

**City of Rowlett**  
**Economic Development Advisory Board**

Tuesday, August 16, 2022  
8:30 A.M.

***Meeting Minutes***

**1. CALL TO ORDER.**

Mark Hall, Vice Chairman, called the Rowlett Economic Development Advisory Board meeting to order at 8:31 A.M. on August 16, 2022. In attendance: Blake Margolis, Brian Funderburk, Larry Glick, Eva Hummel, Chris Kizziar, Mark Hall, and Paula Allen. Staff: Libbey Tucker, Charles Mazarakes and Claudia Frausto. Absent was Chairman Mick Donnelly, Michael Weaver, and Michael Gallops.

**2. CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 19, 2022 MEETING.**

A motion was made by Chris Kizziar and seconded by Eva Hummel to approve the July 19, 2022 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. PUBLIC INPUT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM.**

None.

**4. BOARD MEMBERS SHARE TOPICS AND IDEAS RELATED TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

None.

**5. City Knowledge and Learning Items**

**a. Economic Development Department Update:**

Charles Mazarakes, Assistant Director, provided the business retention update and new business information. There was one new business - World's Best Taqueria with 6 jobs created. They are interested in possible brick and mortar location or a 2<sup>nd</sup> location in Rowlett. No solid plans to either as of yet, current location does bring in organic traffic to the business. Businesses Charles met with this month where Village of Rowlett Apartments and Retrocade. The Village of Rowlett Apartment is in the process of providing a landscaping design with outside social area plan to be approved by the city. Village of Rowlett Apartments is working with city planning department to meet city requirements and codes. Possible relocation of Retrocade in the downtown location as it would benefit the high volume of teenage loitering. At this time the downtown area does not have a location that will not encumber other business or large enough space to house the capacity of games Retrocade currently has. Rowlett Ribbon cuttings included Dancing Needle

Embroidery, ContracSur, and Sammy Lou's BBQ. Charles highlighted upcoming business that are in the process of finishing up building permits to start the process to apply for the CO or are in the CO process now. Business mentioned Cheesesteak House, Lico's BAR-B-Q Smokehouse and Drizl Coffee Shop

Libbey Tucker, Director of Economic Development, gave an update on sales taxes which were unusual as it showed a negative variance of 3.6% below forecasted amount by \$27,422. The State Comptroller's report showed audit collections in the amount of \$133,769 with was a direct reduction to the June allocation. The audit amounts usually aren't this large, and the budget officer has requested more information from the Comptroller about this. The latest internet sales tax report showing the month of May to be strong at 14% above forecast by \$88,621 and 15% more than the same month in year 2021 by \$97,104. Libbey acknowledged the slowdown in new businesses permits in Rowlett for the month of July, with one new business.

Charles spoke about the improvements made at the marina on the Sapphire Bay Marina Tour with Mayor Blake Margolis. He highlighted the new fire suppression system, new electrical systems, the full in-dock fiber backbone dedicated WIFI. They state they are rated the Safest Marina in Texas with these improvements being made.

Continuing with the Economic Development marketing update, Libbey spoke about departmental and upcoming training and marketing opportunities. Charles Mazarakes was officially promoted to the Assistant Director position and is attending Leadership Rowlett and Texas Economic Development Council Annual Conference in October. Libbey Tucker will be Rowlett's representation and will attend the Team Texas Summit in Conroe, TX and the Int'l Economic Development Council Annual Conference in Oklahoma City. Claudia Frausto, Administrative Assistant will be taking a Basic Economic Development Course in November. The department also opened a new position, Downtown Manager position with the job description being finalized. Libbey spoke about the good engagement Rowlett has in general and in North Shore area, building up solid relationships with the engineering companies that work closely with developers. Staff continues to work though the incentive agreement with Jackson Shaw.

Finishing up the Marketing update for Economic Development, Libbey addressed the transition from using the company Underpinned, Inc. for economic development marketing services to Wavteq, which was selected as part of a competitive bid process. Social media topics highlighted for the month of July included a survey for feedback on the downtown area, key industrial business in the city, among others. New business coming to Rowlett were featured the Facebook page and included LakePointe Women's Center, 151 Coffee, NAPA Auto Parts and Valvoline. Civic Brand will continue to market downtown Rowlett. Their posts featured the City's Concert Series, Farmer' market and the monthly gift card giveaway to encourage social media engagement.

A new partner agreement is with EDOiQ which is a company with software we will utilize for a Customer Relations Data base tool, business retention database and also create a new web site.

New businesses coming or have opened with the City of Rowlett are Salad and Go, Cheesesteak House, Drizl Coffee and Planet Fitness. A mixed use development is planned at Miller and Rowlett Road with Storage 365 as the main tenant. It will have 115,000 sf of storage space with 17,000 sf of adjacent commercial spaces. Plans will also have a pocket park to help soften the area as it is next to residential. New Sapphire Bay aerial images were presented to show all the new development and progress that has been made.

**b. Rowlett Chamber/Chamber Foundation Update:** Mark Hall, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, gave the Chamber update. In the month of August there was no monthly Luncheon as end of summer typically has low attendance. The position for membership coordinator is open with interviews underway. Ribbon Cuttings were hosted for ContracSur and Dancing Needle Embroidery. Mark announced the success of the series of eight classes that are catering to small business owners or aspiring entrepreneurs that will be hosted though out the remaining of the year. Classes cover topics like marketing, financing a business, budgeting, and paying taxes, etc. Rowlett Leadership Class of 31 kicked off with good representation from the city.

Sheila Hair gave the update for the Foundation: Four Scholarship yard sign deliveries were made by the Foundation.

**c. GISD Update:** Larry Glick, GISD Board member, gave the update on school district. Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath visited Back Elementary as they have ranked high in the state's academic accountability rating system and were featured in the Dallas Morning News. The district plans to implement a grand goals plan to have all schools at an A ranking. A Bond Committee is being formed that will discuss the needs for the district for a potential May ballot. The tax rate may be a low or no-increase rate. Garland schoolteacher vacancies are down to 30 district-wide compared to the national teacher storage averaging 200 vacancies per district. Higher pay and better benefits helped greatly in filling positions as it showed that the Garland district cares for their teachers.

**d. Knowledge Topic –** A presentation on DFW Economic Climate & Economic Outlook was made by Erick Griffin, VP of Research with the Dallas Regional Chamber of Commerce.

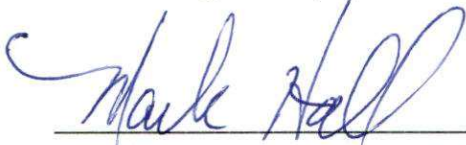
**6. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AND/OR STAFF MAY MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS OF LOCAL CIVIC EVENTS. NO MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR COMMISSION MAY DISCUSS NOR TAKE ANY ACTION WITH REGARD TO THE ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Libbey informed members of Celebrate DiverseCity Event-Saturday, Oct. 15, 4-7 p.m.-Downtown, and all committees are being encouraged to have a table at the event. Please let her know if you're interested.

**7. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD MAY REQUEST TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDA MEETINGS. NO MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR COMMISSION MAY DISCUSS ANY OF THE REQUESTED SUBJECTS UNTIL SUCH MATTER HAS BEEN PROPERLY PLACED ON A POSTED AGENDA.**

**8. ADJOURNMENT.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:53 A.M.



Mark Hall, Chamber Member, Vice Chair



Libbey Tucker, Assigned City Staff

September 20, 2022

Date Approved