



WCEDC Mission Statement: *To Improve Wood County's Quality of Life by Promoting Economic Development*

WCEDC BOARD Minutes
WOOD COUNTY VOTING ANNEX
200 W. Bermuda St.
Quitman, TX 75783

Minutes of July 21, 2021 Board Meeting, at 12:00 pm

Attendees: Tom Keenan (Board Chair), Jim Berry, Gwen Winters, Lee Smith, Allene Doggett, Tom Callan, Commissioner Mike Simmons, Neal Duncan, and Steven Steele. Quorum Present.

Members not present: Vic Savelli, Craig Lindholm, and Greg Hollen,

Staff Present: Christophe Trahan; WCEDC Executive Director

Others Present: Jim Bailey, Wood County Sheriff Kelly Cole, Amanda Duncan with Wood County Now, Quitman City Council Alderman Susan Resnik, Larry Tucker with Wood County Monitor, Sarah Jackson-Butler, and Chris Butler.

Call to Order

Chairman Keenan called the meeting to order at 11:58 a.m. and established a quorum.

Citizen Comment: None.

Consider/Approve of June 16, 2021 Minutes: Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. 2nd by Ms. Winters; Motion carried.

Public Safety Update by Wood County Sheriff Kelly Cole

Wood County Sheriff Kelly Cole gave the board an update on county law enforcement. Sheriff Cole's presentation included the status of the county jail facility, the Sheriff's department's work on cold cases, and the relationship of the community with law enforcement officers. WCEDC Public Safety Committee Chair Tom Callan thanked Sheriff Cole for his time in sharing information with the board.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Trahan presented a report to the board regarding a contraction in local sales and use tax growth for Wood County and its member cities. Mr. Trahan also shared a working report that WCEDC staff is developing tracking the County's largest employers. Once completed, this list will be shared with all local EDCs and the East Texas Council of Governments.

Administration

- **Financial Report:** Mr. Berry presented the WCEDC Board with a Financial Summary of the General Fund and HOT fund budgets as of June 30, 2021.
- **Invoice Report:** None.



Marketing

- WCEDC Website Improvement Update by Kent Huffman: Mr. Huffman made a presentation to the board showing the design for the new public-facing website for Wood County. The rollout of the public-facing site will coincide with the rollout of a new, revamped WCEDC site as well as the implementation of the WCEDC's comprehensive strategy for marketing Wood County. Mr. Huffman detailed that the home page for the public-facing site will be complete and presented at the next board meeting along with further details of the EDC site and the marketing campaign as a whole. September 1 is the proposed date for the comprehensive marketing rollout.

Programs

- Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant Program: WCEDC Grant Review Committee Chair Allene Doggett presented the committee's funding allocation recommendations for the 2021/2022 Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant Program. The allocations were presented as follows:
 - Sitchin' Heaven Outdoor Quilt Show & Concert: \$3,000.00
 - Mineola League of the Arts: \$900.00
 - MEDC – Lake Country Trails: \$1,700.00
 - MEDC – Iron Horse Project: \$2,000.00
 - Lake Fork Area Chamber of Commerce – 2021 High School Fishing Tournament: \$5,000.00
 - Lake Fork Area Chamber of Commerce – 2022 Major League Fishing Tournament: \$5,000.00
 - Pond Hopper Nation: \$1,000
 - Mineola Area Chamber of Commerce – Iron Horse Heritage Festival: \$2,500
 - Unity Mural Project: \$1,500
 - The Beckham Hotel – Grand Opening: \$3,900
 - Sealy Outdoor, Inc. – Big Bass Splash: \$7,500
 - Bass on the Fly: \$1,500
 - Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament: \$7,500
 - Lady Bass Anglers: \$2,000
 - Hidden Pine Venue: \$5,000

Mr. Duncan made a motion to accept the funding allocations as presented and issue letters of awards to the grant recipients. 2nd by Mr. Smith; Motion carried.

- Wood County Tax Abatement Guidelines: Mr. Trahan presented a final draft of Tax Abatement Guidelines for Wood County to the WCEDC Board of Directors. Mr. Trahan detailed working with Commissioner Simmons and Mr. Lindholm on developing the guidelines and highlighted a local vendor incentive program contained within the guidelines. Motion by Commissioner Simmons to approve the guidelines as presented. 2nd by Mr. Callan; Motion carried.
- WCEDC Infrastructure Committee Broadband Initiative Letter of Support: WCEDC Infrastructure Committee Chair Lee Smith presented a proposed letter of support to the board for the Infrastructure Committee's county-wide Broadband Initiative seeking allocation of \$8.8 million of Wood County's American Recovery Plan Act funds to broadband and fiber-optic infrastructure around Wood County. Mr. Callan made a motion to approve the letter of support. 2nd by Mr. Steele; Motion carried.

Chairman's Report: Mr. Keenan reported that Wood County has been asked once again to sponsor the Bassmaster Tournament for 2022. The WCEDC plans to review the host contract with B.A.S.S. LLC and determine the maximum promotional value that can be negotiated from the agreement. Mr. Keenan also briefed the board on the Sabine River Authority's development of a multi-use pavilion on Lake Fork that will be used as the staging area for the Bassmaster tournament for 2022.



Featured Committee Reports

Health & Human Services Committee Report: Ms. Winters briefed the board on the Health & Human Services Committee's progress. The committee is actively developing a survey for distribution to begin determining healthcare statistics for residents in Wood County. Ms. Winters asked the board to consider approving an expenditure for a subscription to SurveyMonkey in the amount of \$384 which could be used as a data collection tool for all committees as they define relevant metrics and determine planning goals for the county. Mr. Berry made a motion to approve the expenditure. 2nd by Mr. Smith; Motion carried.

Education Committee Report: Mr. Steele was unable to give a report due to lack of time remaining in the meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:05 p.m. 2nd by Mr. Callan; Motion carried.

Approved by WCEDC Board of Directors

Approval Date: August 18, 2021

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Keenan", is written over a horizontal line.

Tom Keenan, WCEDC Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "8/18/21", is written over a horizontal line.