

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

April 18, 2022

MONTGOMERY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Rebecca Huss – President
Byron Sanford – Board Member
Carol Langley – Treasurer
Ryan Londeen – Secretary
Dan Walker – Board Member
Wade Nelson – Board Member

Absent: Jeff Angelo – Board Member

Also Present: Richard Tramm – City Administrator
Amy Brown – Events Coordinator

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. **Consideration and possible action regarding the Minutes of the Regular meeting of March 21, 2022.**

Motion to approve meeting minutes for the March Regular Meeting was made by Byron Sanford and seconded by Dan Walker. All in favor. (6-0)

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT

2. Consideration and possible action regarding the MEDC Financial Report March 2022

Presented by Carol Langley.

Huss mentioned the MEDC is running well ahead of its budgeted revenues.

Motion to approve the Financial Report through March 2022 was made by Byron Sanford. All in favor. (6-0)

CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

3. Discuss and consider regarding participating in sponsorship application to Texas Historical Commission for Historic Signage for the Chilton-Dean House on College Street.

Presented by Richard Tramm

Huss mentioned that the MEDC specifically had this in mind when this item was added to the budget. The MEDC should sponsor the application because signs are an important part of preserving the buildings themselves but also bring more tourist in. She believes the MEDC should sponsor this application.

Langley asked how many other homes in the city qualify for markers. Londeen answered that it's going to be up to the State Historic Commission to decide whether a structure qualifies for a marker or not.

Langley pointed out that the Chilton-Dean house once had a historic marker and asked what happened to it. Londeen answered that it only has a medallion and is unsure if there was ever a subject marker.

Huss said that there was a map done for the chamber that listed 33-35 historic locations. Londeen stated that he has counted about that many. The Montgomery County Historical Commission has its own markers for things that don't qualify for State markers for roughly the same cost. If a building does not qualify for the State marker, they could potentially qualify for the MCHC marker.

Walker asked if there was a certain type of caste, 2' by 3', or so? Londeen answered that yes, there are two different sizes. The most typical are the smaller size.

Langley asked if the owners of the buildings are responsible for applying for the markers and why is there only \$5,000 in the budget? Huss answered that the MEDC has a low budget for the item because the process is very labor intensive and there are deadlines. Ryan Londeen felt that one or two a year is probably a good estimate.

Londeen mentioned that The Oaks antique store doesn't have one, and they could very easily get one. The Matilda house, owned by Kay Powell, also has high potential. There are a few

that would be next in line. Finding the time to research and put something together is where it gets tricky. He presented this to the Historic Society and the Historic Commission asking if there are people who can do research on these. A supporting narrative must be written up with a supporting bibliography citing source. That's why the budget was capped at \$5,000, because 1 to 2 markers a year is realistic.

Huss mentioned that the MEDC is not close to running out of money yet. The Baptist parsonage on Caroline Street would be warranted inclusion. Signs would help prevent buildings from being moved and preserve the heritage. Londeen mentioned that the Bell House behind the Chilton-Dean house also does not have a marker. However, it's hard to know which markers will qualify. Mr. Foerester with the County Historic Commission would be able to say. It must be approved by the Montgomery County Historic Commission before it goes to the State.

Huss asked Londeen when he will know if the marker is approved or not. Londeen said that the Montgomery County Historical Commission is voting on it on May 2nd. It then goes to the State, and it takes them 6 months or so to review Tramm said that May 16th is the State deadline for the application. The processing time was not clear to him, based off his conversation with Mr. Foerester. Huss mentioned that the marker fee is due by May 16th.

Motion made to approve participating in sponsorship application to Texas Historical Commission for Historic Signage for the Chilton-Dean House on College Street by Byron Sanford and seconded by Dan Walker. All in favor with Ryan Londeen abstaining. (5-0)

4. Update MEDC Board of Directors on signage grant policy and wayfinding signage standards.

No update.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

5. City Administrators Development Report

Presented by Richard Tramm

In reference to the TxDOT SH 105 Access Management Project, Huss stated that TxDOT is highlighting the importance of the engineering that we want to happen in the city. We can coordinate directly with them rather than having them drive the whole project. There is no telling how short their turn lanes are going to be and where they are going to be. Investing in the engineering and drawings to know what exactly is happening is needed. Tramm expounded that the 149 corridor is too small and too important to run the risk of chaotic

traffic. TxDOT is bringing the medians downtown as well, but some of these upgrades would have been good to be at the design table early in their plans.

Walker asked if the direction TxDOT is starting is about 149 and heading back East. Tramm answered that TxDOT is not coming back as far as 149 for the median project. They are coming several hundred feet off 2854. Ultimately the work will make it all the way to I-45.

Walker asked if the city is getting the possibility of landscaping in the middle in city as opposed to just concrete. Tramm answered that there has been some initial discussion of that. There's only going to be a small amount in the city, but still a significant amount. Nelson said East to West loop is going to be what you see first and it should look nice. It should not be a bunch of concrete.

Nelson asked if the Northwest corner of 149 is going to be a turn lane at some point. Tramm answered that there is a plan for that but there are multiple issues. The main problem is that it does not seem like there is room for it. Long term, that is still the plan.

Nelson asked about the opposite corner. Tramm answered that that is already in motion but is moving slowly. He has worked for the city for 3 years and that project predates him. Huss explained that the city facilitated the transaction and bought the land to do that. Based on the city looking ahead knowing we needed the turn lane it bought the land to make that happen.

Huss mentioned the city does not have the space downtown to have a planted median along SH-105, but related flags and things like that would be great. Nelson thought that some greenery would be nice, mainly on the East side where the medians are going. In Conroe they left it out then the city came back in and added landscaping. Nelson said that it's cheaper to not fill it in with concrete and leave it out.

In reference to the Ancestry.com renewal, Langley asked who the city is trying to find. Tramm answered that the city is trying to track some of the older families of the city, especially if they have school photos, etc. Londeen said that one of the old photos of his house was found through the website. All different types of things can be found on there, structures, people, etc.

6. City Engineer's Report

Presented by Richard Tramm

7. Special Project Manager's Report

Presented by Amy Brown

There is a Farmer's Market in the works. The idea of bringing in food trucks is being discussed. It was brought to city council last week. The council had some questions regarding that. She has also been discussing it with the county because of certain permits required for food vendors and required port-a-potties. They are hoping for 10 vendors but to spread out to 20 vendors would be fantastic.

Walker asked where this property is located. Brown answered that it is just across the street from Fernland.

Londeen asked if that was going to conflict with heavy trash day. Brown answered that they are discussing that.

Langley asked where parking is going to be for that. Brown answered the parking lot across the street.

Sanford stated that people are not too keen on Charlie Diggs events twice in one year—maybe because of the size. People are just trying to walk their dogs or do normal things. Brown said that the events bring in so many people and it helps the gas stations in town, the grocery stores in town and the local stores in town. Huss said that she worked parking the day of the mudbugs event from noon-6pm. No one parked at Longview. People donated to the scouts when they found out the parking was free. They raised almost \$5,000. Parking was very smooth. I hardly got backed up getting into the lots. Most of the traffic came up CB Stewart which wouldn't impact the residential. No one parked at Fernland. There was room for everyone in the two lots that were available.

Brown said that because if there is alcohol sold, the area must be fenced off. Sanford said he spoke to the wife of a fire marshal, and she did not feel they could get out of their home safely. Brown spoke to the fire chief, and he told them what they could and could not do. Fencing off the entire downtown is not ideal. However, if just beer and wine is sold than it does not have to be fenced off. Walker explained that he does not remember downtown being fenced off. Brown answered that it was fenced. Nelson asked if just beer and wine could be sold. Brown answered that the alcohol part could be in the community center so they wouldn't have to fence off everything. It's about finding the balance between the businesses that want to participate and make sure that those that don't participate aren't heavily impacted.

Sanford mentioned that the whole idea of the revitalization plan is that the businesses must cooperate with one another. Safety and parking are always an issue as well. Huss said that it has been discussed before. The days of being able to park within 20 feet of a big event are over. A lot of people have discovered Montgomery and the residents must accept that. Tramm explained that the city is growing exponentially. Montgomery is a city of about 2000 residents. The Christmas parade had almost 2000 participants. Huss said that those people didn't show up in busses and smart cars but in pickup trucks and a 16' trailer. The events are more successful but there are needed adjustments. The city knows what improvements need to be made, it just needs to be installed and trained. The people that have always just rolled up to an event are going to have to adjust to a shuttle system.

Brown mentioned that the county is coming in to help train her on vendor permits. Tramm mentioned that Nikki will be taking that over vendor permits. Langley asked if the city has a problem with food vendors. Tramm answered that the city just wants to be sure that they are properly enforcing the regulations. Walker asked if the county has a written guideline. Brown answered that that is why she wants to come up with the guidelines. The vendors don't know. She wants to train the staff so it's clear and makes everything simpler. Tramm said that the county contacts Brown has been in touch with have been more helpful, with more specific information, than the ones he has tried to communicate with in the past. Sanford said that when this is put together it will be very helpful.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Adjournment for executive session at 6:53 PM

Huss called the meeting back into session at 7:35 PM

8. Consideration and possible action on real property matters discussed in Executive Session.

No action being taken from the executive session

BOARD INQUIRY

Langley mentioned that on the agenda item 7 it says, “Special Projects Managers Report” and on the report it says “Event Coordinator Report.” She asked for clarification as to what Ms. Brown’s title is now. Tramm answered that it is “Special Projects Manager”. There were 6 applications received and Ms. Brown was the best fit for the position.

Huss asked for an update about the TxDOT plan and if it would be possible to make an adjustment in their plan and the aesthetics. Is that something that the MEDC needs to participate in financially? Gunda Corporation has some good contacts and they may be the ones to help with this situation. They did the downtown design plan. It’s worth doing early.

Langley mentioned that Tony Gullo bought the antique car lot, and he wants to turn it into an antique car museum and ice cream shop. She asked who bought the property across from Jim’s Hardware. Are they putting in a food truck park? Tramm answered that he doesn’t know much about who bought the lot.

ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

<i>ACTION ITEM</i>		<i>ASSIGNEE</i>	<i>DUE DATE</i>

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Rebecca Huss and seconded by Wade Nelson to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m. All in favor. (6-0)

Submitted by: _____ Date Approved: _____

Richard Tramm, City Administrator

Rebecca Huss, MEDC President