

Waxahachie Community Development Corporation
January 20, 2016

A regular meeting of the Waxahachie Community Development Corporation was held on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Conference Room, 401 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas.

Members Present: John Sanders, III, President
Mike Ramsey, Vice President
Kevin Strength, Mayor
Paul Stevens, City Manager
Bob Lynn
Daniel Morton
Layne Ballard

Ex-Officio Lori Saunders, City Secretary
Member Present: Charles Harris, Director of Finance

Ex-Officio Debra Wakeland, President, Chamber of Commerce
Member Absent:

Others Present: Steve Chapman, City Attorney
John Smith, Director of Parks and Recreation
James Villarreal, Recreational Superintendent
April Ortiz, Civic Center Director
Laurie Mosley, Director of Convention & Visitors Bureau
Chris Seale, Horticulturist

President John Sanders called the meeting to order.

Vice President Mike Ramsey moved to approve the minutes of the Waxahachie Community Development Corporation minutes of November 10, 2015. Mr. Dan Morton seconded, **All Ayes.**

Ms. Laurie Mosley, Director of Convention & Visitors Bureau, reported last year the Crossroads of Texas film festival was a success and became a part of the Arts Council. She stated the festival is in May this year and therefore won't have the cash flow due to the change of the dates.

President Sanders asked if having a summer film festival has been considered.

Ms. Amy Hollywood, Director of Communications and Marketing stated the film festival is not held in the summer due to the weather, vacations and conflicts with other events. She noted this event can stand on its own. Ms. Hollywood noted the entire fall calendar was reviewed and reflected numerous events with local hotels booked. She stated the feedback from the VIP ticket holders preferred the spring due to numerous fall events.

President Sanders reviewed the needs noting last year WCDC approved \$15,000 and this year the request is \$10,000 to cover the 2 quarters missed from the Arts Council. Ms. Hollywood stated it is estimated we will receive \$5,000 per quarter from the Arts Council for hotel/motel tax revenue.

Mr. Dan Morton asked the cost of last year's event and current cash on hand. Ms. Hollywood stated the event totaled \$35,000 and currently has approximately \$10,000. She stated sponsorship is solicited and expenses are travel for guest.

Vice President Mike Ramsey asked in the future will it continue to be Texas films. Ms. Hollywood stated there as several hundred films left being movies made in Texas and Texans cast in movies.

President Sanders asked what is needed to prepare the square and suggested temporary pop-up tents and seating. City Manager Paul Stevens stated Staff is working to get shade structures in open areas downtown.

After further discussion, Vice President Mike Ramsey moved to approve sponsorship from the Convention & Visitors Bureau in the amount of \$10,000 for the Crossroads of Texas Film Festival. Mr. Layne Ballard seconded, **All Ayes.**

Ms. Mosely requested utilizing contingency funds for the relaunch of the CVB website. She explained the difficulties with her website's function-ability noting the website is 4 years old and showing its age, the City is shifting the branding campaign with new imagery, digital/on-line platform is important in all arenas in business, but extremely important for tourism. She reported Saffire is a company that specializes in helping events, venues and destinations deliver an enticing online presence and feels they can be the CVB model for creatively. Ms. Mosely proposed usage of up to \$25,000 of contingency funds to hire Saffire. She stated the fund has \$60,000.

Ms. Hollywood stated most cities have companies such as this to keep the platforms up to date.

Mr. Bob Lynn stated he has no issues in CVB's program and agreed with the price and recommended to allow CVB to move forward.

Mr. Morton stated he would like to see more than one company pitching this and asked are we researching to see who can do this for us.

Ms. Mosley stated she has researched and finds a lot of cookie cutter companies. She noted there are other web designers such as one in town and she is not happy with the website.

Mr. Lynn stated all is coming together and the CVB piece is very important. Mayor Strength concurred with Mr. Lynn noting this has been planned out 5-6 years ago and now it's time to move forward.

Mr. Dan Morton moved to approve up to \$25,000 of contingency fund to hire Saffire for the relaunch of the CVB website. Vice President Mike Ramsey seconded, **All Ayes.**

Ms. Mosley reported on the Convention & Visitors Bureau December 2015 and January 2016 activities as follows:

Home tour - one weekend with approx. 1,000 visitors
Bethlehem was closed one night due to implement weather

FESTIVAL & EVENT UPDATES

What a great season of Christmas activities – tons of folks at the Christmas parade and tree lighting, 18,000 thru the gates of Bethlehem and approximately 1,000 for the one weekend of the home tour. Then you add in the YMCA Santa Run and Cocoa Stroll = magical Christmas season!!

Upcoming events include:

- Jazz Café 2016 - February 6; 6:30 pm-10:30 pm
- Cupid Shuffle 5k & 15k - February 13
- Gingerbread House Chili Cook-Off - February 19-21

PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA UPDATES

- Our hometown media did a great job as always promoting our Christmas activities – the Daily Light, KBEC, Living Magazine, NOW Magazine
- The feature story in Texas Highways magazine made the phone ring with visitor questions and bringing folks to town.
- The early morning TV segment with WFAA was fantastic to plant a seed in viewers minds about Christmas in Waxahachie.
- We have a strong digital campaign utilizing Pandora radio and Facebook (Up to 3,626 Likes and counting)
- However, we also have good ole' billboards and traditional radio with KLTU for extra measure.

VISITOR CENTER, GROUP TOUR, CONVENTION & SPORTS UPDATES

Bikers for Change 2016

Hosted by the Christian Motorcycle Association
January 29-30; University Church – 221 Solon Rd
For more information: Call Jeffrey Coker at 903-238-6202

Joshua Chapel AME Church Retreat

February 11-13; SAGU
Anticipated Attendance: 700

Skills USA District 6

February 19-20
Waxahachie Civic Center

Battle of the Brands Cruise (Super Chevy/Fun Ford)

Hosted in Conjunctions with the Texas Motorplex
July 2, 7 a.m.

Historic Downtown Waxahachie

VTD Softball Tournament

July 8-10

Waxahachie Sports Complex

OTHER NEWS

- We had 2,311 visitors logged at the Ellis County Museum for the 4th quarter of the year.
- Several of the Waxahachie Hotels joined with the CVB on December 10 to package food for Waxahachie CARE.

President Sanders recommended touring the Civic Center and Sports Complex within the next 60 days. It was suggested holding the February 9th meeting at the Civic Center and holding March 8th meeting at Sports Complex.

Ms. April Ortiz, Civic Center Director, presented the following report of events:

November: closed with 34 events including

- Veterans Memorial Ceremony
- Vision Global (booked their 2016 monthly mtgs.)
- Baylor Scott & White
- Waxahachie Guitar Show (twice a year, booked for April 2016)

December: closed with 37 events booked including

- Jr. Service League Christmas Market (record breaking year, raised \$47,000.00)
- OnCor
- CNB Christmas Party
- Owens Corning Christmas Party (last time booked was 2008)
- Gun & Knife Show (less vendors, attendance/sales up)

The event for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day I mentioned in the last meeting did book, but they had to cancel. They booked the 2 days, downsized and changed entertainers to 1 day (NYE), but ultimately had to cancel due to very low ticket sales. However, the promoters are still looking to host live entertainment events. They booked a poetry event in April, "Chocolate & Wine".

January: currently has 38 events booked including

- Baylor Scott & White (averaged at least 2 meeting a month in 2015)
- Ellis Co. Republican Women/Candidates Forum
- Vision Global Winter Conference
- WHS Quarterback Club

Up & Coming

The planning for the SkillsUSA Texas District 6 event is underway, and as of now are projected to exceed the 2016 attendance numbers.

The 5th Annual Daddy Daughter Dance will be February 11th. Tickets went on sale January 4th, and as of Thursday January 14th, we are projected to have another sold-out year!

Facility

We have started replacing some of our capital items; the reach-in refrigerator was replaced in early December and the walk-in cooler was replaced last week.

We are scheduled to meet with Gomez Contracting to look at options for the wall covering renovations this week.

Misc.

Turf-Scape met with me, David and Chris to discuss the issues relating to the front left side of the property.

We are starting to have issues with the rabbits with this last planting.

Mr. James Villarreal, Recreational Superintendent, presented the following Waxahachie Sports Complex report:

Games:

SAGU Baseball will begin play on: January 29th 4pm (DH) & February 5th 4pm (DH)

Tournaments 2016:

- American Sporting Events Baseball (12 weeks)
- Arlington Girls Softball Association (11 weeks)
- Gear Up Baseball (4 tournaments)
- Travel Sports Baseball (2 tournaments)
- Senior Softball Player Associations (ages: 50,55,60,65,70) June 9-12, 2016 Tournament
- VTD Girls National Tournament (July)
- Waxahachie Soccer Association (last weekend of April)

Maintenance:

Mr. Villarreal presented pictures depicting repairs and maintenance (painting) preparing for the 2016 season.

Currently waiting for a fence pricing bid (Back stops)

All soccer fields will be renovated in April - currently waiting a pricing.

Mr. Chris Seale, Horticulturist, presented the following beautification report:

Completed Projects

- Outdoor holiday lights at Civic Center
- Every year I will add more and more until we are satisfied

- Color Change out at Civic Center
- Color change out at Sports Complex
- Color Change out and spring bulb planting at Bynum Plaza
- Color change out and spring bulb planting at Rogers Street bed
- Irrigation repair at Parks and Rec. building
- Annual color and spring bulb planting at Parks and Rec. building
- Color change out on all planters
- Crape myrtle pruning at: Parks and Rec. building, S. Elm Street, City Hall, Bynum Plaza

Projects Currently Working On

- Hwy 77 Island Bed Makeover
- Parking garage
- East University Ave (Crape Myrtle Grove)
- Planters (Coordinating with TxDOT, Streets Dept, Parks Dept. and Central Garage)
- Medians at Broadhead Road
- Adding a water meter to the Broadhead road medians
- Adding separate water meters for the Sports Complex landscape beds
- Summer change out Planning

Future Projects

- Island bed next to Kikas Chicken
- Island bed next to EMS Station
- Seasonal Displays in the Downtown area
- Spring Bulb Planning
- Holiday Lighting/Decorations

Long term Projects

- Water tower on corner of Solon Rd. and N. Grand Ave.
- Water ditch behind Chilis
- Area behind Fuzzy's Taco on Comell Ln. (Hike&Bike)

President Sanders stated he was invited to the recent Park Board meeting and reported the Board is analyzing all their parks for upgrades pertaining to playground equipment, exercise equipment, lighting, signage, and safety. They are researching feeders and connectors to the hike and bike trail and how those will tie into the Park Master Plan. He reported some bigger Park Board projects include splash parks at the Sports Complex and Getzendaner Park. President Sanders stated the Board will determine funding such as budgeting and city bond refinancing, and eventually the WCDC getting involved to determine funding to assist in the process.

City Manager Paul Stevens stated the Mayor arranged a conference call with the Texas Council of Governments (COG) this morning and talked to some of their specialist about hike and bike grant funds. He explained there are not many grants for parks, but for trails there are, therefore COG will be a big assistance helping us and make sure we have the right information when we do apply. Mr. Stevens stated when applying for trail grant, the score is higher if you are

Waxahachie Community Development Corporation

January 20, 2016

Page 7

connecting schools and retail or residential retail and explained the City has a lot of potential for this to happen.

Mr. John Smith stated there is a lot of hope and opportunity for hike and bike trails and improvements to the existing parks.

There being no further business, Vice President Mike Ramsey moved the meeting adjourn at 5:16 p.m. Mr. Dan Morton seconded, **All Ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Saunders
City Secretary