



**Minutes from Joint Meeting
City Council, City of Palestine
and
Palestine Economic Development Corporation
Thursday, October 18, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.
Red Fire Grill
Redlands Hotel
400 N. Queen St.
Palestine, Texas 75801**

All agenda items are subject to action.

WORKSHOP – 11:30 A M

- A. CALL TO ORDER:** The Palestine Economic Development Corporation reserves the right to convene into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed on this agenda as authorized by Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Development) to wit: **Economic Development**
- B. Establishment of Quorum for City Council –** Attending were: Mitchell Jordan, Ann Connor, Vicki Chivers, Joe Baxter, Laressa Loveless, and Dana Goolsby.
- C. Establishment of Quorum for PEDC Board –** Attending were: Larry Weber, Linda Dickson, Ben Campbell, Michael Page, Charles Drane, and late arrival Stuart Whitaker.
- Others attending included: Rachel Nichols, Mary Raum, Greg Laudadio, Michele Merryman, Mayor Steve Presley, Mike Hornes, Gayle Cooper, Tim Perry, County Judge Robert Johnston, Teresa Herrera, Terry Johnson, and Nate Smith.
- D. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND GUESTS:** Mayor Presley welcomed the attendees and introduced Gayle Cooper, EDC Director. Gayle welcomed the group to Red File Grill and gave an overview of the reasons for hosting the luncheon there in Redlands Hotel: best of restaurants, extensive funds spent on renovations, and major tourist attraction. Lunch was served. Council and Board briefly introduced themselves. Mayor Presley and Larry Weber stated the focus for the City of Palestine is primarily in the downtown area. The downtown area is a high value area.

E. DISCUSSION REGARDING CITY/PEDC ACTIVITIES: City Manager Michael Hornes and PEDC Director Gayle Cooper reviewed status of economic development activities

- **Downtown Infrastructure Rehabilitation**

Gayle Cooper - The PEDC Board voted for a \$500,000 investment in the downtown area, and we hope to increase that amount by \$250,000 with CDGB grant funds. PEDC is collaborating with the County and the City to make downtown improvements. Since we have 44 blocks in Main Street, we must work and fund efforts on a block to block basis. We have settled on an infrastructure area to improve downtown water and sewer work. The area to be covered is Spring to Crawford Streets and Sycamore to Queen Streets. We still need a strategic starting point, or the block we want to complete first, and we invite the community to participate in that conversation.

Larry Weber – The PEDC Board and community can be a catalyst for downtown revitalization. Our downtown area makes us unique and uniqueness brings in tourism. There is ample parking downtown for shoppers and business owners.

& Grant application

Gayle Cooper – There is no property tax involved in EDC projects, only sales tax revenues. It takes private investment to renovate our downtown buildings, along with our grant funding of \$250,000 for fiscal year 2018-2019.

- **Downtown Buildings Renovations/Upgrading**

Gayle Cooper – The PEDC Board will cap their match grant funding at \$75,000 per building renovation. We expect three projects or buildings per year on an average basis. PEDC will put a lien on their property until their renovations are completed as expected and the has been maintained for three years. We expect all property owners to meet or exceed their expectations. This is a great deal for private investment.

Tim Perry – Since our downtown water and sewer lines were installed in 1800's, many pipes need replacement pipe. Electrical conduit will be under ground and we will plan for fiber optics by installing blank conduits for future growth. Tim has available maps for water and sewer lines and is in the process of securing maps for fiber optic lines. The first block of infrastructure work could start as early as summer 2019. We want to make sure we receive the grant dollars for our first block of work and we will know that by early summer 2019.

Mayor Presley – We will use way finding signs to secure our Spring Street/Highway 79 area work projects.

- **Retail**

Gayle Cooper – We will work towards attracting national retail to the community. PEDC will do economic impact analysis to attract new businesses and new employees to Palestine.

- **Housing**

Gayle Cooper – High end housing will soon be here, and higher paying jobs will follow. With the wealth index, our household income is \$67,000 per household. This number helps us attract jobs.

- **Incentive Practices**

Gayle Cooper – Our Tourism group advertises Palestine and EDC reaps the benefit. Palestine is known nationwide because of our tourism advertising campaigns.

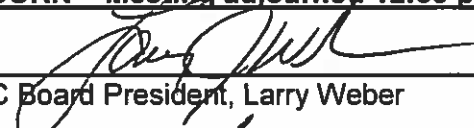
Larry Weber, Board President
Alan Herrington, Vice President
Linda Dickens

Charles Drane
Ben Campbell
Michael Page
Stuart Whitaker

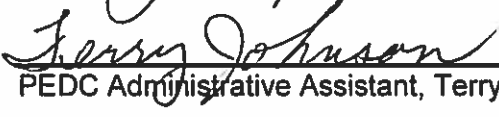
- **Business Retention & Expansion**

Gayle Cooper – The Palestine Chamber of Commerce is our business retention and expansion arm of the City. Collaboration is important. There was further discussion concerning what quality of life Palestine offers to the lower income families in our area.

F. ADJOURN – Meeting adjourned 12:55 pm.

 11-15-18 1:05 pm

PEDC Board President, Larry Weber

 11-15-18 1:05 pm

PEDC Administrative Assistant, Terry Johnson