

WOOD COUNTY INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

July 11, 2019

Regular Meeting Minutes

First United Methodist Church

Quitman, Texas

Members Present:

Sam Scroggins	Lowe Ann Elliott	Gerald Elliott	Martha Scroggins
Allene Doggett	Ken Donahue	Dana Donahue	JR Simpson
Chris Flournoy	Dan Kirk	Robby Fair	Neal Duncan
Miste Davis	Ben Hudman		

Members Not Present:

Joanne Wisdom	Theresa Margos	Jim Berry	Pat Hamlett
Cynthia Stancil	Gwen Winters		

Others Present: Executive Director Kiki Bettis; Quitman City Secretary Rodney Kieke; Media, Zak Wellerman with Wood County Monitor; Taylor and Marty Gould with Beacon Aviation.

- 1. Call To Order/Open Forum:** Chairman Gerald Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Chairman Elliott read a 'Thank You' card from the Wood County Arboretum expressing their gratitude and appreciate for the Industrial Commissioner sponsorship of the 'Miss Ima 5K Run & Kids Fun Run' scheduled to take place July 20 at the Quitman City Park.
- 2. Open Forum:** Marty and Taylor Gould with Beacon Aviation gave a presentation to the board on the benefits of a county-wide digital aerial mapping and presented testimonials from other groups that have purchased the product from Beacon Aviation. The Golden-based company uses planes, camera equipment and mapping to determine elevations and important map information for water districts, phone companies, and economic development. Beacon Aviation provides high quality/resolution geographic imagery that is produced faster and less expensive than the current product provided by the Wood County Appraisal District. Marty also informed the board that there are grants available through the Sabine River Authority that could assist with the overall cost of the product if the board chooses to purchase. The chairman thanked Marty and Taylor Gould for attending the board meeting and noted that the board will discuss it at another scheduled board meeting.
- 3. Consent Agenda:** A motion was made by Ken Donahue and seconded by JR Simpson to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes from the May 9, 2019 meeting and financial report for the month of June, as presented. Motion carried- unanimously.
- 4. Hotel Feasibility Study:** Chairman Elliott presented a proposal from Source Strategies of San Antonio to conduct a hotel feasibility study in the county. The study will determine if the county could sustain a hotel before determining the best locations a hotel could move into the county. Source Strategies will conduct site visits and research to determine the top three hotel brands best suited for the county. Chairman Elliott feels the data most likely will be concentrated around the Lake Fork area with the most potential areas being locating around Highway 154 and/or the FM 515 area. The estimated cost associated with the study was listed at approximately \$9,000. Bettis said the funds are available in the current fiscal year budget and if agreed upon, the study would be completed within four to five weeks. A motion was made by Chris Flournoy and seconded by Martha Scroggins to purchase the hotel feasibility study at the cost of \$9,000. Neal Duncan requested to amend the motion to purchase the study at a cost not to exceed \$9,500. The amended motion was seconded by Chris Flournoy. Motion carried- unanimously.
- 5. Membership to the Texas Hotel Lodging Association:** Chairman Elliott presented a membership request to join the Texas Hotel Lodging Association (THLA). Bettis explained that THLA offers three different types of membership which are designed to serve all sectors of the lodging and tourism industry. Bettis suggested joining as an Affiliate Member which would give the WCIC and Tax Office access to their expert legal team, assist with the collection of Hotel Occupancy Taxes, regulatory and operational issues that affect Texas lodging properties,

representation at the State Capital, educational training opportunities for hoteliers, city and county officials. A motion was made by Neal Duncan and seconded by Dana Donahue to join the THLA as an affiliate member for an annual membership fee of \$250. Motion carried-unanimously.

6. **Proposed HOT Fund Projects for FY 2019-2020:** Members of the HOT Fund Committee met June 18 to review the applications as well as heard presentations on each of the projects. There were a total of 30 applications received with a combined total of \$176,383 in funding requests. The total amount budgeted for such projects were \$75,000. The list of projects and requested amounts to be considered for funding for the upcoming 2019-2020 fiscal year included Lake Fork Chamber of Commerce \$5,000 (High School Open); Patriot Sporting Challenge \$1,000; Skeeter \$7,500; Bass Champs \$10,000; Texas Team Trail \$2,000; Yantis Catfish Classic \$4,900; Legends of Lake Fork \$5,000; Sealy Outdoors \$7,500; Hobie\$750; Bass on the Fly \$1,500; Wood County Old Settlers Reunion Association \$4,000; Mineola Chamber of Commerce \$1,500 (Fiesta Days); Mineola Chamber of Commerce \$1,200 (building/operations); Mineola Chamber of Commerce \$2,500 (Iron Horse Heritage Fest; Mineola Economic Development Corporation \$3,000 (Iron Horse Square Project); Mineola Economic Development Corporation \$3,000 (Lake Country Trails); Mineola Economic Development Corporation \$5,000 (Hometown Hang); Hawkins Chamber of Commerce \$500; Winnsboro Center of the Arts \$1,000; Winnsboro Rodeo Association \$1,000; Winnsboro Autumn Trails \$3,500; Winnsboro Four Corners Foundation \$3,000 (Art/Wine Festival); Alba Economic Development Corporation \$500; Alba Food Pantry/Car Show \$500. Miste Davis asked for the overall percentage used to determine how the projects were funded. A motion was made by Neal Duncan and seconded by Chris Flournoy. Motion carried with Davis casting the lone opposing vote.
7. **Proposed HOT Fund Budget for FY 2019-2020:** Chairman Elliott presented the board with a copy of the proposed Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) Fund budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 and gave a quick overview. The overall total of the HOT Fund budget is set at \$124,650 which is \$5,650 increase over last year's amount. The increases reflect a rise in advertising rates amongst various marketing companies as well as the potential for new advertising avenues along with a minimal increase in rental equipment (Xerox), travel and tourism promotions/projects within the upcoming year. A motion was made by Dana Donahue and seconded by Dan Kirk to approve the proposed HOT Fund Budget for FY 2019-2020 as presented. Motion carried. Neal Duncan abstained from the voting process.
8. **Proposed General Fund Budget for FY 2019-2020:** Chairman Elliott presented the board with a copy of the General Fund Budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 and gave a quick overview. The overall total of the General Fund was set at \$181,447 which is a decrease of \$17,600 over last year's amount. Most of the line items saw a minor decrease however reflects actual expenses incurred. The budget was prepared on the anticipation and contingency that each of the communities would continue paying their contributions to the WCIC although if a community opts not continue their contribution, those funds allocated for ED/UCC grants would have to decrease to make up the shortfall. Bettis noted that the budgets must be submitted to the County Judge on Friday (July 12) however if the board chooses to eliminate the cities contributions during the August board meeting then an amended budget would be presented to the County Commissioners during budget workshops. A motion was made by Dan Kirk and seconded by Ken Donahue to approve the proposed General Fund Budget for FY 2019-2020 as presented. Motion carried. Neal Duncan and Allene Doggett abstained from the voting process.
9. **Review & Discuss 'Blue Ribbon Task Force' Report/Recommendations:** Chairman Elliott asked the board to review the recommendations handed down by the Blue Ribbon Task Force and suggested the board begin making decisions at the next meeting scheduled for August 1. Neal Duncan explained some of the recommendations as he was a member of the task force and said some of the suggestions may not be feasible to implement but that some could be phased in over the years to come. Topics of discussion were whether or not the cities should continue their membership contribution, reducing the size of the board, changing the name of the organization and management of the organization. With regards to the recommendation of educational background of the executive director position, Ken Donahue suggested sending Bettis to school if that is what is needed rather than searching for another individual that could ultimately cost more to employ for the position. Martha Scroggins expressed her concern with the suggestion to have

city economic development directors to be on the board stating that city economic development leaders are focused on bringing business into their city and that they are often under confidentiality agreements. The chairman agreed that the board should have economic development aware individuals on the board, however is cautious of having the directors serve on the board. Chairman Elliott also reminded the board of the decision that was made in December (2018) to reduce the membership to 15 members from 21 however that recommendation was tabled by the Commissioners Court. The task force's recommendation suggested seven members of the board, which is the minimum number allowed by state statute. Duncan encouraged the board not to get stuck on the number seven as the idea was that a leaner board would be more effective. Chairman Elliott said the board could decide at the next meeting to either make a new recommendation on the number of directors on the board or ask the Commissioners Court to vote on the previous recommendation.

10. **Executive Director's Report:** Bettis announced the deadline for ED/UCC fund projects is July 26. In August, the Executive Committee will need to meet to establish a new slate of officers for the upcoming fiscal year which will be voted on at the annual meeting in September. Bettis also noted that Bassmaster and Major League Fishing are considering returning to Lake Fork next year.

11. **Community Reports:**

Mineola- The Fourth of July Celebration at the Civic Center was a huge success. The Select Theater will feature the new 'Spiderman' movie this weekend. The mini train is open and will run every second and third Saturday of the months March through October. Bubba's BBQ and Grill has officially opened its doors for business. The annual Mineola Fire Department's Rodeo will be held this Friday and Saturday night. 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- A new Antique Marketplace has officially opened in downtown across from the courthouse in the former Wood County Carpet building. The Shops at 107 and '3 French Hens', are still striving and the new Stitchin' Heaven building will officially open in October. The annual Tips for Tots, hosted by the Wood County Child Welfare Board, will be held August 5 at AJ's Fish House from 4-8 p.m. There will be a live auction, bake sale and raffle items available for purchase. Proceeds from the event benefit the foster children in Wood County.

Winnsboro- O'Reily's Auto Parts is officially opened for business. The city purchased the former Lone Republic Steak House on Market Street with plans to close Market Street for pedestrian walking only. Annie Mae's has moved to a new location and is scheduled to open soon. The Winnsboro Church of Christ will host its annual Feed the Children October 24-26.

12. **Meeting adjourned:** A motion was made by Ben Hudman and seconded by Dana Donahue to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried-unanimously. Meeting at 8:17 p.m.



Kiki Bettis, Executive Director