

Minutes of March 5, 2020
Meeting of
Wood County Economic Development Commission
6:30 p.m.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees: Joanne Wisdom, Tom Callan, Vic Savelli, Miste Davis, Allene Dogget, Rodney Kieke, Greg Hollen, Jim Berry, Craig Lindholm and Tom Keenan. Quorum Present.

Members not present: Gwen Winters, Cynthia Stancil, Neal Duncan, and Tommy Brown

Others Present: Larry Tucker with Wood County Monitor, Chana Gail Willis with Trails Country Reporter and Guest of Miste Davis (name unknown).

Citizen Comment: Chana Gail Willis made inquiries about the Agenda. Tom Keenan explained agenda and public comment rules. Comments have to be presented before the meeting & not during the meeting per the Open Meetings Act. The policy is to submit comments before an agenda item.

Ms. Willis inquired about next month's meeting/agenda to discuss business development, contracting, and other areas:

1. Hot fund proposals and budget process should be done by end of June instead of July (her opinion);
2. Memberships should not be limited to Wood County residents
3. Excessive absenteeism is not clearly defined in the by-laws
4. State law dictates the appointment of the members.
5. Financials do not match what auditor had. Mr. Keenan responds they are aware of that.

February Minutes: No discussion. Motion and second to approve. Carrier Unanimously.

Monthly Financials: Jim Berry addresses the financials. Financials are not complete because February financials are not available until Mid-March. Because each month's financials are not available until mid-month, maybe consider having the meetings on the 3rd week of the month in order to have current financials. May have to stay one month in arrears. It is also necessary to learn about each line item and what can be spent under each category. Discussion as to what items require Commissioners approval.

Finance: Board has workshops and they develop a recommended budget which then goes to Commissioners Court for adoption. No need to ratify.

Bylaws – Discussion and Vote: Discussion of the current statute which gives the County Judge authority to appoint a board and board members. New Bylaws are the result of the Blue-Ribbon recommendations. Budget approvals remain to be approved by the County Judge and the Commissioners Court. The old bylaws are null & void because they don't follow the statute. Motion to approve the new bylaws made and seconded and were approved by 8 votes for and 1 against (M. Davis).

Meeting Time & Place: Change meeting time to 5:30 and consider different places. Annex not available until June. UT Hospital Board Room or civic center are available. Approval to meet at 5:30 UT Hospital in Quitman. Continue with meeting the first Thursday and allow financials to remain 1 month in arrears.

Formal Agreement to Sponsor Bass Tournament. A formal agreement to sponsor the Bass Tournament was discussed. Dr. John Wisdom will fly his plane; kid fest, aquarium and bounce house, good entertainment discussed. Sponsor form approved to get sponsors. After discussion it was moved by Vic Savelli, seconded by Rodney Kieke and unanimously approved to sponsor the Bass Tournament and host the festival.

Chairman's Report: Regionalism – groups of cities & counties band to get business opportunities by working with best practices. Will get Executive Committee to get ideas to present to the board. Met with committee chairs to work on action plan, to obtain their goals to improve quality of life & promote business. Fishing University filmed 3 days and Tom Keenan did the welcome for Wood County. Next Month must vote for the Officers.

Executive Director's Report – Berry pointed out that most board members have completed Public Info Act Training & Open Meeting Act Training. There are still a few board members who have not provided certificates. He had with County Auditor & County Judge about the financials and now they have 3 years of financial history. Has attended several good meetings with the SRA, & Texas Best Planning group & met with the fishing university group.

Committee Reports: Greg Hollen has been receiving interesting resumes for Executive Director's position. Good discussions with candidates.

Joanne Wisdom asking to set up quality of life committees for health care, public care, & social services. Will talk to hospitals, juvenile services, & will talk to healthy living groups.

Government Affairs Committee by Greg Hollen action plans for education purposes and create models. Share information and activities and creating an information clearinghouse.

Information is being gathered regarding Wi-Fi for the County. Broadband is criss-crossing throughout the county and may be accessible also.

Entrepreneurship and helping businesses to remain in business. Combine education and teach kids to invest in the community with entrepreneurship ideas.

Public Safety – improving communication with the various departments to improve security around the community.

There were no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Next meeting will be on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at UT Hospital in Quitman @ 5:30 p.m. (Not mentioned here, but above in Meeting Place.)

Jim Berry
Interim Executive Director