

**BIG LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Alan Heidemann called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Jim Dickinson, Ken Geroux, Alan Heidemann, Paul Knier, Cindy Lemm, and Kim Noding. Commissioners absent: Donna Clarksean.

Also present: BLEDA Executive Director Therese Haffner and BLEDA Secretary Corrie Scott.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Dickinson motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5. APPROVE BLEDA MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 13, 2023

Commissioner Geroux motioned to approve the February 13, 2023 BLEDA minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Dickinson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6. BLEDA BUSINESS ITEMS

6A. AMENDMENT TO PURCHASE AGREEMENT PID 65-477-0115

Haffner reviewed that the owner of the former school building attached to city hall has requested an extension to the closing date outlined in the current purchase agreement. She stated that the proposed amendment extends the closing date to April 14, 2023 and adds language related to personal items to be removed and building items to remain as part of the building.

Haffner noted that garbage was removed from the purchase agreement. Knier asked if there will be garbage left behind. Haffner stated it was due to concerns with using that

language. She stated that the owner has signed the updated purchase agreement. Dickinson asked if they need additional time. Haffner stated that there is another meeting before the closing date that is within the agreement and that this could be amended to allow for an extension if needed.

Commissioner Geroux motioned to approve Resolution 2023-04 approving the Amendment to Purchase Agreement between the Big Lake EDA and Diane Jacobsen. Seconded by Commissioner Dickinson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6B. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Haffner discussed the status of various projects within Community Development. This update included Housing, Commercial and Industrial, BLEDA, Planning and Zoning, and Building.

Scott reviewed upcoming programming and stated that the Chamber Community Fair in conjunction with the Big Lake Farmers Market will take place on March 18, 2023. Noding asked if there will be an emphasis on job openings at the Community Fair. Scott stated that many organizations use the event as a time to recruit employees and the Chamber plans to place a board for organizations to market their job opportunities at the entrance to the gymnasium where booths will be setup. Geroux asked if the Chamber is still hosting the Community Fair. Scott stated that the Chamber has partnered with Community Education to make the event more affordable and that all proceeds from booth registrations goes toward student scholarships.

7. OTHER

Noding reviewed that City Department Heads have set priorities for 2023 and she asked about the 'complete a downtown center study' priority and what that involves. Haffner stated that preparing a scope of work and identifying an area for redevelopment in the downtown area would be the first step. Noding asked if a downtown center design was created in the past. Geroux stated that the last design was created in 1999. Geroux asked where this topic of discussion was started. Knier stated that all City Department Heads were asked to create a brief list of priorities that they would like to see accomplished at some point and bring those to Council and that this topic is one that was brought forward by the Community Development Department.

Noding asked why nothing was done with the previous downtown designs. Geroux stated that in the past the City has created Comprehensive Plans, but would not generally use them when making decisions and that in the past few years that practice has changed. Geroux stated that the timing of a potential study is imperative for its success and to ensure the investment in the study sees a return. Dickinson recommended that the EDA prioritize recognizing partnerships with landowners that would be effected by the creation of a downtown center. He stated that one purpose of

the EDA is to help remove barriers that could make a City project more difficult to complete. Geroux stated that bringing potential designs public at the wrong time could have a detrimental effect on the City.

Knier asked what the next step is for the design center priority. Geroux stated that there isn't a solidified timeline listed in the EDA Strategic Plan. Haffner stated that she doesn't currently have contact with adjacent landowners, but that it could be pursued. Knier stated that there is an advantage when selling to have a larger parcel. Geroux stated that he supports the idea, but he has concerns on timing because the City hasn't decided yet what their intentions are with the current parcel.

Knier asked what the EDA's role is regarding parkways. Haffner stated that the Planning Commission is taking care of the parkway topic.

8. ADJOURN

Commissioner Knier motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Lemm, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.