



PASADENA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Pre-Board Meeting

April 25, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

Minutes

Members present:

Rick Lord, President
Marilyn Wilkins, Vice President
Salvador Serrano, Jr., Treasurer
Ernesto Paredes, Secretary
Efren Arjona
Angela West
Elaine Domec

Members Absent:

Others Present:

Jeff Moore, Brown & Hofmeister, LLP (via Zoom)
Rick Guerrero, Executive Director
Julianne Echavarria, PEDC Marketing Manager
Karina Tomlinson, PEDC Manager
Yolanda Vegas de Eaves, Sr. Office Assistant

Call to order:

The Pre-Board meeting for the April 25, 2024, Pasadena Economic Development Corporation was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Board President, Rick Lord.

He read through the items on the agenda and asked if anyone had any questions.

With no questions or comments by the Board, Rick Lord concluded the Pre-Board Meeting.

Pre-Board meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

PASADENA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Board Meeting
April 25, 2024, 3:03 p.m.
Minutes

Agenda Item One: Call to order

The Board meeting on April 25, 2024, for Pasadena Economic Development Corporation was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Board President, Rick Lord.

Agenda Item Two: Invocation

Invocation given by: Ernesto Paredes, Board Secretary.

Agenda Item Three: Pledges

Pledges led by: Efren Arjona, Board Member.

Agenda Item Four: Public Comments

No comments made by any attendees.

Agenda Item Five: Approval of Minutes from March 27, 2024

Rick Lord, called for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on March 27, 2024. Marilyn Wilkins moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ernesto Paredes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUS.

Agenda Item Six: Board Actions- Resolutions

- a. **PEDC RESOLUTION 24-009-** Consideration to accept the Financial Report of Investment Activities for the Fiscal Quarter ended March 31, 2024.

Ernesto Paredes made a motion, seconded by Elaine Domec that PEDC Resolution 24-009 be passed, approved and adopted. MOTION CARRIED ANONIMOUS.

- b. **PEDC RESOLUTION 24-010** – Consideration to authorize Staff to negotiate and execute an agreement with the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce to promote, engage and support the Pasadena Loves Local initiative in the amount of \$30,000.00.

Ernesto Paredes made a motion, seconded by Salvador Serrano, Jr. that PEDC Resolution 24-010 be passed, approved and adopted. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUS.

Cristina Womack, Pasadena Chamber CEO stepped forward to give the Board a brief presentation. She began by describing the job fair that took place the day before with an additional 250% more attendees, about 850 people. She praised the Chamber's Vice President Erin Webb, who was not present at this time, for being the lead on the Pasadena Loves Local program alongside Julianne Echavarria, EDC's Marketing manager. She introduced her presentation by referring to the strategic plan update back in 2023, and how it compares to the Pasadena Loves Local program. This program was designed to support two of the six goals: business development and the workforce through the Business Retention and Expansion program and the Pasadena Loves Local workshops. After reviewing them one by one in detail it was refreshing to see that this program alone touches all six strategic plan goal recommendations. Next slide described four PLL workshops in 2023, such as

Generations Collide workshop which took place again last month. These workshops experienced a 62% increase from 2022 to 2023, two of the programs that took place for the year were well above of 100% increase in attendance, and the plan is to do the same events in 2024. The success, as with the job fair, is that the entire initiative supports the strategic plan goal of workforce development, which was not an original initiative goal of the PLL, but it spills out to other goals aligned to the strategic plan. Through the workshops in the small business resource fair, we partnered with SPA, SBDC and SCORE. We teach people how to use small business tools, as well as sharing the small business wins on how other companies are getting contracts with cities, counties, the port, and large industry. Another conversation in the Strategic Plan was about expanding partnerships with PISD, SJC, and UHCL - the latter being one of the specific recommendations. Next week the work committee is having an in-campus visit and extended the invitation to the Board members. C. Womack wanted to highlight that some of the recommendations from the strategic plan were to expand these events across the city. Our citywide open events need to be marketed in different ways, beyond the Pasadena area and into the broader Houston metro area. Next slide shows the media partners present specific for the job fair, Telemundo and KPRC 2 to name some. She also mentioned the large amount of radio coverage the Taste of Town event received last year, and the presence of television hosts and media coverage as well. She reflected on the effort made throughout the years in trying to change the image and stereotype of what people think of Pasadena. She knows this has been a primary focus for R. Guerrero and all the other programs the EDC has been involved. It is exciting to see Pasadena in the news for positive things. Julianne and Kerri Walsh, chair of the workforce committee and Director of Recruiting at Pinnacle, went on the news yesterday and did a segment about the Job Fair, giving great publicity to what is happening. She announced that the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce has been named the 2024 community partner of the year, by the US Small Business Administration, Houston district office. This nomination comes in part from the partnership with the EDC and they are excited to have R. Guerrero present when they receive the award. C. Womack went onto describe another program that is part of the PLL: Business Retention and Expansion, and Surveys. This points to the Strategic Plan goal 2: Business Development. The primary goal is to understand what is going on with businesses and their challenges, what can we hear from them to make sure that we continue to attract and retain businesses in Pasadena. These types of companies range from small businesses to large industry and everything in between. For this past year's expansion, R. Guerrero asked us to focus more on small businesses as part of the visits, which was one of the recommendations. Julianne and Erin have done an excellent job making sure meetings are available, allowing us to offer them the support they need. There has not been that much change in the challenges that businesses face; workforce as number one whether the businesses are small or large across the industry, for expansion or new business development is planning and permitting process, which does not come as a surprise. For small businesses, the challenge is marketing since Pasadena has limited media coverage. Our next workshop happening in September is going to focus on small business marketing and with the outcome of these visits we will develop the content to meet their needs. The last slide refers to the Survey which gets documented in writing, so we understand what we need to work on. Being consistent with the Strategic Plan, this year we launched a survey at the State of the City, this is the largest and most formal event we do, capturing feedback from everyone in the audience. There are a lot of the same issues, but collectively working together there is nothing that is outside of what the EDC and the Chamber focus on. The top five areas of support requested in the survey are: local planning and permitting, educational workforce development, small business support, strategic appointments, and infrastructure. Overall, the program is doing exactly what we were hoping for and then some. The Chamber along with Rick and Julianne have been working on the contract renewal, we look at the programs and evaluate them to make sure we are not doing the same thing year after year. She thanked the Board for its support and offered to answer any questions. *M. Wilkins commented that about 20 years ago, and this had to do with*

involvement in another chamber, there was an effort to connect large businesses and small businesses, and the challenges that arise from that can be difficult. But from the standpoint of saying small businesses, she does not think of five hundred employees or less, even though that is what the definition is. She thinks based on criticism she heard, not regarding this Chamber's program but in general terms, the larger but still small businesses may have a harder challenge with respect to how their needs are being met. She hopes as the program continues to mature, that there is more emphasis on that. C. Womack wanted to clarify if for the smaller businesses, she refers to less than 50 employees. M. Wilkins responded that it might be businesses with two hundred employees but not thousands. On that segment of the marketplace when you see Pasadena Loves Local, on most people's minds, they think of finding their favorite boutique, or ice cream store. Not those companies that are larger but are not huge, that also have their own set of challenges. C. Womack responded that they have been focusing on data to quantify within the chamber and within all the companies they gave grants to, during the pandemic based on employee size. The port of Houston is a great model on capturing data to award businesses, whether is small business, minority /women owned. We have not historically done a great job with that in Pasadena on any level. We have been segmenting our data a little more around the types of people we are serving and trying to understand that. We want people to understand that Pasadena Loves Local is not about small businesses, it is about local businesses and small businesses are part of that; it is both and. S. Serrano, Jr., added that some of those companies are also local business owners. We think for example: McDonald's but there is a family behind, the one of Ed Quijano who is involved in the community. Same thing with Luke Wilbanks, we think of Chick-fil-A, so we think "We want to eat at a mom-and-pop shop," right? The people that are donating behind the scenes do not ask for much, local Pasadena families are pushing and sponsoring events, like the Quijano family. This is hard because we think "Well, they have their own resources" but they really have their own challenges. We are growing and understanding everything from Chevron to the Port of Houston, down to your local mom and pop shops. He wanted to bring this to light because sometimes when we think of McDonalds or Chick-fil-A, we see them as big brands. C. Womack responded that that is the reason we must think of 6.2.2 and 6.2.3 on the strategic plan and follow up having these conversations, and as it all grows, we will continue to grow too.

Agenda Item Seven: Report by Rick Guerrero, Executive Director

R. Guerrero began his report by referring to the progress in the partnership with the chamber and as C. Womack mentioned, the job fair went very well. Based on Julianne's feedback it was a packed house. He is proud of his staff at the EDC, they have been active in supporting them in every way they can. On a side note, just the last couple of days Julianne had two interviews, one with Telemundo and another with Channel 2 to promote the job fair. He then proceeded to give some project updates.

Richey Street: This item will be in the Executive session for an update. Pasadena Blvd: There is a lot of activity going on, there will be more as we move forward and hopefully it can be finished in 12-18 months.

Pasadena Arena: This project continues to progress, they started to install the new water and fire lines. We have been looking at seating options and various LED screen options as well. Desing for the interior is almost done, and it looks very nice. Vince Greenway & Little Vince Greenway: These projects continue to move forward and there are no updates at this time.

Hwy 225 Safety Lighting: We are waiting for approvals from TxDOT. We are just trying to figure out what is the best way to secure the safety lights, since there is going to be work done on Hwy 225 in the future, it is probably a faster process for us to find a free-standing structure rather than attach it to Hwy 225.

Pasadena Plaza: We have a meeting coming up in the next couple of weeks, it is going to be 80 – 90% design completion at that point. Convention Center Fairgrounds:

At the convention center property in general, water lines had been added across the front as well as new sewer and electrical capacities, to help some of the events such as the strawberry festival, the Pasadena rodeo and anything else that happens at the grounds. The work will last at least another 18 months or so.

Agenda Item Eight: Comments by Board Members.

Angela West: Congratulated the Chamber of Commerce on the award, she thinks it was well deserved and recognized their hard work. She remembers when she was young and worked at a company that was involved with the Chamber, making her familiar with them for many years.

Elaine Domec: She thanked EDC's staff because they do an excellent job, adding that we would not be where we are without them.

Ernesto Paredes: He passed some information about the Chamber to people from his church and had a lot of good feedback from adults and youth that were able to visit the event. He agrees with what Cristina said about the attendance, it was packed house and thanked the Chamber for the support.

Efren Arjona: Apologized for not being present during the last meeting. He Congratulated the Chamber and asked them to keep up with the excellent work.

Marilyn Wilkins: She seconded everything said to the chamber. She also wanted to thank publicly the newly retired City Controller Julie St. Jean for her services to the EDC and her hard work.

Salvador Serrano, Jr.: He congratulated the Chamber on their award and acknowledged their hard work, he used to be one of their Board members, its staff has evolved to be wonderful just like the one at the EDC. He also thanked the city's staff because their work does not go unnoticed, we put all these plans together and they make it work for us.

Rick Lord: Thanked everyone for the teamwork and added that things are going in a good direction, and like everyone else he wants the Pasadena Blvd corridor fixed up quickly, R. Green responded, "no pain no gain."

Agenda Item Nine: Executive Session.

****NOTE** 3:31 PM** – At this time Board President Rick Lord announced that the Board would be "going behind doors" for an Executive Session.

- a. Convene in executive session pursuant to Section 551.087, Texas Government Code to deliberate regarding economic development negotiations, for Business Attraction/Retention Projects.
- b. Convene in executive session pursuant to Section 551.072 and 551.087, Texas Government Code to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property and to deliberate regarding economic development incentives – Project #2401.
- c. Convene in executive session pursuant to Section 551.071, Texas Government Code to seek legal advice from the PEDC attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation or settlement offers related to Richey Street Roadway and Pedestrian Improvements project.

Agenda Item Ten: Reconvene into Regular Session

****NOTE** 4:16 PM** – At this time, President Rick Lord reconvened the Regular Board Meeting.

The Board will reconvene into Regular Session, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, to take any action necessary regarding:

- a. Deliberation regarding economic development negotiation for Businesses Attraction/Retention Projects.
 - There was no deliberation on this item.
- b. Deliberation regarding real property – Project #2401.
 - There was no deliberation on this item.

c. Deliberation regarding legal advice from PEDC attorney.

- **PEDC RESOLUTION 24-011** – Salvador Serrano, Jr. made a motion to further consider the settlement offer related to the Richey Street Roadway project at the next PEDC meeting, seconded by Ernesto Paredes. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item Eleven: Adjournment

Board President Rick Lord called for a motion to adjourn the April 25, 2024, meeting at 4:17 p.m.

Ernesto Paredes moved seconded by Salvador Serrano, Jr. MOTION CARRIED ANONIMOUS.