

**BIG LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY, AUGUST 8, 2022

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, Cole Hendry, Paul Knier, Cindy Lemm, and Kim Noding.

Also present: BLEDA Executive Director Hanna Klimmek, BLEDA Assistant Treasurer Deb Wegeleben, and BLEDA Secretary Corrie Scott.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

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

5. APPROVE BLEDA MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2022

Commissioner Geroux motioned to approve the June 13, 2022 BLEDA minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6. BLEDA BUSINESS ITEMS

6A. STRATEGIC PLAN – 2ND QUARTER REPORT (APRIL 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2022)

Klimmek reviewed the BLEDA Strategic Plan and asked the BLEDA for recommendations on the document.

Heidemann stated that the Strategic Plan is included in the job description of the Community Development Director position. Geroux asked if it makes the most sense to wait on making changes to the Strategic Plan until a new Community Development Director is hired. Klimmek agreed it makes sense to include the new Community Development Director in the discussion. Dickinson asked about any changes or updates

to City Hall. Klimmek stated that the option of making City Hall a stand-alone building by modifying utilities has been considered as it could get in the way of making a sale which would not be ideal. Geroux stated that the project should likely not involve the BLEDA as the decisions are made by the City Council. Klimmek stated that the redevelopment of Carousell Works or City Hall as a whole would go to the BLEDA prior to City Council. Noding asked if separating the utilities for the two portions of the building would be an expensive project. Klimmek stated that the project would not be a significant cost.

Knier asked how many people have applied for the Community Development Director position. Klimmek stated that no applications have been submitted but that two people have called to inquire regarding the position.

6B. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR/BLEDA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION DISCUSSION

Klimmek reviewed that the City has posted the Community Development Director position. She requested that two members of the BLEDA participate in an interview panel for the position.

Knier asked if it is normal to have a panel when hiring. Klimmek stated that it is normal to use a panel when hiring department heads. Dickinson offered to sit on the interview panel. Heidemann also offered to sit on the interview panel.

6C. PRELIMINARY 2023 BLEDA BUDGET

Wegeleben reviewed the 2023 BLEDA budget.

Heidemann asked why the percentage of wages was changed. Wegeleben stated that it was to more accurately reflect the Community Development Director's time spent on the BLEDA but that it can always be adjusted again in the future if there are changes.

Geroux stated that there needs to be more investment in the BLEDA to make the Commissioners' time more worthwhile and the impact of the Commission more efficient. Klimmek stated that a marketing budget would be necessary to be successful in marketing the City of Big Lake to developers outside of the community. She stated that a CIP Fund will need to be started and it will take time to build this budget.

Geroux asked if the BLEDA has brought a proposed budget forward to the City Council. Wegeleben stated that it hasn't happened before and that there would need to be specific examples on what the money would be spent on. Knier asked what a marketing budget would be needed for. Dickinson stated that the branding project is to show those outside of the community what the City has to offer, not just those living within the community. Lemm asked if there are brochures for the City that can be mailed out. Klimmek stated that there hasn't been a new brochure created since the new logo was

unveiled. Wegeleben stated that there is a very small marketing budget in the general fund that can be used by the BLEDA to market the City.

Geroux stated that when the Council makes decisions it brings in a political aspect to decision making whereas the BLEDA is not elected and it is easier to make decisions without politics getting in the way. Dickinson stated that there is a specific portion in the Strategic Plan that states what types of marketing should be invested in, but there isn't a budget to allow for those projects to be completed. Heidemann asked if the new Community Development Director could be tasked with coming up with a proposed budget for marketing. Wegeleben stated that she needs a proposed number for the marketing budget for 2024. Knier recommended using some of the money in the Revolving Loan Fund for marketing.

Knier asked about a return on investment for the marketing budget. Geroux stated that it is not easy to quantify a return on investment from marketing. Klimmek stated that the return on investment would likely not be realized immediately, but rather over a number of years.

Geroux stated that it would be wise to have a budget built up in the case that a redevelopment opportunity arises. Wegeleben stated that there are restrictions on levying so there would need to be transfers from the general fund. She stated that the levy through BLEDA would count toward the City's levies as a whole. Knier stated that he is concerned about increasing property taxes. Geroux agreed that he doesn't want to see property taxes raise, but that if there is going to be a BLEDA it needs to be funded appropriately.

Commissioner Dickinson motioned to approve the 2023 BLEDA budget with a transfer of \$50,000 from the Revolving Loan Fund to the marketing budget. Seconded by Commissioner Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Commissioner Noding motioned to approve a Resolution authorizing the City of Big Lake to levy with the amendment of the proposed budget. Seconded by Commissioner Lemm, the motion passed on a vote of 6:1 with Commissioners Geroux, Heidemann, Hendry, Knier, Lemm, and Noding voting aye and Commissioner Dickinson voting nay.

6D. BLEDA BUDGET AND LIST OF CLAIMS

Commissioner Dickinson motioned to accept the budget report and approve the BLEDA List of Claims for June and July 2022 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6E. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE

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

Knier asked about Premier Marine's labor and if they can fill the needed positions. Klimmek stated that they are heavily marketing job openings, but that she hasn't spoken with the owners lately and she can't say whether or not they are receiving applicants. She stated that there is a lack of available housing for those wanting to relocate to Big Lake.

Scott reviewed that Music in the Park is wrapping up on August 11, 2022. She stated that August 10, 2022 the City is celebrating National Farmers Market Week. Wegeleben asked about the Fairy House Contest. Scott stated that there were six people who registered this year and that the event was created to limit the time of the year that people place homemade fairy houses on the trail system to avoid any litter, disturbance of wildlife or issues with Public Works being able to maintain parks and trails. Scott reviewed that the website redesign is moving forward and should be up in October. She stated that if anyone ever sees content on the website that needs updating, they can reach out to her.

Knier asked about the marketing plan. Klimmek stated that she will be working with Scott to create a marketing plan regarding the new branding project, the website, and social media.

7. **OTHER** – None.

8. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Knier motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Noding, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.