Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation

MEETING MINUTES
Board of Directors Regular Board Meeting
501 Procter Street, Ste. 100, Port Arthur, TX 77640
Monday, April 7th, 2025
6:00 PM

I. ROLL CALL, INVOCATION & PLEDGE

The Board of Directors of the Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation met in a Regular Board Meeting on Monday, April 7th, at 6:00 p.m., with the following board and staff members present:

President Darrell Anderson, Vice President Ingrid Holmes (arrived at 06:11 PM), Treasurer Melvin Getwood, Directors Jerry LaBove, Morris Albright, Beverly Raymond, CEO Terry Stokes, DCEDO Krystle Muller, Administrative Assistant Sarai Garcia

Board President Darrell Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
Beverly Raymond gave the invocation followed by the pledge to the flag.

II. MINUTES

Morris Albright made a motion, seconded by Jerry LaBove, to approve and adopt the March 12th, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes. The vote was unanimous, all in favor. Motion carried.

III. PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Speakers (limited to 3 minutes each)**

   a. Henry LaBrie | Owner, Mid-County Plaza, LLC

   Henry LaBrie informed the board that they've submitted a request to purchase an additional 1.22 acres adjacent to the existing 5-acre tract in the Industrial Park purchased recently from the PAEDC. As well as an 8.2-acre tract has been submitted for consideration.

2. **Presentations**

   a. Gener8tor Program – Mr. Robert Pieroni

Robert Pieroni was unable to attend, so Ms. Prentice Keller presented on his behalf. She discussed research and planning efforts for the Small Business Resource Center Incubator at the Press Building. Ms. Keller introduced Gener8tor, a turnkey service that provides business solutions and administrative support. She highlighted the program's benefits and its potential impact on the Port Arthur community and the PAEDC. She finalized by answering the board's questions regarding the program.

3. **Communications**

a. PAEDC's Legal Team Meeting Attendance Correspondence

CEO Stokes and President Anderson informed the board of a communication from the PAEDC legal team stating that legal representation will participate in monthly board meetings via Zoom rather than in person. They also introduced the newly assigned attorney, Stanley Springerley, Senior Associate Attorney with Denton Navarro.

CEO Stokes informed the board about the following upcoming events and invited them to attend. He highlighted the Jefferson County Commissioners Leadership Breakfast and the Small Business Awards Banquet, noting that the PAEDC will be a sponsor and have a reserved table at both events.

b. **Earth Day: Procter Street Clean Up**
Thursday April 17th, 2025, at 8 AM | Port Arthur International Seafarer's Center

c. **Jefferson County Commissioners Leadership Breakfast**
Wednesday April 23rd, 2025, at 9:45 AM | Robert A. "Bob" Bowers Civic Center

d. **Small Business Awards Banquet**
Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at 6PM | The Venue at Belle Oaks, Beaumont TX

e. **Spring Job Fair**
Wednesday April 30th, 2025, at 10 AM | Robert A. "Bob" Bowers Civic Center

f. **2025 Industry Show**
Thursday August 14th, 2025, at 2 PM | Robert A. "Bob" Bowers Civic Center

IV. REPORTS

1. CEO's Report | Discussion

CEO Stokes gave the Board an update on the following items:

a. Financial Report for the month of March 2025
b. Downtown Revitalization Program Update

CEO Stokes informed the Board that a community survey will be issued within the next couple of weeks, and the Downtown Strategies team will be hosting in the next few weeks.

c. Update on Workforce Development Programs

Shawn Granger the Workforce and Community Development Manager, updated the board on the following Workforce Development Programs:

- **The Lamar State Port Arthur Scholarship Program (10 scholarships) has been approved by City Council and distributed to all schools serving Port Arthur residents.**

- **Five applications have been received for the Youth Employment Program; the application deadline is May 2nd. A selection board will be assembled to review and select participants.**

- **Several businesses have been identified and have expressed interest in partnering with the Youth Employment Program to align students with career fields.**

- **The CDL program is now operating under a new contract effective April 1st. An audit has been completed to close out the previous fiscal year's contract. Seven students are currently enrolled, with additional classes planned. This is the final year of the current CDL program contract.**

- **Plans are underway to expand outreach to middle schools with a new program called "Future Force."**

d. Review of timeline for formal launching of PAEDC's Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support Center

Mr. Stokes informed the Board that the goal is to have a soft launch by November 30, 2025, with an official hard launch planned for January 2026.

e. Staffing Update

Mr. Stokes informed the Board that the goal is to hire a Marketing and Insights Manager no later than June. He also announced that Sarai Garcia is now a permanent member of the PAEDC, serving as Administrative Assistant.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. To discuss and consider approval of the proposed PAEDC Code of Ethics

CEO Stokes clarified that the Code of Ethics falls under the Bylaws of the PAEDC, not the Policies and Procedures. Director Raymond noted that a roll call vote was necessary, as a supermajority vote (5 votes) is required to amend the Bylaws. The vote resulted in 4 in favor and 2 against; therefore, the motion failed. The votes were as follows:

Yes: Darrell Anderson, Morris Albright, Ingrid Holmes, Melvin Getwood
No: Beverly Raymond, Jerry LaBove

Attorney Springerley stated that he would review the current Bylaws, approved in April 2022, to confirm whether a supermajority vote is indeed required for this governing body.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

(None)

VII. NON-CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. To discuss the possible procurement of security guard services for the Press Building

A memo outlining the approximate costs for security guard services at the Press Building was distributed to each board member. The EDC staff recommended that this item be included in the budget for the next fiscal year.
Vice President Holmes made a motion to include armed security services at the Press Building in the next fiscal year's budget. The motion was seconded by Melvin Getwood. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. To discuss for possible consideration an Economic Development Performance Agreement with CGLR Properties LLC

President Anderson moved Non-Consent Agenda Item #2 to Executive Session

3. Review, discussion, and possible action on the Corporation's revised proposed Bylaws, Code of Ethics, and Board of Directors Policy and Procedures Manual and requesting City Council's approval of same.

Non-Consent Agenda Item #3 was tabled, as it is dependent on the outcome of the Code of Ethics discussion.

4. Review, discussion, and possible action regarding Section 8.18, Voting: Action of the Board of Directors, "Directors must be present in order to vote at any meeting"; as outlined in PAEDC By Laws dated April 4, 2022 (requested by Director LaBove)

Morris Albright made a motion, seconded by Beverly Raymond, to bring Non-Consent Agenda Item #4 to the floor for discussion.
Director LaBove expressed concern regarding votes taken during the previous meeting, stating that Board members participating via Zoom should not have been allowed to vote and should be physically present.
Attorney Springerly clarified that for virtual participation to be valid, a physical quorum must be present, the presiding officer must attend in person, and advance notice must be given. He noted that any items previously voted that are of concern may be brought back for ratification.
CEO Stokes added that a notice has since been added to agendas, as provided by Attorney Zech, and that the same language will be included in the proposed Bylaws.

VIII. CLOSED SESSION (EXECUTIVE SESSION)

The Board of Directors recessed their meeting at 7:04 PM to enter Executive Session to discuss the following topics:

1. §551.071 – To consult with Attorney
   a. Lamar State College Port Arthur & Seahawk Landing Loan

2. §Section 551.074 - To discuss personnel matters
   a. Employment contract with PAEDC Chief Executive Officer

The Regular Board of Directors meeting reconvened in open session at 8:03 p.m. with the following board members and staff present:

President Darrell Anderson, Vice President Ingrid Holmes, Treasurer Melvin Getwood, Directors Jerry LaBove, Morris Albright, Beverly Raymond, CEO Terry Stokes, DCEDO Krystle Muller, Administrative Assistant Sarai Garcia

MOTIONS IN OPEN SESSION:

Jerry LaBove made a motion, seconded by Ingrid Holmes, to approve an Economic Development Performance Agreement with CGLR Properties LLC, as prepared and presented by the PAEDC attorney. The vote was unanimous all in favor. Motion carried.

IV. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS OR REQUESTED REPORTS

1. **Review, discussion, and possible action to terminate the PAEDC's contract with its legal counsel, Denton Navarro Rodriguez Bernal Santee & Zech, P.C. (DNRBS&Z) (Request of Director LaBove)**

2. **Ratification of agenda items voted on during previous meeting with director participating via Zoom (Request of Director LaBove)**

X. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Beverly Raymond made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ingrid Holmes. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON THE 5th **DAY OF** May**,**

2025.

SECRETARY OF THE CORPORATION