

MEETING MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
JANUARY 20, 2021 8:00 AM

CALLED TO ORDER BY: The Economic Development Corporation Meeting was held electronically and called to order by Chairman Cantor at 8:06 am.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lew Cantor (Farmington Hills), Mark Zachos (Farmington Hills), TR Carr (Farmington Hills), Scott Elliott (Southfield), Fritz Beiermeister – Late 8:18 am (Farmington Hills), Sam Slaughter (Farmington Hills)

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Hartsock, John Anhut, Kimberly Lindsey-Feagin

OTHERS PRESENT: Gary Mekjian, Acting City Manager (Farmington Hills); Ken Massey, City Council Member/EDC Liaison (Farmington Hills); Janet Cisneros, Secretary (Farmington Hills)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Carr, support by Elliott to approve the agenda as submitted.

Yeas: CANTOR, ZACHOS, CARR, ELLIOTT, BEIERMEISTER, SLAUGHTER
Nays: NONE
Absent: HARTSOCK, ANHUT, LINDSEY-FEAGIN
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Slaughter, support by Elliott to approve the meeting minutes from December 16, 2020 as submitted.

Yeas: CANTOR, ZACHOS, CARR, ELLIOTT, BEIERMEISTER, SLAUGHTER
Nays: NONE
Absent: HARTSOCK, ANHUT, LINDSEY-FEAGIN
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- Chairman Cantor talked about the Business Incubator, now known as the Innovation Center, and that Place Dynamics has completed the survey. He will provide copies to the members that want a copy. Chairman Cantor said at this time the presentation to Council has been placed on hold. He stated that when they do present it will be Phase II which gets down to funding and contracting someone from the outside to oversee the project along with the format of the organization such as a 501C3.
- Member Zachos had questions regarding if Place Dynamics is done, how are they paid and if a motion from the Corporation is required. Chairman Cantor stated that the cost was \$18,000 and recommended payment. Acting City Manager stated a motion should be made.
- Chairman Cantor stated that City Planner Mark Stec was not able to attend today's meeting but will attend next month's meeting.

January 20, 2021

Motion by Carr, support by Slaughter to receive and present the study done by Place Dynamics and render payment.

Yeas: CANTOR, CARR, ELLIOTT, BEIERMEISTER, SLAUGHTER
Nays: NONE
Absent: HARTSOCK, ANHUT, LINDSEY-FEAGIN
Abstentions: ZACHOS

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

BUSINESS:

- Conversation regarding an Advocacy program for restaurants and bars who have paid their 2020 license fees and were not able to use them. It is suggested that the EDC write a letter as an advocate requesting those fees be rolled over to 2021 for small businesses. Council Liaison Massey felt it would be a good idea to make this a joint effort with the Greater Farmington Chamber of Commerce with both EDC and the Chamber submitting separate letters instead of a joint letter, which would make a more powerful statement. Several members were not comfortable with including the waiver of taxes. Member Zachos inquired as to how this came about, and Member Beiermeister stated that Tom Langan of Langan's Nor-West Lanes started a petition requesting help to save Michigan's small businesses. For clarity, a portion of the petition language is cited below:

“This petition asks the House and Senate of the State of Michigan to help small businesses survive by immediately passing legislation to (1) give them credit against their future property taxes for those property taxes paid in 2020 **for any days that they were shut down by the State**, and (2) waive the 2021 liquor license renewal fees for on-premise liquor licensees **whose business was closed by governmental order during 2020.**”

- Member Slaughter stated this might duplicate the program provided by the State who is offering a 2nd round of PPE loans.
- Council Liaison Massey offered background on the liquor license process. He also suggested incorporating other imposed fees in addition to liquor licenses.
- Chairman Cantor stated that he would reach out to the Chamber and report back his findings at a future meeting. He also said he would touch base with Council Liaison Massey and/or Acting City Manager Mekjian to discuss matters further.
- Acting City Manager Mekjian shared an email from Oakland County regarding a \$3 million Restaurant Relief Phase II program.
- Chairman Cantor asked Member Elliott about his take on the future of vacant buildings and what the real-estate market is like now. Member Elliott stated at this time there is no set answer on office buildings. He also stated that there will be a major impact on landlords as businesses start to scale down. He did state that currently the industrial market is very strong. Member Elliot stated that with the roll-out of the new vaccine more people will be going back to work.
- Chairman Cantor stated the scale-down would offer an advantage to the Innovation Center at the Hawk for establishing a PPE safe co-meeting space.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Chairman Cantor would like to see the Farmington Hills Connect program developed more. He stated that thanks to former Economic Development Director Samantha Seimer the website has more than 400 organizations and people signed up. He asked Members Zachos and Beiermeister who were originally working on this project for input. Member Zachos stated that he and Member Beiermeister would need to connect-up again to talk about moving this forward.

BOARD MEMBER'S COMMENTS:

- None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- None

ADJOURNMENT:

- The next meeting of the EDC is scheduled for February 17, 2021 at 8:00 AM.
- Motion by Beiermeister, support by Elliott to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 AM

Yeas: CANTOR, ZACHOS, CARR, ELLIOTT, BEIERMEISTER, SLAUGHTER
Nays: NONE
Absent: HARTSOCK, ANHUT, LINDSEY-FEAGIN
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 6-0

Minutes drafted by: Janet Cisneros