & Recreation Specialist said on the first page you will see the events that already passed. She knows they have not had a meeting in a while so she listed all the events from March through June. She said they did not have any issues but movie night did have to be postponed twice due to the weather. The second page has the upcoming events for July only. They do have two new events which are two health classes she partnered with Texas A&M and they are going to be hosting the classes for us. They will be teaching the community for free and so far we have a good amount of people signing up. The last portion of the report is a budget update.

Jeff Angelo asked when is the Christmas parade this year. Patricia Campuzano said it will be the second week of December on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Jeff Angelo asked if Light up the Park is on the same day or is that the week before. Patricia Campuzano said it is going to be the week before on December 7<sup>th</sup> and the Snow Party is going to be December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ryan Londeen asked if they are doing that again on a separate day. Patricia Campuzano said yes and last year she did do it separately. When she first started they did do it the same day and did come across a little

bit of complications because a lot of people did start to show up early to the event so they could not open it up early enough for them but they did opening it up and everything went good. The second year they decided to split it up to see how that would work and they actually got a lot more people on the second year so last year she had about 3,000 people show up for that event only.

Jeff Angelo said that puts it on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December when people are leaving. He said he is worried and asked if they have thought about that. Patricia Campuzano said yes and she knows that last year she did exactly the same thing and it would have landed on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Jeff Angelo said but it was a weekend before Christmas and it was still good. Patricia Campuzano said yes it still had a really good turnout. Jeff Angelo said he guesses there is enough people that still stick around as not everyone goes out of town for Christmas. Patricia Campuzano said she has the statistics from social media that she can present the numbers on how much people are already interested on the event.

Jeff Angelo asked when is the trick-or-treat in historic Montgomery going to be. Patricia Campuzano said it is going to be October 26<sup>th</sup>. Jeff Angelo asked if they are doing the Quilt Walk again. Patricia Campuzano said yes that is going to be October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

Jeff Angelo asked when the Ruck for Veterans is happening next year. Patricia Campuzano said that one already passed in March so she is assuming it will be the same time next year. She said that is a different private event so whenever they apply she will know but it should be somewhere around March.

Jeff Angelo asked Patricia Campuzano what are you struggling with and what are you having success with. Patricia Campuzano said she has been doing pretty good so far. She said she does handle the social media side of the City as well so she does do the marketing on the City's events and has been doing that pretty good so far.

Jeff Angelo asked Patricia Campuzano what she struggles with and if she is having issues getting people to show up to these events. He sees the posts but asked how often she is posting. Patricia Campuzano said she is posting every day so she does have posts every day from three to five posts a day. On weekends she does have three posts so she can monitor them but does not try to monitor them on the weekends just because she also goes to college but she does have an iPad if she does need to check on anything. She said she has received a lot of spammers that are trying to get people to call them or email them or something for vendor wise so she does take her proper precautions on that to make sure that people do not get scammed.

Jeff Angelo said if you thought the last question was crazy you will probably really think this one is and asked Patricia Campuzano what she wants to be when she grows up. Jeff Angelo said the reason he asked that is there is a reason for that is you are studying psychology right. Patricia Campuzano it is a work in progress yes sir. Jeff Angelo asked but not communications. Patricia Campuzano said sort of. Both of them actually. She said she has talked with her advisor because she does do this for a living. She has been taking public communication classes and the major that she also wants to. Jeff Angelo said he was just curious because either social media class or something that would help you in this endeavor because obviously you want to be the best that you can be.

Jeff Angelo asked if there is anything that they could be doing to help prop you up to give you greater success. You are on the ground so you get the push back when there is push back but you also get compliments. Where do you find that they could be doing better to help make these events more successful. Patricia Campuzano said not anything right now that she can think on the top of her head. She has been going to training and did go to a government social media training for social media so she can market it correctly and know the proper steps to take for it as well and just did that about two, three weeks ago.

Jeff Angelo asked Patricia Campuzano what she is gleaned from these workshops and if she is getting some good nuggets that maybe she can apply. Patricia Campuzano said yes.

Jeff Angelo said he still does not have an answer to his question of what do you want to be when you grow up. Patricia Campuzano said she has been talking with her advisor to make sure she has that path on the right spot. Jeff Angelo asked which is what. Patricia Campuzano said it is a work in progress. Jeff Angelo said he was just curious because sometimes people are here for a reason and sometimes they are here for a season and it is okay either way but it can be really uplifting when events go well and it can be really disheartening when they do not. He has had both. He said all the time there are some that do great and some not so much so you have to have pretty thick skin in those cases. You are kind of the icing on the City cake or at least the events you put together are the icing on the City cake and the quality of life and the things that people come here for right now it is really all they have. Making sure that you are shored up to where you have the resources that you need as well as people who can come alongside you and help grow you in a way to help you become highly successful is very important to them because it is really all they have. They do not have a director driving big monster-sized companies in but they do have events. Wade Nelson said you are kind of the front line right now.

Patricia Campuzano said she has a group of volunteers that she is managing. Jeff Angelo said he can get some people together for her and asked what she needed. Patricia Campuzano said for certain events she does need more backup for the bigger events such as Christmas and Halloween. She said movie nights are a bit more repetitive as those are pretty good to handle. For Christmas and trick or treat she would want to have more people for her to actually keep the event safe. Jeff Angelo asked when you are talking about keeping it safe are you talking about City employees like police officers or just people in general, regular citizens who are collaborating with you to help. Patricia Campuzano said it could be that. Casey Olson said it could be a volunteer with a yellow vest that says City on it and say stay off the street.

Arnette Easley asked where Patricia Campuzano stood as far as paying police for security versus outsourcing as they spoke about that one time as well. Patricia Campuzano said they talked slightly about that with Gary. There is a certain policy and they do need the officers to be there of course because they are the ones if you think about it a law enforcement officer has more authority than a security guard so they do need them to a certain degree. She said she does talk with Lieutenant Belmares and they do communicate pretty well. They agree on a good amount of people that she needs. The Lone Star Street Dance is a pretty big event at night so she does have officers there just for safety and traffic control and then she does have volunteers that if she does need someone else and knows there may be a lot more people coming to a certain event she does bring her volunteers in and has vests for them to be out there. For the Christmas parade that is the one event she is actually preparing her volunteer for because that is the one event that she does need more bodies in different locations to make sure that nobody gets run over and then the parade goes smoothly like it did last year. Jeff Angelo asked how many volunteers are needed. Patricia Campuzano said she is still looking at the numbers and so far she has a few signed up. Her numbers right now are from 10 to 20 volunteers are signed up but she does check on their hours as some of them do have daytime jobs as well and some of them are open 24/7. Jeff Angelo said Arnette is really good at organizing stuff like that. Arnette Easley said he could help. Jeff Angelo said this guy knows everybody and anybody who is anybody. He said Arnette is very good at getting people to jump in and help out where needed. Jeff Angelo said why not collaborate with Arnette as he is dying to get in the game. Arnette Easley said absolutely put him in coach. Jeff Angelo said he is really very good at that. Arnette Easley said what he thinks is it is kind of foolproof when you have a collaborative effort and you get everyone on the same page. You are the captain of the ship and you allocate certain duties for different people to do whether it is staging or whatever it is and you have those people at the post so it is pretty easy to do. He said he puts on three or four events a year and he has never had issues. Jeff Angelo said some of the events they put on have multiple thousands of people just like the parade.

Wade Nelson said maybe take a couple weeks and put a wish list. Jeff Angelo said they want to be involved but they need to see more coming back this way. These guys are taxed.

Casey Olson said he does have one question about events and he knows they do not have the resources to do it this year. He has been asked several times about it and it is the Wine Fest they used to do in the fall. He knows they cannot call it the Wine Fest but he does not care what they call it. Wade Nelson said it needs to be back here. Patricia Campuzano said she has been brainstorming on that since they had the discussions. They cannot call it the Wine Fest and then there is alcohol policy so she does look up on those to make sure they are not involved in that side of it because it is really technical. She has been looking into it so hopefully she can bring something back for them next year but she is putting her budget together and does keep a good track of everything she spends so that way whenever she does bring the budget back to the Board she can say she is thinking about doing this and this is how much it would take because of this. Wade Nelson said that might be the single event that brings people from outside of the City. Dan Walker said it is a different caliber of people. Patricia Campuzano said believe it or not it has brought people from Arizona and other places. Wade Nelson said the point is those are the first set of eyes on this community and that is why you are kind of the front line right now as you are the one promoting the City so doing it right and getting that kind of concept back into the City is important. Jeff Angelo said the Wine Fest was owned by the chamber at one point. Casey Olson said it belongs to Conroe now. Jeff Angelo said they do not have the name Wine Fest but they can call it anything. Casey Olson said you can call it Harvest Fest. Jeff Angelo said Wine & Dine or Wine & Stroll. He said the point is they can call it whatever they want. It probably takes according to Shannan Reid this year is out but they should be able to pull it off by next fall. Patricia Campuzano said she met with her because she wanted to get her input to find the backstory. She said it does take a lot of work and she will put the list together for the Board to know how much work it takes and know what she is looking at. Jeff Angelo said just know that they want to do it next fall which gives them a little more than a year and a half to pull it off.

Casey Olson asked what are the rules on the City selling alcohol. Dave McCorquodale said he does not know the alcohol rules. Dan Walker said they have done it before. Casey Olson said the vendors sell the alcohol and the City gets no cut. Dan Walker said if they get a cut off of the selling of the booth or the space. Casey Olson said they would get very little.

Jeff Angelo said there are cartage permits you can get for events and they are not super expensive. He said he has a liquor license but you are talking about a cartage, an event permit and they are not that much. It is a liability thing making sure you have insurance that will protect in the event of and the City may not want to go that direction and that is why a lot of cities do not because of liability but there are those of us that would be more than happy to partner with the City to get the alcohol sold. The Wine Fest is a phenomenal event and it really could drive some revenue for you and for your budget.

Arnette Easily said another idea would be and he has done it two years, he would like to get with Patricia about putting together an annual classic car show. He said he belongs to the 105 Cruises and a couple others. It would be really cool and it brings a lot of people.

Jeff Angelo said the last question he wants to ask has to do with Sip-n-Stroll. He said he sees 50 or 60 people and maybe they should be giving people a visual of what types of booths are there. He asked if there is any way Patricia can accumulate some photos of products, not just the booth but what they are selling and what they are offering because to him he would never to go Sip-n-Stroll unless he knew that there was something and maybe he wanted to sip and stroll with and go get. The point is for those who are in the area and have the free time available would love to come out but it does not mean anything, it does not say what it actually is. Maybe they can define that a little bit better on the social media post. Patricia Campuzano said potentially the only thing that has changed on that is the originator was Kambra and it is going

to be moving back to Kambra. Jeff Angelo said that is fine but is she doing the social media on it as well. Patricia Campuzano said she knows Kambra has her own social media. She said she can promote the events and usually does that with the private event side of it as well. She does have pictures of the vendors that she had but if Kambra can provide her with pictures she would be more than happy to. Jeff Angelo said he thinks Patricia should just ask for it and say this is something that they need. Jeff Angelo asked why did they send it back to Kambra. Patricia Campuzano said she does not have the details on that. Jeff Angelo asked who did that. Patricia said it was something spoken by Gary but she does not have the details. Casey Olson said he knows a little bit about that. He said some of the businesses that were on the other side of FM 149 were complaining to the City about they were not getting the love because all the vendors were down on McCown Street and off of College Street which is the historical area. He said I will tell you right now one of the main complainers was Rendy saying how come they are not over here and this really does not do much for us and they said because they would get run over on FM 149 so that is why they are not over here. He said he thinks Gary just said well you know what, if it is private then that is it. Jeff Angelo said okay so that is why they pulled it out of the City's wheelhouse. Casey Olson said he knows Gary wanted to take it over and was gung-ho for it and it was something he thought the City could do and then he realized none of those people down there not one of them gets along. Ryan Londeen asked do they just do it and not worry about it. Casey Olson said sometimes you just have to forge ahead, put your head down and not worry. Casey Olson said to Gary's defense when you have councilmembers that will just turn on a dime and run to his office and just scream bloody murder because their friend complained and cried to them it is not worth the effort. Jeff Angelo said he understands and for 50-60 people a week it is definitely not worth the effort. Jeff Angelo said they should be focusing their efforts on things that are going to drive folks to the City and that obviously does not because 50 or 60 people are the same ones and they may be the vendors for all they know. Patricia Campuzano said she does not count the vendors in there. Jeff Angelo said the point is that it is not on their plate anymore so Patricia can focus on others that are and maybe spend a little more time developing those which is what they need to be doing. Jeff Angelo said like Wade said that is all they have right now until they can get something else going and that is all they have had for a long time. You heard it today that they want more and are willing to put out whatever it takes to get more but in the meantime you can take the reins and really push towards a better tomorrow for the events side of things.

Dan Walker asked if the postings are primarily Facebook only or what are other avenues that are being used. Patricia Campuzano said she has Facebook and Instagram that are the main social media platforms that they use but she does use Mailchimp where she sends out blast emails to people that have subscribed with them and that is where she gets a lot of people as well. She said those are pretty good and she does keep up with the stuff on the tourism page and their City website tab under tourism. Dan Walker asked if on their City website when you pull it up do they pop up. Patricia Campuzano said whenever you click on the City website it will be a tourism tab and when you click on the tab she has been working on that stuff so they can have more visibility to the people but you do have to click on the tourism tab. Casey Olson said in the search engine part of it he has no idea but he does know if you type in Montgomery it pops up. There is a couple of Montgomery items and you have to be careful because a lot of times you will click on Montgomery and it will take you to Delaware or Maryland or something. Patricia Campuzano said she recommends putting Texas at the end because that is what she has done because she has done that too many times too.

Jeff Angelo asked if the City has a TikTok account. Patricia Campuzano said no. Jeff Angelo said that is another avenue and right now TikTok even though it seems like it is a young generation there are a lot of adults that are on TikTok now. Jeff Angelo said having cool, fun engaging videos might drive people to the City as well. He said he is talking about getting creative with their social media and at least when you are showing off your events you have to

show the benefits of them. He said you can go to CapCut and put together a quick video of all the videos that have been shot on iPhones but they need a little more marketing.

Jeff Angelo asked Patricia Campuzano if she has met and talked with Tom Hoyt yet. Patricia Campuzano said no. Jeff Angelo said he is going to ask him to reach out to you. He is willing to volunteer anytime and this guy is a genius when it comes to marketing. He is old but he is smart and has been at the top of the game as far as national and has run hundreds of radio stations at one time so he knows what he is doing and he might be able to help. He wants to get in the game, is willing to volunteer, and work hard. Jeff Angelo said these are guys who can mentor and really guide you and help you make great impacts. Dan Walker said you probably get more out of that than going to school. Patricia Campuzano said she likes learning from her elders. Jeff Angelo said mentors make a difference. Jeff Angelo said let me put you in touch with somebody who might be able to grow you a little bit in the right direction. He said next time they may have the Patricia of the Year trophy where anybody who does incredible things gets that and wants to encourage you to reach out to him. He will send an email and they will get working on that.

Arnette Easley said what Easley Enterprises in Montgomery County United their non-profit does, all the stuff they do through the course of the year at the end of the year, they top it off with what they call the Christmas Gala and they have companies donate. They get very large donations that goes into the piggy bank to put on more events. They sell tickets that night. They have a set down meal and live band which cost \$50 per ticket. With a couple hundred people you have a good little jig and it works. Jeff Angelo said to speak to what Arnette is saying and now that you have all this free time now that you do not have Sip-n-Stroll. Patricia Campuzano said she does not know about all the free time. Jeff Angelo said well maybe a little more free time but maybe something along those lines would be well received where you can celebrate some of the City leaders and the businesses who have made great inroads. What gets rewarded gets remembered and repeated. If you can reward some of the business leaders even the ones who are complaining may decide to stop whining and start working towards a better tomorrow as a team. That is what they really want need to focus on, not just events for outside the community but also for the ones that are in so they can partner and collaborate and become one unit because we are obviously not doing a very good job of doing things scattered so maybe they should start trying to bring people together a little bit more. Arnette Easley said it would definitely unify the City at large and you get companies to donate of course along with what they do; they underwrite a lot of stuff but they get a lot of donations to help put that event on and then you can salute companies. He said when you acknowledge someone it just makes them feel really good. At the end of the year you have a little dance, beverages and everyone has a good time.

Wade Nelson said in addition to what they are saying it is kind of like the Charlie Diggs concept and you can pay for the whole event through sponsorships. Patricia Campuzano said she has been working to get sponsorships. Wade Nelson said sponsorships are huge. You are not going to pay for the whole event but you will pay for a big chunk of it and those are the people they are talking about acknowledging. Dan Walker said with these Wayfinder signs you get some of them that are a fairly good size and you get some oil company and they would love it. Wade Nelson said you could put up a banner showing who the sponsors are. Arnette Easley said whatever you have the community center because the nonprofit are able to get the center for free and that is a cost you do not have to have. Jeff Angelo said who you go to for that would be Shannan Reid. She has put on a million of these events such as chairmen's balls and she would be a great resource for that and would love to do it too. Jeff Angelo said you have good people around you, you just need to tap into some of them such as Arnette, Tom Hoyt, Shannan Reid and people like that who care including himself and others who will come alongside but you have to do some of the heavy lifting. He said he thinks Patricia has the capability of doing it, they just want to see more of these events take flight so that they will get recognized because

they need the recognition right now. They need people to look at them and say that is a fun place to be.

Arnette Easley said not to think they are saying you are not doing a good job. They are just saying you have assets and resources to make you bigger and that is definitely what they are saying. Jeff Angelo said that is exactly what they are saying.

### **BOARD INQUIRY**

Casey Olson said Mike Muckleroy had brought something to City Council two summers ago about looking at maybe the City doing a splash pad and they have the property right there in the center of town. City Council was hesitant about it because maybe of liability issues. He said he has seen the one in Houston and he likes it but he was in Destin three weeks ago in Destin Commons which they have done a wonderful job with Destin Commons a retail center walk around and there is a neat little splash pad right in there. Jeff Angelo said he thinks the splash pad is a great idea. He said they can be nasty and have a lot of bacteria so you have to be careful with them and make sure they are maintained. They did look into it a bit. There is a lot of push back from Council but why not have EDC pull something like that. Casey Olson said that is why he is asking. Jeff Angelo said he does not see why they cannot look at something like that as they do have the budget. Those are the kinds of things that will make the community. He asked what about Cedar Brake Park and if that would be a good spot. Dan Walker said bring people into the community. Casey Olson said those are two great locations, it just depends on what you want to do. Wade Nelson said he thinks that is where you utilize developers where they can bring those concepts together with retail within their development and a common area. He said if you look at The Woodlands such as Market Street it has a splash pad, green space, and sitting areas and that helps retailers as well and they like that. Casey Olson said their issue is they are not set up like that downtown. They do not have space and their center is owned by the City. Wade Nelson said there are some things he and Dave have looked at that if they come together they can develop something like that with the right guys. He said again that is where the City needs to get a different perception on how you work with developers and say look we are going to wrap our arms around you and do whatever you need to do, let us help you instead of this well what are you going to do for me thing. Let us help you get there because they are going to bring something that is very valuable to the City for the right guys. He said not everyone but for the right ones that want to do the right thing. He said he thinks that is how you accomplish that but EDC can participate in that.

Jeff Angelo asked Dave McCorquodale what his experience is on the splash pad concept. Dave McCorquodale said he spent 14 years in the swimming pool industry. He said he would advise them to not cheap out when you do it. If you decide to do it, do it right. There is not a magic formula and do not say instead of that we can spend 25 percent less and we will just use these parts from Jim's. Wade Nelson said there is a really good example in College Station that Midway did at Century Square. He said everything is wrapped around that green space common area but he cannot remember if they have a splash pad there or not but it could easily be incorporated into something like that. Jeff Angelo said he thinks it is a great idea and it is not something they have not thought about but it just kept getting shot down every time they talked about it mostly for liability reasons. Casey Olson said that is the thing that Council pushed back on and it was one of his concerns like he did not know the liability of that. Wade Nelson said maybe it is not City owned but it is developer owned. They get some credit for doing it and you have to incentivize them to do that because they are losing space to what could be retail. Ryan Londeen said the City of Conroe has one and the City of Shenandoah has one. Casey Olson said he sees that for them to move forward they are going to have to do some of these things. Jeff Angelo said once again when they get a director he promises they will get some of this stuff accomplished and in short order too.

Arnette Easley asked if they would look at putting it in Cedar Brake Park or a neutral site somewhere. Wade Nelson said it could be there or a neutral site. He said you have to have a town center concept that people gravitate to and they stay there. Jeff Angelo said maybe the City could buy up all the houses around there and they will create little coffee shops and all kinds of fun businesses. He said like in Copple that is what they did. They just developed their own community and every house is new yet they look like they are part of the original. If you ever want to see something really done right Copple is amazing. Wade Nelson said Copple is awesome. Ryan Londeen said he knows there is potential development coming down the end of College Street and to the west of Cedar Brake Park and maybe incorporate something there. Wade Nelson said that would be a great spot. Jeff Angelo asked where. Ryan Londeen said west of Cedar Brake right across the street. Wade Nelson said the 50 acres. Jeff Angelo said okay yes. Casey Olson asked if they had been to St. Charles in New Orleans. Jeff Angelo said no. Casey Olson said it is a beautiful street. Wade Nelson said that whole aesthetic and the end developer that is doing the 50 acres is what you are talking about. Casey Olson said that is what he told me when he showed me. He said this looks similar to St. Charles and he said that is kind of the concept. Dan Walker asked if it was the 50 acres west of Cedar Brake. Wade Nelson said yes along SH 105. Casey Olson said they are like the southern brownstone and are \$700,000 price points. Jeff Angelo said that is good news. Jeff Angelo asked if that project has started yet. Wade Nelson said it is in the early stages. Jeff Angelo asked if it is getting farther along than what it was. Wade Nelson said it is in the preliminary stage.

Casey Olson said if you have noticed the developments that have moved forward were for a while smaller homes and then all of a sudden they just slowed down and stopped and now the developments that are moving forward are these much higher price point homes. Casey Olson said back to what you originally said about some kind of medical facility, those are the people that can live in those homes. Ryan Londeen said they are all driving down to The Woodlands. Casey Olson said because of their postage stamp they have got to bring in some kind of a specialty like cancer or whatever it is. Jeff Angelo said there are companies out there that want to get in front of the City. He has talked to them and had one at his place as a breakfast guest. He runs a massive medical facility down in College Station and he wants to move here.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Dan Walker and seconded by Ryan Londeen to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. All in favor. (5-0)

Submitted by: *Diana Titus*  
Diana Titus (Jul 17, 2024 09:34 CDT)  
Diana Titus, Deputy City Secretary

Date Approved: 7/16/2024

*Jeffrey S. Angelo*  
Jeffrey S. Angelo (Jul 18, 2024 12:00 CDT)  
Jeff Angelo, MEDC President












# MEDC Minutes 6/27/2024

Final Audit Report

2024-07-18

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