

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE COMMITTEE (EDZC) MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2021 9:30 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

PRESENT: Joseph Cataldo, Chairman; Member: Bob Delvecchio, and Alternate Members: Linda Moore (arrived at the meeting at 9:52 a.m.) and Sheila Schweitzer **Also Present:** Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney and Tammy Bursick, City Clerk

Excused Absences: Mr. Garry Rooney
Mrs. Jessica Hawkins

Unexcused Absence: Mr. Terry Torres

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) October 19, 2020

The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A) Election of Officers

Mr. DelVecchio made a motion to appoint Mr. Joseph Cataldo as Chairman. Ms. Schweitzer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. DelVecchio made a motion to approve Mr. Bob DelVecchio as Vice Chairman. Ms. Schweitzer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A) Update on the Lighting Project

Mr. Cataldo went over the lighting project. The Engineering Director was not at today's meeting, but will give an update at the next EDZC meeting.

Mr. Cataldo welcomed Ms. Schweitzer to the Committee. He updated her on some of the projects that they have been working on and how the Committee operates. He said that they are an Advisory Board to the City Council. Each year a portion of taxes goes into the Economic Development Zone Fund for projects downtown. He said that last year there was enough money in the Fund to take on a project. The Committee chose to start with a lighting project and now they have a few dollars left in the Fund. He felt that the Committee needed to go back to discussing parking this year. He said it was not a money issue, but a political issue. Because of costs the City wants to wait until the repaving project is in place that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be doing. He does not think that this project has been

scheduled yet. He noted that FDOT had a vision, which they call “complete streets” where they have funds available to do paving. He said the first step is to have the City say that they want this project and that has not happened yet. He said there is a new City Council so this would be a good opportunity to speak with them about complete streets. He knows that COVID has set things back, but hopefully they can start talking about this again. He said that the City needs to get on this plan and it is at no cost to the City. However, if they wanted to do enhancements then the City would have to allocate some money. The Committee agreed to focus on this and put it on all future agendas.

Mr. DelVecchio reported that he went to Kimley-Horn and reviewed the plan. There is an extended version, which consists of 290 parking spaces and there is a shorter version, which is from the railroad tracks to the Church. He said that they all acknowledge that there are issues downtown. For Ms. Schweitzer’s benefit she was told the Economic Development Zone goes all the way down to the former KMART center.

Mr. DelVecchio asked the City Clerk to provide Ms. Schweitzer with the map of the area, their vision statement and information that she should have on why this Committee was formed.

Ms. Flanigan did a briefing on the Sunshine Law. She said that if anyone has any questions to please contact the City Attorney’s office.

Mr. Cataldo felt that it was time for them to start talking to the Councilmembers about the FDOT project and getting the word out again. It is important that local businesses are up to date on this and understand it because this is a political issue. He knows some of the businesses are not interested in spending any more money and don’t perceive that there is a problem. They will say don’t fix something that is not broken. He did not feel that the City needs four (4) lanes going through downtown. This was done because I-95 had not been completed yet and they needed a thoroughfare to go through town. Now, according to all the studies, it is not necessary and is something that needs to be revisited. He said once I-95 was completed four (4) lanes were not necessary. He mentioned looking at a grant program for downtown that business owners could help contribute to some of the costs.

Ms. Schweitzer asked if the Committee was allowed to canvas the businesses on 14th Avenue.

Mr. Cataldo explained that they were as long as they don’t do it together. He said that they would need to do it on a one-on-one basis.

Mr. DelVecchio said that he has talked to most of the businesses over the years and they seem to be on board and there is a great interest in doing it.

Mr. Cataldo added that they need to have people start feeling good about downtown and hopefully make it safe so businesses will succeed. He recalled that one (1) thing that they talked about was having outside dining and building outdoor patios in the right-of-way. He said that the businesses would have a license from the City in order to do this. This idea was well received, but never went anywhere as far as going to the City Council and requesting the program.

Mrs. Moore arrived to the meeting at 9:52 a.m. Mr. Cataldo gave her a recap of what they have been discussing this morning.

Ms. Schweitzer commented that what is happening now is everyone is doing their own thing and it looks disoriented and unattractive.

Mr. Cataldo agreed that anything businesses can do to make if more ascetically pleasing will bring in more business.

B) Cameras in Pocahontas Park

The Committee briefly talked about the cameras in Pocahontas Park, which is still on the table for discussion.

Mrs. Moore explained that before COVID they received the approval from City Council to spend some money out of the Enterprise Zone Fund and at the time the Engineering Director told them that they needed to have a lighting study done. Then because of COVID they could not find anyone to do the study. She said until the study has been done they cannot do anything.

Mr. Cataldo said they do have a few dollars left in their Fund that they could spend on cameras for Pocahontas Park. He said if more businesses come to downtown then there would be more money put into this Enterprise Zone Fund to spend.

Mrs. Moore recalled that they were told that the lighting would not be done until the sidewalks have been replaced along 14th Avenue.

Ms. Schweitzer asked if the Committee decides on a project manager to oversee these projects.

Mrs. Moore said no. She said that the Committee decides where the money will be spent and staff handles implementing the projects.

Mr. DeVecchio added that the City Council did approve the Committee's Vision Plan.

Mr. DeVecchio brought up the Irish Club and the discussion that took place at their last meeting.

Mrs. Moore said that they (Derek) knows what he can and cannot do at that location.

Mr. DeVecchio would like to talk individually to the Council about some different issues.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comments made.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

/tb

