

WOOD COUNTY INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

May 9, 2019

Regular Meeting Minutes  
First United Methodist Church  
Quitman, Texas

**Members Present:**

Robby Fair	Dan Kirk	Martha Scroggins	Lowe Ann Elliott
Gerald Elliott	Dana Donahue	Ken Donahue	Allene Doggett
Pat Hamlett	Neal Duncan	Sam Scroggins	

**Members Not Present:**

Joanne Wisdom	Miste Davis	Theresa Margos	Ben Hudman
JR Simpson	Issac Allen	Jim Berry ✓	Chris Flournoy

**Others Present:** Executive Director Kiki Bettis; Media, Zak Wellerman with Wood County Monitor; and Victor Savely, County Hotel Lodging Representative.

1. **Call To Order/Open Forum:** Chairman Gerald Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the invocation led by Sam Scroggins.
2. **Consent Agenda:** A motion was made by Dana Donahue and seconded by Pat Hamlett to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes from the March 7, 2019 meeting and financial report for the month of May, as presented. Motion carried- unanimously.
3. **Wood County Arboretum Sponsorship Request:** Chairman Elliott presented a sponsorship request from the Friends of the Arboretum. The Friends of the Arboretum will host the 'Miss Ima 5K Run & Kids Fun Run' on Saturday, July 20, beginning at 8 a.m. in the Quitman City Park. All monies raised from the event will benefit the Wood County Arboretum & Botanical Gardens. A motion was made by Neal Duncan and seconded by Martha Scroggins to purchase the Bronze Level sponsorship in the amount of \$100. Motion carried-unanimously.
4. **Comprehensive/Strategic Plan Proposal:** Chairman Elliott presented a proposal from Opportunity Strategies for facilitation services for Strategic and/or Business Retention and Expansion Program. The proposal included various options for each of the programs which included cost, timeframe and structure of the assignment. The board reviewed and discussed the options/price and asked Bettis to inquire about the cost difference to include additional attendees. Neal Duncan suggested the board table the proposal to allot time for the Blue Ribbon Task Force to present their recommendations on the WCIC to the Commissioners Court. The board agreed to revisit the proposal at the June meeting.
5. **Chairman's Report:** Chairman Elliott thanked the board members who attended and assisted with the Bassmaster Elite Tournament held last week at the Sabine River Authority. Despite the heavy rainfall the event was a huge success and well attended. Chairman Elliott was able to recruit help from Winnsboro community member Tex Willis and several members of the high school bass fishing team to assist with the tear down and set up of the event. The chairman also expressed his gratitude to Bettis for all of her time and efforts put into the tournament.
6. **Executive Director's Report:** Bettis announced Applications are still being accepted for HOT Fund Projects. Applications must be submitted no later than 5 p.m. on May 24. The HOT Fund Committee will schedule a time to meet, review, and discuss those applications before submitting their recommendations to the board for approval. The Bassmaster Texas Fest Fishing Tournament had a great turnout, despite weather! Roughly 500 cars were parked on Saturday alone-estimating at least 2 people per vehicle= 1,000+ attendees! Several out of town visitors come to the event (a lot of new people and even some of the anglers had never been or fished Lake Fork before) as well as the area-they expressed what a "Gem" Lake Fork is and will be returning soon. Some anglers are still here fishing Lake Fork until the next tournament starts in a couple of weeks in Oklahoma. The majority of our lodging establishments were occupied, the retail and restaurant

businesses in and around the county saw an influx in customers indicating a positive boost to Wood County's economy. This tournament brings a lot of recognition to Lake Fork, Wood County and East Texas. Seeing these tournaments can lead to people moving to the area and potentially adding to economic progress through business developments. B.A.S.S. and TPWD will be announcing the next season's 13-city tour during ICast in Florida (the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in July). Discussions are taking place with Emory, Lake Fork Chamber and Sabine River Authority on a possible return of the tournament to Lake Fork next year. The Tax Collector/Assessor has mailed out letters to all county lodging establishments explaining the HOT collection process. We have heard back from several establishments that were unaware of the county's hotel/motel tax and/or thought their taxes were being handled by AirBnB. The State Comptroller's Office has confirmed that AirBnB does not pay the local taxes and in the letter from the Tax Collector stating that it is the owner's responsibility to collect/pay such monies. This also holds true for VRBO. This is still a work in progress as some entities pay monthly/quarterly, however the process is moving in the right direction. Bettis reminded the board that she will out of the office next week attending a grant writing course in Fort Worth.

7. **Community Reports:**

*Alba-* The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual DPS Bass Tournament will be held Saturday at Lake Fork Marina followed by the Legends of Lake Fork annual tournament.

*Hawkins-* Jarvis College graduated 102 students last week which is believed to be the largest in history. Gwen Winters and Cynthia Stancil were selected to serve as directors and the board will welcome them at the June meeting.

*Mineola-* The Select Theater will feature the new 'Avengers' movie this weekend followed by the film 'Break Through' on Saturday, May 18. There will be special showing of the movie 'Grease' on May 23. Signups have commenced for the Mineola League of the Arts Summer Camp in July. May Fiesta Day was a huge success especially around the Iron Horse Square. The mini train will run every second and third Saturday of the months March through October from 11 am until 4 p.m. Ladies Night Out on the downtown square will be held this Saturday. Uncle Bubba's Grill will be open soon. Also the Henry Hotel will be opening a B&B and restaurant- Logan's Place- within the next six months which is located near Dairy Queen in the former Taste Bud's building.

*Quitman-* The One Act Play cast and crew went to the state competition. The annual Dogwood Fiesta will be held May 17. A Fish Fry will be held Saturday at the First United Methodist Church from 5-7 p.m. benefiting Boy Scout Troop 36. '3 Hens', a new business to the city has officially opened its doors and is located on East Goode Street.

*Winnsboro-* The Rotary Club held a fundraiser last week and raised roughly \$4,000. The city's Farmers Market is open every Saturday. 'Monday Night Live' kicks off May 20 at the Bowery followed by the History Days & Walking Tour on Saturday, May 25.

*Yantis-* Lake Fork Chamber of Commerce selected the Wood County Industrial Commission as their Member of the Month for June.

8. **Meeting adjourned:** A motion was made by Pat Hamlett and seconded by Dana Donahue to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried-unanimously. Meeting at 7:32 p.m.



Kiki Bettis, Executive Director