

Meeting Minutes
Bellville Economic Development Corporation

The regular meeting of the Bellville Economic Development Corporation was called to order by David Ottmer at 5:30 P.M., Tuesday, January 14, 2003, in the Council meeting room at City Hall, Bellville, Texas.

Present were Wayne Browning, Jerome Peters, Warren Scott, David Ottmer, Kenneth Stein, Nancy Allen and Bob Simpson. All members were present.

Wayne Browning made a motion the Agenda be approved. Jerome Peters made a motion Items #15, 16 and 17 be moved to follow Item #7 earlier in the agenda. Wayne revised his motion; it was seconded by Warren Scott and carried unanimously.

Wayne Browning made a motion the Minutes of the December 10, 2002 meeting be approved. Bob Simpson provided the second to the motion and it carried unanimously.

Bob Simpson distributed a Treasurer's Report for the period December 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002. A beginning balance of \$207,581.41 and an ending balance of \$225,192.24 was reported. A sales tax check from the City for December in the amount of \$10,897.76 was received this evening for deposit into the account. Wayne Browning made a motion the Treasurer's Report be accepted as reported. Nancy Allen seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Agenda Item # 6

Public Comment

- • Ellen Lancaster, President of the Boys & Girls Club, spoke regarding their request for financial assistance. She reminded the Board of \$300,000.00 in donations and grants brought into the city from outside sources; all of this money has been spent in Bellville. She reported new statistics that the club is serving 65% of the target age group of 6-16 year olds in Bellville. She stated this is the highest percentage in the nation. Tuition of only \$10.00 per child, per year is charged. Many of the kids' families are unable to afford even this amount and the kids work in the snack bar or do odd jobs to offset this charge. The population of kids coming to the club mimics exactly the demographics of the City of Bellville.

- • Kathryn King, Library Director, corrected some misinformation which was reported about the Bellville Public Library application. She has researched grants, but has found none which could be used for building or remodeling. The grants she found were only for books, training, etc. She was referred to the HGAC, but learned they do not award grants to libraries. The sale of brick pavers has been used by other organizations as a fundraiser, but the library board is doubtful this method would work for them at this time. As the city has grown, the library has expanded as much as possible. The staff has increased, the quality of life for Bellville residents has improved and programs for pre-schoolers, computers and genealogical research areas have been added to the services offered. There are currently 5,200 active library patrons; 190 are served every day. In response to questions asked by Board members, Mrs. King responded she had applied for a Tocker Foundation grant for shelving improvements and an LCRA grant for new carpeting in public use areas. The work proposed could be done in three stages: first, the parking lot; second, moving the entrance; and last, enclosing the current entrance. She estimates 4-6 months for completion.
- • Phil Bartlett of the Assurance Insurance Agency reported the number of employees had increased to ten. The payroll/benefits now exceeds \$450,000.00. The expense of moving the business to Bellville was approximately \$15,000.00. Because of Briarwood restrictions, the existing building was \$22,000.00 more than planned. He stated he wanted to prove the business could be a success before he applied for EDC funding and requested the Board's favorable consideration.
- • Tom Feux, Treasurer of the Boys & Girls Club, requested a moment to speak on behalf of the group. He reported declining annual support from a past, major grant which now provides only a third of the budget. Operating costs are fixed and the club is pretty much operating "without a net". Past major donors of seed money are waiting to see if the community ponies up with funds to assist with the \$60,000.00 shortfall in operating expenses before they commit to additional gifts.
- • David Lydic, Library Board member, stated he and his wife Lanora considered the medical facility and the library before moving to Bellville. He also stressed the danger to children exiting the library onto Palm Street and how difficult it is for elderly and physically challenged persons to access the library. He urged the BEDC to support the library by granting the requested funds.
- • Nancy Allen asked to introduce the new name of the event to be sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. It is now to be called the Bellville Heritage Gathering and will be a separate 501(c)3 non-profit organization. As a member of this group, Nancy will not be voting on this application in February. Tom Bennett, President, presented the revised application reducing the requested amount from \$65,000.00 to \$35,000.00. The tag line for the name of the event is "...a Texas Day in the Country". Seed money is needed in order to meet the planned event date of May 3, 2003. Though attendance could grow to 20,000-30,000, the planners expect 15,000-20,000 to attend this first year. The event will include driving 30-60 head of longhorn cattle through town and the use of hay trailers to transport visitors from parking areas to downtown Bellville. If the liability is too great, the school district will be approached about the use of buses for this purpose. The organization was formed so that it could focus on this project and only this project. The Chamber already sponsors several other events in Bellville and would be overly taxed by this event. In response to the question of the community's interest in such a project, Mr. Bennett stated no survey had been done, but positive feedback had been received from the town hall meetings, from the Lion's Club and other groups, from the city administrator, the police chief and the fire department. He responded the idea originated at the Chamber of Commerce.

Agenda Item # 7
Discussion of Grant Applications Received to Date

The following comments were made by the BEDC members regarding the applications which have been received and which will be voted upon next month:

- David Ottmer has a conflict of interest since his nephew works at the Boys & Girls Club and will not vote on this application in February nor will he vote on the application of Assurance Insurance Agency because he has placed coverage with them.
- Warren Scott, Nancy Allen and Wayne Browning spoke in favor of the application from Boys & Girls Club.
- Bob Simpson asked if the tuition could be increased from \$10.00 and received a response that the Operating Board of the Boys & Girls Club had already increased tuition from \$10.00 per year, per family to \$10.00 per year, per child.
- Jerome Peters made positive comments regarding the application received from Assurance Insurance Agency.
- General consensus was to give no further consideration to the Bellville Swimming Pool application. It is a private club, the actual owners of the property are unclear and no ad valorem taxes are being paid.
- Regarding the application from the Bellville Public Library, Nancy Allen stated she had recently attended EDC training in Corpus Christi and 4B funds can be used for libraries and learning centers.
- The advice of the city attorney will be sought to determine if a revised application from the Chamber of Commerce can be considered in February. Most of the funds requested would fall under the category of advertising for which we have set a cap of \$12,500.00. The copier and furnishings would be considered capital expenditures.

Agenda Item #8
Recess

Executive Session to Consider Potential Litigation and Possible Land Purchase

The regular meeting of the BEDC was called into recess by David Ottmer at 6:40 p.m. following a motion by Jerome Peters and a second by Kenneth Stein.

Agenda Item #9
Regular Session Reconvenes and Action Taken

Members of the BEDC returned from Executive Session at 7:27 p.m. Jerome Peters made a motion to accept the \$17,443.49 being held as a refund from Mrs. Lana Johnson's grant provided receipts are available showing Dr. & Mrs. Johnson acted in good faith. This motion was seconded by Wayne Browning. The count of the vote on this issue was 5 to 2 in favor of the motion. Wayne Browning, Jerome Peters, Warren Scott, David Ottmer, Robert Simpson voted for; Kenneth Stein and Nancy Allen voted against.

Agenda Item #10
Discussion and Action to Amend By-Laws to Terminate any Board Member with Three Unexcused Absences

Jerome Peters reported the City of Bellville follows the General Rule city structure of the Texas Municipal League. The office of a city alderman would be considered vacant following three meeting absences without the knowledge of the mayor. He also spoke with the county judge who stated the Commissioners' Court has no such policy for absenteeism. Kenneth Stein reported the school board has no policy for absenteeism nor does the hospital board. Jerome proposed a resolution stating the President of the BEDC would call any member who missed three meetings without having advised either the president, vice president, secretary or treasurer. Such call would be made to determine if the member still was interested in serving on the board. This resolution will be raised again at the next meeting after allowing the members some time for thought.

Agenda Item #11
Consideration and Action Regarding Advanced High-Speed Interconnect Service for Bellville through PUC

Nancy Allen reported she had met recently with State Representative Lois Kolkhorst and will meet with representatives of the Sealy EDC and Southwestern Bell to discuss this matter. Petitions are available, but have not been circulated. 150 signatures are required prior to submission. It is expected such service would be competitive to that already offered. SBC is seeking a change in legislation which would make it more financially feasible to bring high speed internet service to rural areas. Jerome Peters made a motion Nancy Allen be given the authority to distribute such petitions. Kenneth Stein seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #12
Consideration and Action Regarding Submission of Application to the Texas Historical Commission Visionaries in Preservation Program

Nancy Allen announced a meeting with Tracey Althans of the Texas Historical Commission Visionaries in Preservation Program had been scheduled for Friday, January 24 at 1:00 p.m. at the First National Bank Community Meeting Room. The Western Heritage Gathering will be a primary topic and anyone who is interested in working with this group should

attend. Lois Kolkhorst, Carolyn Bilski, Philip Harrison, Helen Alexander and Bill Allen were present at a meeting held earlier today with representatives of LCRA and SBEC to discuss local grants. A Legislative Committee comprised of John Elick, Lynn Roberts, Carolyn Bilski, Lois Kolkhorst and Nancy Allen has been formed to work with the Visionaries in Preservation program.

Agenda Item #13
Consideration and Action Regarding Mandatory Training for Members of 4B Economic Development Corporations

David Ottmer distributed information he had downloaded regarding available 4A and 4B training. A session with Frank Morgan of LCRA will be rescheduled.

Agenda Item #14
Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Need to Amend Current BEDC Grant Application Form

David Ottmer suggested this agenda item be tabled for consideration at a later date following review of information to be provided by the Sealy EDC to Nancy Allen.

Agenda Item #15
Discussion and Action to Consider Attending Bellville Heritage Legislative Day in Austin
on Thursday, February 27, 2003

Nancy Allen distributed a preliminary agenda for the bus trip to Austin which she and State Representative Lois Kolkhorst have arranged. The charge to rent a bus which will accommodate 55 people is \$1,500.00. Bob Simpson made a motion the bus be reserved and the rental fee be paid by BEDC. The motion was seconded by Wayne Browning and carried unanimously.

Agenda Item #16
Consideration of any Action Necessary and Related to the Organization and Operation of
a Corporation formed under Chapter 4B of the Economic Development Act of 1979, as
Amended

Jerome Peters suggested a spur be taken to Austin on February 27th and presented to Governor Rick Perry. The other spur could be given to him when he visits Bellville.

Looking at model EDC's from other cities was also discussed.

There being no further business to come before the BEDC, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne C. Edwards

Recording Secretary