

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

July 20, 2020

MONTGOMERY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

CALL TO ORDER

President Rebecca Huss called the Zoom Teleconference meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Rebecca Huss - President
Dan Walker – Vice-President
Amy Brown – Secretary
Tom Cronin – Board Member
Arnette Easley – Board Member

Absent: Julie Hutchinson – Treasurer
Bob Kerr – Board Member

Also Present: Richard Tramm – City Administrator
Dave McCorquodale – Assistant City Administrator
Susan Hensley – City Secretary

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of June 15, 2020 Regular Meeting –

President Huss asked for comments on the minutes as presented. Mr. Easley made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Cronin. All In favor. (5-0)

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Report for June, 2020

Mr. Tramm noted the sales tax received and transferred on July 8, 2020 will show in the July financial report. He said sales taxes are being received earlier in the month, so the notes at the bottom of the financial reports will continue to mention sales taxes for the current month.

Mr. Tramm said the TexPool interest rate for June was at 0.21%. He said this rate has been steadily around .2%, but could drop into a negative number. Mr. Tramm said the interest rate is being closely watched.

Mrs. Huss asked if Mr. Tramm and Mr. Lasky have a plan the MEDC and the City could follow if interest rates were to be negative.

Mr. Tramm said the backup plan would be to move the funds to a noninterest-bearing account and look at other options which might be available. Mr. Tramm said even noninterest-bearing accounts may charge fees. He said in that scenario, there may not be a good option. Mr. Tramm said Mr. Lasky continues to look for options.

Motion by Mrs. Brown, seconded by Mr. Cronin to approve the June 2020 Financial Report as presented. All in favor. (5-0)

CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

5. Update on Downtown Development planning.

Mr. Tramm said some of the items funded by the EDC for the Downtown Development planning process include a draft of an RFQ which will be used to procure services for the project. Mr. Tramm said a draft, provided by Mr. Peacock, is included in the agenda packet. He said this draft still needs some editing, but is a good starting point for the EDC to consider.

Mr. Tramm said City Staff need direction from the Board for the timing of the release of the RFQ. He said he believes Staff can have this ready to release before the EDC meeting in August.

Mr. Tramm said if the Board is agreeable to give the EDC President final approval, the RFQ could be published as soon as it is completed. Mr. Tramm said if the Board prefers to see the final copy before distribution, Staff would present the final copy at the August meeting for approval.

Mr. McCorquodale said the next step to complete the RFQ includes revising the Executive Summary into Montgomery-specific action:

- Provide more context in writing
- TxDOT coordination on FM 149 Project
- Utilities and Infrastructure: water/sewer, green infrastructure, electric & telecom
- Value Assessment / Fiscal Analysis of Downtown
- Economic Development Plans

- Streetscape Design & Public Space Improvement

Mrs. Huss said the role of the EDC President is simply to sign the document which City Staff prepares, acknowledging the document is in line with the EDC's wishes.

Mr. McCorquodale said City Staff wanted to bring this to the Board again, simply to make sure Staff and the Board are "on the same page."

Mrs. Huss said the document, as presented, has the main design elements the Board has previously discussed. She said she is unsure of Design Concept #2 on page 37. Mrs. Huss said the item refers to College Street. She said she is not sure that is exactly what was discussed.

Mr. McCorquodale said he agreed. He said that is one of the reasons the Executive Summary needs to have context added. Mr. McCorquodale explanation needs to be included on where the images came from as well as images should be taken conceptually and not literally.

Mrs. Brown asked for Staff's recommendation on the timing of the RFQ release.

Mr. Tramm said Staff would like to release the RFQ as quickly as possible. He said if the RFQ can be released the first part of August, he is hopeful to have something to present to the Board in September or October.

Mr. Cronin said he would like another member of the Board to view the RFQ before the Board President signs off on it and it is sent out.

Mr. McCorquodale said as long as Board members replied individually to Mr. Tramm via email, the final RFQ could be sent to the Board before distribution.

Mr. Tramm said he wants to keep the Board informed.

No action was taken.

6. Update on Social Media Marketing.

Mr. Tramm said the Board reviewed the draft Social Media Marketing Plan in June. He said the Board approved some social media budget expenditures.

Mr. Tramm said Hootsuite has been implemented and appears to reach more people and have more engagement.

Mr. Tramm said Staff is looking at options for purchasing video equipment and expects to purchase in the next month.

No action was taken.

7. Consideration and possible action to approve purchase of radios for use by City Personnel during events.

Mr. Tramm said discussion was held during the Christmas Parade Committee meeting concerning the benefit of City Personnel having radios in order to communicate efficiently. Mr. Tramm said Police Chief Soloman provided a cost estimate for purchasing professional communication radios.

Mr. Tramm asked the Board if this is something they would like to consider.

Mrs. Brown said the estimate is for twelve radios of extremely high quality at a very good price.

Mr. Walker agreed, but asked if these are going into the police cars and not carried by the officers at the festival.

Mrs. Brown said these radios are not for the police officers, but instead for City Staff to communicate with event organizers and City personnel.

Mrs. Brown asked Mrs. Huss to explain the discussion during the Parade meeting on renting out the radios to festival organizers.

Mrs. Huss said there was discussion on the need for every festival or event having a type of communication with City personnel. She said it was suggested event organizers put a deposit down and possibly a rental price on using the equipment.

Mr. Tramm said during last year's Christmas parade setup, many people were congested in a small area and using their cell phones. He said during that type of situation, relying on cellular communication can be problematic. Mr. Tramm said this type of communication would not be on the cellular network, but on its own radio band.

Mr. Cronin asked if the City, at the moment, has no current means of communication other than cell phones.

Mr. Tramm said the City does not currently have a radio system. He said, obviously the Police Department has a radio system of its own.

Mr. Cronin asked if the Police would have access to the City's frequency during festivals.

Mr. Tramm said if the Police Department is participating with the festival and there is a need for them to have a radio, one will be provided.

Mr. Walker said with the type of system being proposed, the Police Department could plug the frequency into their scanner and monitor the situation.

Mr. Cronin asked what types of events would use these radios.

Mr. Tramm said any large event involving City personnel.

Mr. Cronin asked where the radios would be kept and maintained.

Mr. Tramm said there has been discussion of keeping the radios at the Police Department.

Mr. Walker asked if there was a warranty on the radios.

Mr. Tramm said he did not know, but would find an answer to that question.

Mr. Easley asked if the radios would be a requirement for festival organizers or an option.

Mr. Tramm said there has not been a discussion on policy. He said that is something the EDC Board could set with a uniform event policy.

Mrs. Huss said she would rather the Police Department, Public Works and City Management discuss their proposed requirements before the EDC makes a policy.

Mr. Walker asked if Mr. Tramm was looking for a motion to approve this purchase.

Mr. Tramm said yes, but any expense over ten thousand dollars would require City Council approval.

Mrs. Huss said "especially, since it was not in the budget" for the current year.

Mr. Tramm said the funds could be used from the Events category, since there have not been events this year.

Mrs. Huss said that would be the Events – Other category 56434.

Mrs. Huss said she would like to see a rental contract for event organizers, with the rental payments going to MEDC.

Mr. Easley asked if there was a service contract included with the purchase.

Mr. Tramm said he did not receive any information on a service contract, but could inquire about one.

Mr. Cronin asked about the trip charge for \$85.00.

Mr. Tramm said he would request information on that charge.

Mr. Walker asked how quickly the delivery window would be on the equipment.

Mr. Tramm said he believed it could be delivered quickly, but would ask.

Mr. Tramm said he would find the information on the questions asked and present it at the next meeting.

No action was taken.

8. Economic Development Report – Richard Tramm

a. City Development Report

Report provided

Mr. Tramm explained the City is currently looking into having sales tax on large scale retail construction costs being paid to the City via direct payment permits.

b. City Engineer's Report

Report provided

BOARD INQUIRY

Mrs. Brown asked if Mr. Tramm had received any information on the 14% sales tax increase as discussed during the June meeting.

Mr. Tramm said the reports are not very detailed, but he did see some large home furnishing purchases. He said grocery stores, hardware stores and fast food retailers continue to show strong sales.

Mrs. Huss asked for a specific timeline for the RFQ to be included in the next meeting. She asked for details on deadlines for submission, evaluation procedure, and a deadline for approval.

Mr. Tramm said he would have that for the August meeting.

Mr. Easley asked when the EDC will give more thought to distressed properties and cleaning up areas such as 149 north to 1097.

Mr. Tramm said he would look into exactly where Staff is on that item and he will bring a report back at the next meeting.

Mrs. Brown asked if there were plans to begin budget workshops for the 2020-2021 fiscal budget.

Mr. Tramm said he will contact the Board before the next meeting to find a date for the workshop.

Mrs. Huss said the EDC needs to have the workshop before the August meeting.

Mr. Tramm said he would look at the calendar to identify a couple of dates, then send those suggestions to the Board.

Mrs. Huss suggested two workshop dates. She said the first proposed budget needs to go before City Council at their second August meeting. Mrs. Huss said if Council does not approve of the budget, MEDC must send an amended budget to Council at their first September meeting.

ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS


ACTION ITEM	ASSIGNEE	DUE DATE
Send final RFQ to Board members before release	Mr. Tramm	
Researching any warrantee, service contract, trip charge and delivery window on radios	Mr. Tramm	
Estimated timeline for RFQ deadlines and procedures	Mr. Tramm	
Update on cleaning up distressed areas	Mr. Tramm	
Send email with workshop date suggestions	Mr. Tramm	

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mrs. Brown, seconded by Mr. Easley to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. All in favor. (5-0)

Submitted by:  Date Approved: 08-07-2020
 Amy Brown, MEDC Secretary




 Rebecca Huss, MEDC President