

WOOD COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

January 9, 2020 6:30pm

Meeting Minutes

Wood County Collins Field Airport

Mineola, Texas

Members Present:

Tom Keenan, Allene Doggett, Victor Savelli, Joanne Wisdom, Neal Duncan, Craig Lindholm, Jim Berry, Rodney Keike, Tom Callan

Members Not Present:

Gwen Winters, Cynthia Stancil, Miste Bolden, Tommy Brown, Greg Hollen

Others Present: Larry Tucker with Wood County Monitor.

1. **Call To Order/Open Forum:** Chairman Tom Keenan called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.
2. **Consent Agenda:** A motion was made by Joanne Wisdom and seconded by Allene Doggett to approve the minutes from the November 7, 2019 meeting. Motion carried - unanimously. The monthly financial report was not available.
3. **Hotel Feasibility Study:** Interim Executive Director Neal Duncan advised the board that the study would be made available on the website.
4. **Lake Fork Chamber Boat Show:** Interim Executive Director Neal Duncan briefed the board on the Lake Fork Chamber of Commerce request for funding for the Lake Fork Chamber Boat Show, which had been transferred from the HOT Fund program to the marketing budget. Victor Savelli advised the board that the HOT Fund Committee had recommended the change. Judge Hebron advised the committee that the invoice from the previous year had been paid from the advertising and legal notices line. Duncan advised the board that the Lake Fork Chamber had invoiced for funds and reimbursed their members in years past and that the board needed to approve the current request of \$6,975.00 and get an invoice from the Lake Fork Chamber. There was further discussion about which budget line might be used to fund the request. Chairman Keenan suggested that further investigation was needed.
5. **Fishing Univeristy & Host Agreement:** Interim Executive Director Neal Duncan advised the board that the host agreement was brought to the board outside of the normal grant process and that the board had not agreed to pay. Duncan informed the board about the prgram and the request for funding in the amount of \$1,625.00. After some discussion about the nature of the program and the channels and frequency of Victor Savelli suggested that more information was needed on distribution and quantity of viewership and that we request audience figures. The issue was tabled until the February meeting.
6. **USDA Rural Development Funding:** Interim Executive Director Neal Duncan recommended the formation of a committee to investigate grant opportunities and other sources of assistance. He named two examples of broadband infrastructure grant programs and briefed the commission on his visit with the UT Tyler regarding a program and potential opportunities for assistance in the area of business development, broadband infrastructure and community planning. Chairman Keenan indicated those issues would be assigned to a committee, which would be covered later in the meeting.
7. **Bassmasters 2020 Tournament:** Chairman Keenan informed the commission that he has attended a meeting with the Sabine River authority and Interim Executive Director Neal Duncan advised the board that:
 - The Bassmaster Toyota Texas Fest is a fishing tournament that raises money to give \$250,000.00 to Texas Parks & Wildlife.
 - Part of the Event is a two festival that will be hosted by the WCEDC on June 6 & 7, 2020.
 - The Quitman Chamber will handle vendor registration.

- The WCEDC will handle sponsorships.
 - SRA will handle the location requirements and infrastructure.
 - The Sheriff's Kid Fish will be on the same day (June 6, 2020) as the festival.
8. **Strategic Plan and New Direction:** Judge Hebron gave each board member a copy of the strategic plan and briefly described the plan components. She then made comments to the board. (See attached.) She conclude her comments with the announcement that Greg Hollen and Jim Berry will begin the process of finding a professional executive director.
 9. **Destination East Texas Advertising:** Interim Executive Director Duncan briefed the committee on the back cover ad option and positive feedback he received for local economic development professionals. A motion was made to purchase the back cover ad for \$875 by Craig Lindholm and seconded by Vic Savelli. Motion carried – unanimously. Vic Savelli suggested changing the creative from the previous ad.
 10. **Chairman's Report:** Chairman Tom Keenan briefly discussed the future formation of committees and the commission will move forward.
 11. **Executive Director's Report:** Interim Executive Director Neal Duncan reported that this will be his last report at Interim Executive Director and that Jim Berry will take over those duties. Jim Berry briefly discussed his plans for moving forward as the new Interim Executive Director.
 12. **Meeting adjourned:** Chairman Keenan adjourned the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

Neal Duncan, Interim Executive Director