

City of Rowlett
Economic Development Advisory Board

Tuesday, July 18, 2023, at the Rowlett Area Chamber & Visitors Center
8:30 A.M.

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairman Mick Donnelly, called the Rowlett Economic Development Advisory Board meeting to order at 8:30 A.M. on July 18, 2023. In attendance: Chairman Mick Donnelly, David Hall, Michael Gallops, Tori Owens, Chris Kizziar, Blake Margolis, Jeff Winget, Michael Weaver and. Staff: Melinda Bartram, Claudia Frausto, Munal Mauladad, Charles Mazarakes, and Libbey Tucker. Absent were: Paula Allen, Larry Glick, and Vice Chair Eva Hummel.

2. PUBLIC INPUT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM.

None.

3. CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 20, 2023 MEETING.

A motion was made by Chris Kizziar and seconded by Tori Owens to approve the June 20, 2023 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

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. New businesses listed for June are LuxZuri events and photography studio, a small event space for 50 people with one new job; and, Tight House Disc Golf with one new job. BRE visits for the month of June were with Tight House Disc Golf, Discount Tire and Iris Memory Care.

Libbey Tucker, Director of Economic Development continued with the sales taxes report showing 14% above forecasted amount by \$97,185, which is 7% less than the same month last year in 2022 by \$47,382. Seven Certificates of Occupancy were granted with two new Commercial Building Permits issued valued at \$53,351.76. Five existing commercial building/remodel permits pulled for the month of June coming in with a \$1,085,000 value. Webpage views for June were 6,362 with website downloads five.

Melinda Bartram, Downtown Manager, gave the Downtown Rowlett updates, noting she is working on several economic revitalization activities, including the vacant spaces at The Village, the property located at 3825 Main and 3829 Main, among others. GO TEXAN certification was presented to the City

for promoting local businesses who sell products/food made in Texas. During the month of July the Rowlett podcast will feature the Commissioner for the Texas Department of Agriculture, Sid Miller to discuss the program and how it benefits small businesses in the community.

The Northeast DFW Downtown Managers Consortium kickoff meeting will be held July 26, 2023 at Barroco's. Melinda reported staff discussed the Civic Brand marketing strategy assessment with City Manager and leadership staff and reviewed recommended graphics. She has organized a small business marketing training with downtown consultant Jon Schallert called Destination Creation, in partnership with the Rowlett Area Chamber and Visitors Center scheduled for July 24-25, 2023. Topics covered will be how to make your business as a destination, how to stand out from other businesses that are similar and in the end be the place people drive to. This is open to not only Rowlett businesses, but also to Fate, Greenville and Mesquite.

The Downtown Rowlett survey deadline of July 31 is approaching, Melinda reported so far more than 1,250 people have taken and completed the survey.

Libbey provided the marketing updates on the Rowlett Economic Development website launch which has been very successful, generating a great deal of website traffic as well as companies reaching out to possibility of finding a location in Rowlett. Although there are a few data connections to work out on the website, the team is still updating various aspects. A LinkedIn ad campaign has launched, created in partnership with WavTeq, our economic development marketing firm, that is a carousel-style ad that targets groups and professions that the team designated. It is generating positive results for exposure. An unpaid media opportunity with Business View Magazine is underway with interviews with staff and Michael Gallops. The piece is supported by ads purchased by the City's vendors and area businesses. The article will be published in August as well as a separate published piece we can use for our separate marketing. Michael Gallops, Charles Mazarakes and Libbey Tucker all attended the TEDC Mid-Year Conference in Allen Texas for Professional Development. As requested by Chairman Donnelly, Libbey and Charles provided information on projects in the Planning & Development process.

Charles continued with the downtown marketing efforts by CivicBrand, which included promoting the Downtown Rowlett survey and link to take it. They wrote a blog on the Top 20 things to do in Downtown Rowlett featuring downtown businesses as well as the Rowlett Library and events hosted in downtown. The Sweet Taste of Pride event and Juneteenth Block Party in Downtown Rowlett were also featured, which reported great attendance turn out.

b) Rowlett Chamber/Chamber Foundation Update:

Tori Owens, Chairman of the Board for the Chamber of Commerce, gave the Chamber and Chamber Foundation updates. 33rd Rowlett Area Chamber Golf Classic will be September 21st so they are still seeking sponsors, players, volunteers, and raffle donations. Rowlett Economic Development together with the Rowlett Chamber will be hosting an Economic Development Summit on September 27 which will be held at the RCC, more information to come. There are still a few openings for the Tuscany Trip in October; anyone in the community is welcome to sign up at the Chamber if interested. Leadership Rowlett Class 32 applications are being accepted for the new year, anyone interested could find the application on the Leadership Rowlett website as there is only two weeks left to join.

c) GISD Update:

In his absence, Libbey Tucker gave updates for Larry Glick, GISD Board member for the school district: Larry is a member of the GISD security committee advised that they are being extremely proactive in meeting the State requirements of providing an armed officer at every campus. Other than possibly Sachse, School Resource Officers will not be from our police department. Plans will be to extensively train retired police officers or former military for those roles.

The first tranche of bonds from their recent Bond Election were successfully sold in the early weeks of July. GISD continues to have the highest bond rating in the State of Texas. They were sold with a maximum length of 22 years at an average rate below the 4% range norm.

GISD has announced the hiring of the new CFO, replacing Dr. Ringo. Darrell Dodds from Midland ISD has a long history in finance, beginning in banking and then school finance. Mr. Dodds has served as President and Board member of the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO).

d) Knowledge Topic – Rowlett Economic Development Marketing Efforts - Sandy Pratt, Head of Digital Marketing, WAVTEQ

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.

- Blake Margolis asked Mick Donnelly to consider joining Rockwall County economic development advisory board that is newly forming as having a Rowlett advisory board member on it would be very beneficial in knowing future developments plans between Rockwall and Rowlett.
- Blake Margolis also welcomed Jeff Winget as the new economic board member in place of Brian Galuardi.
- A Town Hall meeting will be held on August 14, 2023.
- Applications for the 11-week Rowlett Citizen Police Academy are being accepted as classes start August 17, 2023; application on the Rowlett website.
- Board and commissions applications are being accepted if any member needs to reapply or apply to join any board or commissions for Rowlett.
- Utility Billing should be in their new facility on Dalrock Road in October and will include a drive through for bill pay. This location will also provide a Rockwall County voting location for Rowlett residents.
- Chris Kizziar shared that at the July 18 Council meeting the Rowlett Veterans Recognition Program will be honoring 100-year-old Carl S. Chilton Jr., US Army Air Corp member and welcomed attendance by the board.
- Libbey added more information about the Economic Development Summit on September 27, 2023 and invited the board to attend the half-day event that will have speakers from several commercial development industries, Texas Association of Business, Dallas Regional Chamber, and the Governor's office.

- Charles invited the board to a meeting we are hosting that is to be held August 16, 2023 for the East Side Allies which is a consortium of Eco Dev professionals in the eastern DFW metroplex that meet quarterly to discuss best practices and hear a presentation from the sponsoring city of the quarter. The meeting will be held at Bowl-a-Rama and catered by Barroco's.

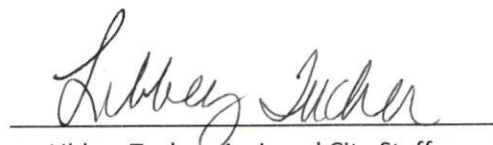
7. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD MAY REQUEST TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDA MEETINGS. NO MEMBER OF THE BOARD OR COMMISSION MAY DISCUSS ANY OF THE REQUESTED SUBJECTS UNTIL SUCH MATTER HAS BEEN PROPERLY PLACED ON A POSTED AGENDA.

- North Shore update/tour requested previously by Chairman Mick Donnelly at the June meeting which team is still working on.
- Incentives policy updates and changes to be added to future agenda

8. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45 A.M.


Mick Donnelly, Chairman


Libbey Tucker, Assigned City Staff


Date Approved