

MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 5, 2023

1 | Page

The Economic Development Advisory Board of the City of Fort Myers, Florida, met in regular session at Oscar M. Corbin, Jr. City Hall, 2200 Second Street, a meeting place in the City of Fort Myers, Florida, on Thursday, January 5, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. Present were: Chair Dennis Landfried, presiding, Regular Board Members, Ori Lee Ford, Roy Kennix (Left at 3:11 p.m.), Herb Strong (Arrived at 2:02 p.m.), and Ken Pariser. Also present were: Travis Carey, Assistant City Attorney, Steven Belden, Community Development Director, Steven Weathers, Economic Development Director, Gwen Carlisle, City Clerk, and Jennifer Myers, Recording Specialist. Absent: Vice Chair Jerome Miller, Regular Board Member John Kakatsch, and Alternate Board Members Nannette Maxson and Duane Dyar.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Landfried called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Landfried led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

ELECTION

- Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Landfried noted that several Board Members were absent and asked if the Board wanted to postpone the election until next month. Discussion ensued regarding the election.

Board Member Strong arrived at 2:02 p.m.

MOTION: Board Member Pariser moved to table the election to February 2, 2023 as a date certain for a decision; seconded by Board Member Kennix; motion carried unanimously.

1. PRESENTATIONS – None.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1. Approve Minutes of the December 1, 2022 meeting

MOTION: Board Member Strong moved to approve the Minutes of the December 1, 2022 Regular Meeting; seconded by Board Member Pariser; motion carried unanimously.

3. STAFF REPORTS

3.1. Phyllis Calloway, Southwest Florida Enterprise Center Director

Phyllis Calloway, Southwest Florida Enterprise Center (SWFEC) Director announced that on February 23, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. the SWFEC will be hosting a First Year Cohort Showcase for the tenant partners that have been in the Incubator Program for a full year. She invited the

MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 5, 2023

2 | Page

Board Members to attend and meet the new businesses that will be graduating out of the Incubator Program in 2023.

3.2. Steven Belden, Community Development Department Director

Steven Belden, Community Development Department Director gave an update on the Hurricane Ian recovery progress.

3.3. Steven Weathers, Economic Development Director

Steven Weathers, Economic Development Director stated that he will be sending out his phone number and email address through the Clerk's Office and requested that each Board Member contact him to schedule a time to meet and discuss their thoughts on economic development. He mentioned that the Counselors of Real Estate (CRE) arrived in December to assess Midtown and will be providing a report soon which he will provide to the Board when it is received. The City Council is having a Work Session on January 12, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. at the Riverside Community Center wherein they will discuss various issues. Mr. Weathers noted that the HCA Hospital has plans to expand to Fort Myers therefore, he had a discussion with their Southwest Florida representative to build a relationship with them and help them find local suppliers to contain their spending locally as much as possible. He mentioned that he met with the Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau wherein they discussed international economic development. Mr. Weathers conveyed that the County invited him to participate in a trade mission to build a relationship with Canada. He mentioned that the FIU Community Economic Development Strategic Implementation Strategy stakeholder meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 15, 2023 and he will forward an invitation to the Board Members if it becomes a date certain. Mr. Weathers explained that he recently became familiar with the Horizon Council Foundation which is a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for public-private partnerships and businesses to invest in the long-term prosperity of Lee County's economy and has a meeting scheduled with them on January 11, 2023 to see how the City can become more engaged with them.

Board Member Kennix inquired if the City received funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Mr. Belden replied that the City received approximately \$15 million of ARPA funds wherein most of the funds are going towards infrastructure projects, however, he can provide the breakdown how the funds were applied at the next meeting. Mr. Weathers explained that the Hurricane Ian Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement process requires that the City wait for approval from FEMA before acting on many issues or they will not get reimbursed such as with boat removal. The City did receive some FEMA funds up front, however, the remaining reimbursement funds may take several years to be received possibly as far out as 2029.

Board Member Ford felt that the City should request an increase its share of the County tax collected from hotels. Mr. Weathers replied that the hospitality cost share would be handled by City and County leadership. Discussion ensued regarding the business attraction and retention. Board Member Strong inquired if the City tracks the hospitality industry. Mr. Weathers replied that the City does not however, the Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau does wherein he can get those data reports from them and provide them to the Board.

Chair Landfried asked if there has been progress in obtaining a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System such as Sales Force for the City. Mr. Weathers replied that he is

MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 5, 2023

3 | Page

still working on obtaining a CRM System. Chair Landfried stated that he would like to overlay the FIU Community Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan with the Board as a group to get focused on specifics to be proactive and thoughtful in the City's growth. He mentioned that the Board Members reviewed the 2018-2023-2028 Strategic Plan and that there are a lot of issues in the Plan that the Board is actively working on. The FIU Plan and the Strategic Plan will give the Board some defined objectives to work on.

Board Member Pariser asked if the Board has a budget allowance for Board representatives to attend conventions or conferences. Mr. Weathers replied that he believes it was budgeted, asked the Board for their suggestions, and noted that he will research conferences and bring the information back to the Board. Discussion ensued regarding the Board's educational objectives.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Love, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Economic Development Director inquired if he could ask a question and the Chair agreed. Mr. Love inquired about the City's goals for local environmental economic development such as Rockfill Road or Prince Street that generate income for the City. Mr. Weathers replied by asking Mr. Love to contact him to schedule a meeting to discuss the NAACP's community goals.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Landfried noted that he made his comments earlier in the meeting.

5. BOARD MEMBER FOCUS AREAS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Board Member Pariser inquired whether the Chair made any progress in scheduling a meeting with the other Board's Chairs to discuss overlapping topics. Chair Landfried replied that he is still working on scheduling a meeting with the other Board's Chairs. Mr. Weathers recommended that he work on scheduling a workshop with the key Advisory Boards and Committee's chairs.

- Creating policy to ensure local contractors are engaged in the Hurricane Ian redevelopment efforts - None
- Disadvantage Business Enterprise Program - None
- Business development/education assistance with FGCU, Enterprise Center & technical training - None
- Palm Beach Boulevard corridor - None
- Affordable housing - None
- US 41 Corridor - None
- Water quality - None
- Cultural, Sport, Tourism Development - None

MINUTES - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

January 5, 2023

4 | Page

- MLK Boulevard Corridor - None
- FIU Community Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan - None

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Board Member Kennix expressed his appreciation to the City for its extensive involvement in the Towles Garden affordable housing development and invited the Board and Staff to the groundbreaking ceremony on January 26, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

Chair Landfried requested that the City's Public Information Officer be invited to the next meeting to give a presentation regarding the City's branding campaign.

Board Member Kennix left at 3:11 p.m.

Board Member Pariser inquired if the million dollars is still in escrow for the City of Palms Park and if there was an extension. Chair Landfried replied that he believes the City did get an extension. Mr. Weathers advised that the City is waiting for the CRE Report to decide on the future of the City of Palms Park. Board Member Pariser inquired about the progress of the Request for Proposal (RFP) Midtown analysis. City Clerk Carlisle stated that Council is waiting on the CRE Report to move forward with the RFP for the Midtown analysis.

8. NEXT MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT – February 2, 2023

ADJOURNMENT: *Board Member Ford moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 p.m.; seconded by Board Member Strong; motion carried unanimously.*