

**MINUTES
GROVES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
GROVES CITY HALL
MAY 20, 2024**

IN ATTENDANCE:

**Rhonda Dugas, Derek Theall, Paul Oliver, Mark McAdams
Pete Konidis, Letha Knaus, Sidney Badon, Brandon Monk,
Lamar Ozley, Kevin Carruth**

ABSENT:

None

President Dugas called the meeting to order at 5:26 p.m.

Prayer and Pledge was given by Mr. Derek Theall, Vice President.

President Dugas welcomed the guest and the news media to the meeting.

ITEM V:

President Dugas called for a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the May 20,2024 Groves Economic Development Corporation. A motion was made by Letha Knaus and a second was made by Mark McAdams.

Pete Konidis stated his name was not on the list as attended.

Mr. Konidis asked for a motion to amend the minutes to reflect

his name be added as attended to the minutes. A motion was made by Letha Knaus and a second was made by Mark McAdams to amend the minutes to add Pete Konidis to the attended list. President Dugas apologized for the Oversight. A record vote was taken. The motion passed.

ITEM VI:

President Dugas called for citizen comments. There were no citizen comments.

ITEM VII:

New Business. President Dugas asked Mr. Carruth if there were any new business updates that had not been previously discussed. We had discussed Carstar.

Mr. Carruth said that right before the meeting he had “heard” but not confirmed that Goodwill is looking to put a retail location here in Groves. Mrs. Knaus added that Paris Beauty Shop is opening soon on Monroe. We will be getting another coffee shop, and Wildflower will be having their ribbon cutting. As the building on Hogaboom and Twin City were discussed President Dugas said that particular building had been discussed quite some time ago. But that building is located in Port Arthur not Groves.

ITEM VIII:

Financial reports. President Dugas called on Mr. Ozley to present the financial reports. A hard copy of the reports were printed out by Mr. Ozley and distributed to the Board. The possibility is very strong that we will receive \$3.1 million dollars in sales tax for this year. Sales Tax for April was \$295,486.27 which is \$53,102.21 increase for April from the previous year. The budget report reflected reimbursement expense and the conference fees. May reflected reimbursement expense for Ozley and Dugas.

ITEM IX:

Deliberate Church EDC Reimbursement. President Dugas called for a motion and a second on the item. A motion was made by Mark McAdams and a second was made by Derek Theall. President Dugas called for a discussion. The discussion reflected these concerns: a “church” does not generate a tax basis for the city nor a capitol investment, and low permanent employment full time positions with a church. Additional concerns are that churches are tax exempt, and the definition of “church” would allow for any homestead to become one. It was recognized that churches do bring in people that use our restaurants and stores in the city. Mr. Oliver stated his position again that we are economic development organization and we provide our police and fire department services to the churches. We are investing in our businesses with the reimbursement program. President Dugas asked Mr. Monk if this wording was sufficient for a vote or needed to be amended, Mr. Monk said the wording is sufficient. President Dugas called for a record vote. All Board members voted no and the motion to allow Churches a reimbursement failed.

ITEM X:

Outside painting of a structure for a business. President Dugas called for a motion And a second. A motion was made by Letha Knaus and a second was made by Pete Konidis. President Dugas called for a discussion. The discussion concluded with these points. The city cannot determine what color a business can paint their building, placing a “up to” \$500 cap on the amount of reimbursement or continue with the 40% reimbursement up to the allowed \$5000 for the category. President Dugas continued to reiterate that the 40% would continue to apply to this category. Perhaps we could have a case by case basis for maintenance of every 7 to 10 years or a flat 5 year period. President Dugas stated Murals are considered signage. A motion was made to table this item by Sidney Badon and a second was made by Mark McAdams. The Board voted unanimously to table the item. This will be placed on the June 17th 2024 agenda for a vote.

ITEM XI:

GEDC reimbursement for Classic Finds in the amount of \$331.29. President Dugas called for a motion and a second for this item. A motion was made by Letha Knaus and a second was made by Pete Konidis. Owner Melissa Hoyt attended the meeting. Mrs. Hoyt provided a sales tax certificate with her application President Dugas called for a record vote. The Board voted in favor of the reimbursement and there were none opposed. Motion passed.

ITEM XII:

GEDC reimbursement for Maison D' Amis in the amount of \$1,220.00 for advertising. President Dugas called for a motion and a second for this item. A motion was made by Mark McAdams and a second made by Letha Knaus. Owner Ana Reyes attended the Meeting. A sales tax certificate is not required of the event center services. President Dugas called for a record vote. The Board voted in favor of the reimbursement and there were none opposed. Motion passed.

ITEM XIII:

GEDC member comments. President Dugas called for member comments. Lighting of the downtown area was mentioned. Terms of EDC board members was mentioned. President Dugas once again said if a member wants something on the agenda they need to contact her through email. President Dugas stated the Board decided that if the guidelines need to be updated it would be done for the September meeting before the new budget starts.

ITEM XIV:

President Dugas adjourned the meeting at 6:23 p.m.