



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

WCEDC BOARD MINUTES
THE LINKS AT LAND'S END – THE PAVILION
285 Private Road 5980
Yantis, TX 75497

Minutes of February 16, 2022 Board Meeting

Attendees: Tom Keenan (Chair), Gwen Winters, Mike Simmons, Stephen Eggleston, Jim Berry, Lee Smith, Thomas Callan, Craig Lindholm, Allene Doggett, and Steven Steele. Quorum Present.

Members not present: None

Staff Present: Christophe Trahan; WCEDC Executive Director

Others Present: Larry Tucker with the Wood County Monitor, Yantis City Council Alderman Gerald Schmidt, Holly Lake Ranch Director of Operations Adam Ehlert

Call to Order

Chair Keenan called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

Citizen Comment: None.

Consider/Approve of January 19, 2022 Minutes: Mr. Callan made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. 2nd by Ms. Doggett, Motion carried.

Executive Director Report:

Mr. Trahan updated the board on the progress of scheduling site visits with local businesses in the county. So far, in Q1 2022, most businesses contacted have been nonresponsive. WCEDC staff is currently awaiting responses from Keller's Creamery, ETAS, and Wood County Nursing Home in Mineola. Site visits have been scheduled with Hawkins ISD and Yantis ISD, and Sanderson Farms has confirmed that they are interested in having a site visit and are working to provide a date in which WCEDC representatives can meet with members of their corporate team at their Mineola facility.

Mr. Trahan also notified the board that local news affiliate KLTV conducted an interview with County Judge Lucy Hebron regarding the WCEDC's work in educating local lodging businesses regarding the new training requirements under Texas House Bill 390.

Administration:

- Financial Report: Mr. Berry presented the financial report for the period ended December 31, 2021 to the board. Financials for the period ending January 31, 2022 were not yet available from the county auditor's office.

- Invoice Report: Two invoices were presented to the board for approval:

- \$1,038 Special Event Insurance for the 2022 Bassmaster Elite at Lake Fork
- \$1,800 KMOO Advertising Package

Mr. Lindholm made a motion to approve both invoices as presented. 2nd by Mr. Smith; Motion carried.



Programs:

- Wood County Master Planning Initiative: Mr. Keenan & Mr. Trahan presented the board with an updated draft of a term sheet for acquiring consultation services for a master planning initiative for Wood County. The board was asked to submit any input they have on the term sheet to WCEDC staff while the WCEDC Executive Committee determines a timeframe for release of the term sheet.
- Wood County Lodging Industry Workshop: Mr. Trahan presented a proposal to the board to develop an educational workshop for lodging businesses in Wood County. Potential topics to be discussed at the workshop would be the new training requirements for lodging businesses under Texas House Bill 390, Wood County's local hotel occupancy tax grant program, and an open discussion regarding how local hotel occupancy tax remittance in Wood County is handled. Ms. Winters suggested collaboration with Jarvis Christian College on the topic of human trafficking as the college has an ongoing initiative combating the issue. Mr. Callan made a motion to allocate \$2,000 of the Tourism Projects budget for the production of a local education workshop for local lodging businesses. 2nd by Ms. Doggett; Motion carried.

Chairman's Report:

- By-Laws Review:
Mr. Keenan presented a potential by-laws amendment to the board to change the recurring date of the regular board meeting from the third Wednesday of each month to the fourth. This change was considered to allow more time for staff to acquire financial reports from the county auditor's office which become available on the 15th of each month. Mr. Smith made a motion to amend the WCEDC By-Laws to state the regular meeting take place on the fourth Wednesday of every month. 2nd by Mr. Steele; Motion carried.
- Bassmaster Elite at Lake Fork 2022: Mr. Keenan updated the board regarding the planning and production of the 2022 Bassmaster Elite at Lake Fork. The WCEDC and the SRA have engaged the Pilot's Club of Quitman as a fundraising partner for the event and they will also be conducting a bicycle rodeo and a 5k run along the dam in conjunction with the festival that is planned for the last two days of the tournament.

Featured Committee Reports:

- Marketing Committee: Mr. Eggleston updated the board on the marketing efforts of the WCEDC. He presented several branded items to the board including a 10x10 canopy, pop-up banners, table covers, and tote bags. Additional items to be used as giveaways are being procured as well. Mr. Eggleston also detailed the work being done by Brynna Williamson—the local writer who the WCEDC is working with to produce Wood County Stories for LoveWoodCounty.com. Ms. Williamson is currently working on a story regarding the Patriot Sporting Challenge set to take place in April. Lastly, Mr. Eggleston asked that the board consider a certificate of appreciation for his business partner Kent Huffman for the marketing work he has done for the WCEDC at no cost. The board was in general agreement that such a certificate would be appropriate.
- Health & Human Services Committee: Ms. Winters updated the board on the health outcomes survey that her committee has developed. The survey is currently in its pilot phase and Ms. Winters asked each board member to have at least 5 individuals take the survey. The survey will also be circulated by WCEDC staff to local chambers of commerce for this same purpose during the pilot phase as well. The formal rollout of the survey is planned for March 15.



- Economic Development Committee: Mr. Lindholm updated the board on the progress of the pre-development phase for the Center for Memory Health & Education in Quitman. The project's team of consultants is currently working on getting contracts and local partners to help design the proposed infrastructure while simultaneously working on a pro forma for the facility to determine the feasibility of the operations of the center.
- Infrastructure Committee: Mr. Smith laid out a comprehensive update for the board regarding the three broadband expansion projects currently being worked on by the infrastructure committee—the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) grant being pursued by Peoples Telephone Cooperative and Wood County, the East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) broadband initiative, and the pursuit of county American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) dollars for broadband expansion. Mr. Smith detailed work with WCEDC staff to make presentations to the city councils in Alba, Winnsboro, Quitman, and Hawkins to get council approval to move forward with fiber-optic deployment and downtown Wi-Fi projects for the four cities in addition to the fifth project involving a network of WISP towers around the county that will comprise the five projects submitted under ETCOG's initiative.

Adjournment

Mr. Lindholm made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:08 p.m. 2nd by Mr. Callan, Motion carried.

Approved by WCEDC Board of Directors

Tom Keenan; WCEDC Board Chair

Approval Date: March 23, 2022