



CITY OF FRANKLIN

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

MINUTES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

October 13, 2015

Members Present:

Ken Austin	President
Jake Sappenfield	Vice-President
Josh DeArmitt	Secretary
H. Lee Hodgen	Member

Others Present:

Rob H. Schafstall	Legal Counsel
Rhoni Oliver	Community Development Specialist
Julie Spate	Recording Secretary

Call to Order:

Ken Austin called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Jake Sappenfield made a motion to approve the September 8th, 2015 minutes. Josh DeArmitt seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Old Business:

None.

New Business:

Economic Development Fees:

Mr. Sappenfield thinks it is difficult for EDC to determine which project to fund without better parameters in place. His preference is a collaboration between groups to result in a few larger projects rather than so many smaller ones. Mr. Austin concurred with this thought, citing the visual tour and DDF signage as an example of potential collaboration. Mr. Austin brought to light that some of the mission statements from the submitting organizations did not include economic development and asked Rob Schafstall if this is or should be a required element. Mr. Schafstall responded affirmatively. Further, he thinks the simplest way to go about this is at the time of their written submission, the first thing stated should be "This organization is a public entity established to promote economic development within the city of Franklin." Only if they can respond in agreement to this are they are eligible to be considered. Mr. Austin thinks there will be an increase in applicants in the future. Mr. Schafstall read the state statute. "The fees collected under this section must be distributed to one or more non-profit entities established to promote economic development within the city of Franklin." Mr. Schafstall thinks the applying organizations should self cut first by the statute. The next cut would be to rank by merit the quality of the proposal, i.e. collaborative, etc. Lee Hodgen asked if this year's six applicants was one of the largest years. Mr. Austin confirmed it was at least close. Mr. Hodgen asked if there was any specific discussion at City Council in reaction to the EDC submission. Mr. Austin said no. Mr. DeArmitt asked if the organization should have to demonstrate a financial

need. Rhoni Oliver reviewed that a letter goes out to the organization at the beginning of the application process and that a request to demonstrate financial need could be included. Mr. DeArmitt additionally asked if financial statements are also asked for. Members of the audience confirmed that budgets are currently asked for but not financial statements. Cheryl Morphew of JCDC maintains that a statement as to whether EDC will entertain requests for general operating support should be given as that could require financial statements as supporting materials where the more collaborative project requests are project based budgeting and a request for organizational financial statements would not apply. Mr. Austin stated trying to put himself in the position of the CEO standing before the EDC when the abatement was approved. The tendency of the EDC is to try to be fair and just split the total funds amongst the applying organizations so that no one gets upset. Ms. Morphew responded by reminding that that's just business and all the applicants are professionals who would not be upset if they didn't get their money. Rather, it is about the impact in the community and who's going to make that impact, what projects are going to make that impact. Ms. Morphew continued to explain that as Franklin's economic development organization, they had never felt right to submit for general operating funds. This year JCDC felt they had the perfect collaborative project to submit that would foster economic development but gave the money they were awarded back to the EDC because JCDC doesn't have time to fundraise for their projects, so if EDC wasn't going to support it, they preferred to give the money back so EDC could do with it what they wanted to. Mr. Austin appreciated the work of a county organization spearheading a project effort as they submitted. Discover Downtown Franklin Executive Director Tara Payne concurs with Ms. Morphew's comments regarding not all are able to be awarded monies, but professionals are still able to collaborate and work together at the end of the day. Franklin Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Janice Bullman suggested for next year that the guidelines and requirements are specifically spelled out so there is not as much variation in the grant requests submitted. Mr. Austin acknowledges that the larger Franklin becomes the more it is necessary to have all the "ducks in a row." Even the economic development fee itself has not been promoted. Even the current mayor is not emphasizing it specifically. Krista Linke has edited documents to help, but the final goal has not yet been reached and Mr. Austin is appreciative of the discussion today and thinks we are headed in the right direction. Mr. Austin wishes Mr. Ditmars was here today as he values his leadership and opinion. Ms. Oliver suggested that there could be a point-based system to the guidelines worked out so submitting organizations would know more where they stand going in. Bea Northcott of Franklin Education Commission made a case for general operating support since that is what many non-profits need. It then is incumbent upon the requesting organization to justify it and convince EDC that it's an economic development issue. Mr. Austin recommended tabling this until the next meeting.

Mr. Hodgen made a motion to table the discussion until the next meeting. It was seconded by Mr. DeArmitt. The motion passed.

Other Business:

Mr. Austin announced that Mr. Ditmars is stepping down from his EDC appointment to the FDC. Ms. Oliver asked when Mr. Ditmars' commission expires. Mr. Schafstall explained that his commission has already expired but that he is willing to serve until he is replaced. Mr. Hodgen asked if this is to be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Austin confirmed. Mr. Sappenfield asked what the residence location parameters are to be able to serve. Mr. Schafstall said there are none. Ms. Oliver highlighted that Mr. Ditmars lives outside of the city limits in the buffer zone. Mr. Austin asked for the board members to think of individuals that would be an asset to the FDC.

Mr. Austin asked when the EDC officer commissions end. Ms. Oliver responded:
John Ditmars, county council appointment February 1st, 2016
Lee Hodgen, mayoral appointment February 1st, 2016
Josh DeArmitt, mayoral appointment February 1st, 2018
Jake Sappenfield, city council appointment February 1st, 2017
Ken Austin, mayoral appointment February 1st, 2018

Adjournment:

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Hodgen and a second by Mr. DeArmitt. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m..

Respectfully submitted this 10th day of November, 2015.

Ken Austin, President

Josh DeArmitt, Secretary