

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**October 18, 2021****MONTGOMERY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION****CALL TO ORDER**

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

Present: Rebecca Huss – President
Arnette Easley – Vice-President
Carol Langley – Treasurer
Byron Sanford – Board Member

Absent: Ryan Londeen – Secretary
Jeff Angelo – Board Member
Dan Walker – Board Member

Also Present: Dave McCorquodale – Assistant City Administrator
Amy Brown – Events Coordinator

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Shawna Snider (202 McCown St.): She expressed concerns about some of the events that happened at the festival the past weekend. She was notified by her tenant that property was being used by the festival for porta potties, vendors, and a police station. It poses a concern for liability. If something would have happened on the property, she would have been liable for it. That is not something she feels is justified or should be expected of any property owner in the City. Her tenants were incredibly frustrated. Wine and Design is a service-based industry, and they had several events of their own lined up including 60 clients who had pre-paid to come to their events on Saturday. All but 4 of them had to park elsewhere and had to pay a festival to get to the store and her tenant had to reimburse them for it. She was not notified of the event, and it was completely out of the blue for them. The coffee shop and boutique were contacted verbally but there was no land use permission given in written form nor was there proof of insurance given. It is very concerning as a landlord in hearing that her tenant lost money. She is not here to place blame but to voice concern. It has happened before with the antique festival too. She has tried in private to voice concern but that does not work. She asks that this please be taken

care of in the future because as a landlord she cannot have this happen again. This is the third time this has happened, and she feels like she is being unheard. This time was a very big problem.

Phillip Lefevre by online comment and read by President Huss: one of the main purposes of the MEDC is to improve the lifestyle of the City residents and attract tourism. Being involved in the City the last 20 years one of his biggest regrets is that the third oldest city in the state has had little to nothing to attract people to it. He is glad to see this is changing and that people have been hired to promote events. The has been a dead zone for too long. It needs to hire more Rebeccas and Amys, not fewer. He plans to open a new restaurant at Anderson soon. One of the deciding factors was an event that Charlie Diggs was putting on near the courthouse and how it attracted people. Montgomery needs more Charlie Diggs. These events pay for themselves in sales tax revenue, business for their stores, and the overall image of the City.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Consideration and possible action regarding the minutes of the September 20, 2021 MEDC Budget Public Hearing and Regular Meeting

Langley: she presented the financial report but the minutes show that Tramm presented it. This needs to be revised.

Motion to approve the minutes as presented pending the comment that Carol made was made by Byron Sanford and seconded by Carol Langley. All in favor. (4-0)

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

2. Consideration and possible action regarding the Financial Report through September 30, 2021

Presented by Langley.

The interest rate on the texpool has stayed the same for 2 to 3 years. The sales tax transfer of \$68,690.66 was transferred on 10/7. The remainder of the loan for \$188,684.21 was paid and transferred on 9/29. There were a few charges that will be out of next years budget from the credit card since the bill did not come in time to be included totaling \$293.30.

Huss: came in super close to the amended budget number for sales tax. Year-to-date is \$960 thousand versus a budgeted amount of \$930 thousand.

Motion to approve the Financial Report through September 30, 2021 was made by Arnette Easley and seconded by Byron Sanford. All in favor. (4-0)

CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

3. Consideration and possible action to accept the Downtown Design Master Plan.

Presented by Dave McCorquodale.

One of the critical design team members was out sick and unable to present. They, along with President Huss, decided to push this item. Staff recommends tabling this item and staff is working on new dates for when they can present the plan.

Motion to table both agenda items 3 and 4 pending a special call meeting was made Byron Sanford by and seconded by Arnette Easley. All in favor. (4-0)

4. Consideration and possible action to move forward with elements contained in the Downtown Master Design Plan.

Item tabled per previous motion.

5. Consideration and possible action to purchase subscription for custom mapping software.

Presented by Dave McCorquodale. Mapme is an online software that the MEDC is currently sampling on the City's website. He demonstrated different features of this software including showing the different tourist spots in the City.

Huss: the main thing that is different between the paid for version and this trial run is that the MEDC would also be able to add in a total of five layers. The intent would be to include a shopping, dining, goats, and a temporary layer for different events (parking, event map, etc.) and tailored to that specific event.

Langley: do you find this on the website? Huss: on the website and on the mapme.com/montgomerytx webpage. You do not have to download an app. It is just a website. It worked with whatever mapping software that you personally use by clicking "route me". You do not need to download an app and try to figure out how to use the app. Layers can easily be changed. The distrix stuff is not really changeable at this point. New items can be added easily.

Easley: The schools have a lot of treasure hunts. You can just add these to this? Huss: Yes. She would like to have a map of the cemeteries too including things in the cemetery. You are adding reasons for people to come to the City. You are not investing a lot of things like an app and equipment.

Langley: is the \$850 to \$900 a total fee or a month-by-month. Huss: that is the annual fee and may be less because they give government discounts.

Easley: is this a flat fee? Huss: the 5-layer map is what is included in this fee. Again, this doesn't take a lot of work to get things updated.

Sanford: he was encouraged that at Fernald he was able to use the QR technology and pull it up. He noted it had a strong response on social media.

Huss: they also looked into electric kiosks for reaching people in downtown. The kiosk business is doggy. The software has to be weather proof but able to be touched to work. They, also, charge for stuff on the back end including subscription, maintenance etc. In this case, you only need a google browser and it provides everything you would want to find out on a kiosk. You only need to update it in one place and the fees are more limited than a kiosk. It gives you the opportunity to branch in other areas as well.

Sanford: can the MEDC look at this again in a year to review whether to continue the service?

Huss: Yes.

Motion to purchase subscription for custom mapping software was made by Byron Sanford and seconded by Arnette Easley. All in favor. (4-0)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

6. City Engineer's Report

Presented by Dave McCorquodale

Sanford: in the 1-to-3-year plan of the downtown improvement plan, they emphasize water and sewer infrastructure. That item was roughly \$50,000. Do the water line improvements being done now mean they are \$50,000 ahead on that plan? McCorquodale: that was for a drainage master plan. However, this work would have to have been done before making any improvements to pond street because of the improvement plan. A part of the CIP plan on the city side coming out this fall is an evaluation and update of the CIP plan which encompass the rest of the infrastructure in the downtown area.

Easley: At the time of the study for the GLO project, Town Creek was not a part of the study. Why was it not assessed? McCorquodale: town creek is outside of the boundaries of the GLO project. The GLO project boundary is tied to income levels and if you include the town creek area your watershed gets bigger which may skew the income levels to not score well enough to get the grant. Ander's Branch was a smaller watershed with a lower income population based on census data. It is not to say that Town Creek is not ever going to be looked at. It is just not included in this GLO project area.

Easley: are there any capital improvement projects being proposed for Town Creek?

McCorquodale: unless it is funded by grants the City will shy away from it. The City has historically not gone onto private property to make drainage improvements which. In the absence of grant funds, it is up to the Council on what they want to look at. Easley: from a development standpoint, there is nowhere to go but north. Maybe the City can have developers help with that project as they develop the area. This has been a problem for so many years to where when a heavy rain comes in, 149 becomes impassible. McCorquodale: typically, private

developers need to make sure their component of the drainage does not make things worse, but they don't necessarily have to make things better. Easley: at some point in time, this problem needs to be addressed.

Sanford: did the total houses in Tówn Creek Crossing change from 199 to 150? McCorquodale: it did go down due to the expansion of lots. In Section 1, they are at 100 lots. The plan was to do another 99 lots just to the west. Based on the site conditions, they had to deal with restrictions including a gas line. They decided it would be easier to do 33 lots with 3/4 -acre size lots. This is about 50 fewer homes on larger lots. Sanford: Is that normal? McCorquodale: it's very likely that they got into something on the drainage side of things where the numbers just weren't working. Larger lots gives you more room to work with including getting the grading to work.

7. City Administrator's Development Report October 2021

Presented by Dave McCorquodale

8. City Event Report October 2021

Presented by Amy Brown.

Langley: Where is the location of the farmers market? Brown: its in the Ransom's parking lot. Huss: probably 10 to 15 vendors were setup, and it was a nice setup. The crowd was incredible. The bakery sold out before 10. Langley: who is Joshua Reed and does he own the blue berry patch? Brown: his parents own the blueberry sanctuary. He is smart and doing a great job. Huss: It was very well attended.

Brown: apologizes for some of the issues with what happened with the recent events including the issues of property owners not being notified. She takes full responsibility as the City liaison. She is working hard to get a structure in place to ensure events go more smoothly and that all businesses and property owners are notified. Langley: in the past with other big events, communication was the big number on thing and starting out early is better than the week of. When she got complaints, it was because they didn't get the right person of business. It always made a big difference if they got to the right person or to the owner of the business. Brown: she is fixing this and the main thing is getting the main contact information for everybody. Huss: even though these events are private, its good to have an event coordinator with on the ground knowledge to help with communication. Not only will this help bring people in but also get the best out of the people who do come.

Easley: can a person be in charge of going to each business during the event to make sure people are cleared. Brown: she is the only person in this spot and she is at the event from beginning to end.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Convened into executive session at 6:56 PM for the discussion of real property.

Convened back into public meeting at 7:23 PM.

CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Carol Langley made a motion to authorize the City Administrator and the Assistant City Administrator to discuss real property and seconded by Byron Sanford. All in favor. (4-0)

BOARD INQUIRY

Huss: would like to get an up on the partnership initiative.

Langley: would like an update on the movie, strongholds. Huss: the movie is 99% done. Just needed to make a minor change.

ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

ACTION ITEM	ASSIGNEE	DUE DATE

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Byron Sanford and seconded by Arnette Easley to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. All in favor. (4-0)

Submitted by: Richard Tramm Date Approved: 11/15/2021

Richard Tramm, City Administrator

Rebecca Huss

Rebecca Huss, MEDC President

