

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

Tuesday, March 21, 2023  
8:30 A.M.

***Meeting Minutes***

**1. CALL TO ORDER.**

Chairman Mick Donnelly, called the Rowlett Economic Development Advisory Board meeting to order at 8:35 A.M. on March 21, 2023. In attendance: Chairman Mick Donnelly, Michael Weaver, Brian Funderburk, Larry Glick, Michael Gallops, Blake Margolis, Tori Owens, Chris Kizziar, Mark Hall, Brian Galuardi, Eva Hummel and Paula Allen. Staff: Charles Mazarakes, Claudia Frausto and Angie Smith Deputy City Manager. Absent were Libbey Tucker, Melinda Bartram.

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

None.

**3. CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 21, 2023 MEETING.**

A motion was made by Eva Hummel and seconded by Paula Allen to approve the February 21, 2023 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

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

None.

**5. Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair:** Mick Donnelly nominated Eva Hummel as Vice Chair, board approved unanimously. Board unanimously approved nomination from Brian Galuardi for Mick Donnelly to continue as Chairman of the board.

**6. City Knowledge and Learning Items**

**a) Economic Development Department Update:** Charles Mazarakes, Assistant Director, provided the business retention update and new business information. New businesses listed from for February LuxZuri with one new job listed, Ultimate Nails and Spa with four, Collectors Tattoo and Gallery with one. LuxZuri is located downtown and is a photography studio and event space. Staff is working with them on correcting occupancy permit to reflect the correct uses. BRE visit for the month of February was with Terry Peterman – Edward Jones Financial.

**b)** Charles continued the report with sales taxes showing 9.9% above forecasted amount by \$62,329, which is 10.2% more than the same month last year in 2022 with \$65,895. Rowlett's Top taxpayer by industry is Retail in first, Home Improvement/Construction in second and Utility Providers in

third. Internet sales tax latest update from December collections reporting marketplace providers has increased \$21k, or 13%, over Q1 FY22. Three Certificates of Occupancy were granted with no new Commercial Building Permits were issued. Four Existing commercial building/remodel permits with \$1,096,314.80 value. Webpage views for February were 6,035 with website downloads 277, Quarter to date showed 16,687 website page views with 684 website downloads. Three new businesses with 6 new jobs created reported.

Charles spoke about Marketing updates: Website is finishing adjustments with last meeting soon, plans to be up and running by next board meeting. Social media LinkedIn marketing campaign with Wavteq as part of a two-part campaign. There will be two distinct ads: "quality of life" to appeal to community marketing and another set targeted to site selectors that are more active on LinkedIn for a testing length of six months to acquire leads. Delays on company side as they are going through a shift in design department ownership. Overall goal is to market City of Rowlett as a strong offering to all business types. Libbey with Team Texas in SoCAL for recruitment mission. Small but notable sponsoring of mid-Year Conference in Allen TEDC. More information being sent to the board as they are encouraged to attend.

Mayor Blake Margolis spoke about the new Development Review Committee which would help businesses get a better idea of how the Planning process works and to gauge the viability of the project before they invest too much in the rezoning or development process. A trial run meeting was hosted with staff and an interested business party. They left with clear understanding of the process with the City and positive comments on the Development Review Committee. Concerns brought up to make clear non-committal legal procedure to illustrate that the committee is only a form of advisory for projects and not a voting or approval board. Recommendations to record minutes was also suggested, so that if anything were brought up or questioned the City would have minutes to review. Mayor's Development Review Committee hopes to save staff time while making a more welcoming process for developers to encourage positive business growth for city needs.

Charles offered the board copies of the Dallas Regional Economic Development Guide that features the City of Rowlett ad placed as we have been notably absent. It's sent to developers and site location consultants across the country. Charles mentioned that North Shore Master Developer Discussions are ongoing, light Industrial/Warehouse Prospects are leading the Inquiries. Also, a possible retail strip (18,750SF) with two separate buildings (7,100SF and 4,800SF with DT Lane) on Lakeview Pkwy. A past project wanting to develop a food truck park with kid playground and mini dog park attachments was stopped for this location in the development process due to lack of food truck ordinance which hindered development commitment. The developer for the retail strip hopes to be an affordable location for small businesses wanting to open in Rowlett that currently cannot afford too.

Marketing highlights include Best of Rowlett, Team Texas trip, and Paleteria Niko, a family-owned Hispanic culture dessert business. The month of February featured La Casita giveaway where two winners were chosen at random that liked and followed both La Casita Coffee and Downtown Rowlett and tagging a friend. Updated photos of Sapphire Bay showing progress of site. Family owned Counter Culture is having setbacks due to meter set with Oncor, city is working with them to fast track the process. 151 Coffee has their Co but are facing staffing issues, looking towards an April date opening.

Dutch Bros is close to being open as the building was a pre-manufactured building. They do not foresee staffing issues as they have been aggressive in pay and job posting on social media.

**c) Rowlett Chamber/Chamber Foundation Update:**

Tori Owens, Chairman, of the Chamber of Commerce, gave the Chamber update. The Chamber is hosting Rowlett's 14th Annual Taste & Trade Business Expo which will have the community's finest businesses and restaurants all in one location at the end of March. Chamber is preparing to take part of a community clean up outing as part of the Adopt a Road Campaign which will be early in April. Teaming up with Baylor Scott & White Lake Pointe to host the Hometown Heroes Awards Event to honor members of the community in early May. Lastly, the Chamber still has a few openings for the Tuscany Trip in October.

Mark Hall gave the update for the Chamber Foundation. Mark spoke about the Foundation reviewing applications for 5 scholarships at \$1,000 each for high school kids that live in Rowlett and majoring in Business courses.

**d) GISD Update:**

Larry Glick, GISD Board member gave the update for the school district. The ballot has two contested elections this year. One is incumbent Jamie Miller vs. Christina Sterling and the other race is Daphne Stanley vs. Jed Reed. Anticipating a very tight race for votes between candidates. He encouraged reading the GISD Bond 2023 packet which was prepared by Michael Carol PHD at UNT. Dr. Ruiz with help from NASA held a Rowlett area competition for students to talk about and use artwork to describe and illustrate the D.A.R.T (Double Asteroid Redirection Test). Four winners walked away with valuable books on the D.A.R.T with autographs of NASA members who worked on the project. Expressed the need for focused science educational courses in younger grade students to foster a love for the field as communities are moving to a more technical resource.

**e) Knowledge Topic –2023 City Bond Election information given by Angie Smith, Deputy City Manager**

**7. Discussion Regarding EDAB Composition**

Charles presented information on the composition of the EDAB board and the discrepancies that exist between the Ordinance, the Boards and Commissions Handbook and the Agreement with the Chamber of Commerce. After discussion, the board agreed to the Board structure amendments as listed below, noting a change in the alternating term limits for the three resident appointees. Two will be on the same term and the third will alternate.

- Beginning with the reappointment process of October 1, 2023, one additional resident representative will be added for a total of three residents. Two will serve on the same term and the third will be an alternating term. (Paula Allen will continue to serve out her existing term ending September 30, 2023.)

- Indicate a preference for having at least one resident representative who works in the field of development or commercial real estate.
- Chamber Foundation position is redundant, so remove from Chamber Agreement. (This was not in the ordinance or handbook.)
- Remove ex-officio GISD administrative staff representative from ordinance and handbook.
- Chamber of Commerce representatives – One of the appointees will be the Chamber Board Chairman (or their designee) appointed on an annual basis. The other two Chamber representatives shall serve two-year alternating terms. Current representatives need to identify these terms.

A motion was made by Brian Galuardi and seconded by Michael Weaver to approve the edits for the composition of the EDAB board. The motion carried unanimously.

Final approval will be made by City Council for consolidation into an ordinance and the Handbook.

**8. 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.**


- Charles M. and Blake M. encouraged EDAB attendance of Recode Rowlett Wednesday March 22, 2023 at the RCC as it would bring insight to the obstacles developers and site selectors encounter when working with Rowlett and provide understanding to future code changes.


**9. 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.**

- Staff will work to arrange a tour of Sapphire Bay for the May meeting.
- Eva Hummell invited EDAB for a tour of the Atmos Training Facility to showcase the improvements and investments Atmos has made in Rowlett, date to determined.

**10. ADJOURNMENT.**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:18 A.M.

  
Mick Donnelly, Chairman

  
Charles Mazarakes, Assigned City Staff

4/18/23

Date Approved