

**MINUTES
PRYOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRUST AUTHORITY
SPECIAL MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 14TH, 2021
12:15 P.M.**

THE PRYOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRUST AUTHORITY MET IN SPECIAL SESSION IN THE LARGE CLASSROOM AT HILLCREST HOSPITAL, PRYOR, OKLAHOMA AT THE ABOVE DATE AND TIME.

TRUSTEES: **FRED SORDAHL, ARIANNA DERR, DARRELL MOORE, DON BERGER, SCOTT MILLER, GENE DILLARD, LARRY WILLIAMS

EX-OFFICIO TRUSTEES: JARED CRISP - MUNICIPAL UTILITY BOARD GENERAL MANAGER, LARRY LEES - MAYOR

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, PRAYER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - MR. SORDAHL.

The meeting was called to order by Fred Sordahl at 12:15 p.m. Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Darrell Moore.

2. ROLL CALL - MRS. COATS.

Roll call was conducted by Mrs. Coats. Trustees present included: Fred Sordahl, Arianna Derr, Darrell Moore, Scott Miller, Gene Dillard and Jared Crisp. Trustees absent: Don Berger, Larry Williams and Larry Lees.

Others present: Kim Ritchie, City Councilors Briana Brakefield and Choya Shropshire, Pryor Area Chamber of Commerce President Barbara Hawkins, Pryor Main Street Director Jennie VanBuskirk LaFave, Grand Gateway representative Tami McKeon, GRDA representatives Tom Gray and Laura Townsend, Hillcrest Pryor representatives Doug Weaver and Jennifer Bryant, Broken Arrow Community Development representatives Norman Stevens and Jennifer Rush.

Sordahl moved to Item 4.

4. APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE MAY 10TH, 2021 MEETING.

Motion was made by Derr, second by Miller to approve minutes from the May 10th, 2021 meeting. Voting yes: Derr, Moore, Miller, Sordahl. Abstaining, counting as a no vote: Dillard. Voting no: none.

Sordahl moved back to Item 3.

3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS.

Arianna Derr introduced the guests from Broken Arrow Economic Development, Norman Stevens and Jennifer Rush. Sordahl then asked everyone in attendance to introduce themselves.

5. PRESENTATION BY THE CITY OF BROKEN ARROW.

No action. Norman Stevens, Assistant City Manager for Broken Arrow, shared information regarding his 10-year career as Economic Development Manager for Broken Arrow.

Mr. Stevens stated that he has been with the City of Broken Arrow in various capacities for 37 years and became the Economic Development Manager on February 1st, 2011. He served in this capacity until February 1st, 2021, at which time he became Assistant City Manager. Jennifer Rush took his place as Economic Development Manager in April of 2021.

Mr. Stevens stressed the most important element to making economic development successful is getting all the city entities to work together. City Council, Chamber, Main Street, etc., all must work toward the same goal.

Mr. Stevens shared that when he began his tenure, Rickey Hayes was instrumental in teaching him everything he knows. He learned so much from Mr. Hayes. Mr. Stevens stated that not everything goes the way someone thinks it will; for instance, he thought the idea of investing in Broken Arrow's downtown corridor was stupid. He felt it would be a waste of money. What is now called the Rose District has been a huge success and it stays busy all the time. Sales tax revenue has gone from \$50,000.00 to \$500,000.00 since this renovation. In another situation, the Warren Theatre was built in an area of South Broken Arrow. It is a beautiful facility, but nothing else has developed in that area and with the pandemic, it sat empty for a year. He realized his errors in judgment and has been told by more than one person that he should have been fired over the theatre decision.

Ms. Jennifer Rush stated that she came from a position in Bixby where she wore many hats. She stated that economic development requires full-time relationship-building. Mr. Stevens and Ms. Rush agree that economic development is a long process. Ms. Rush is just now seeing the fruit from some seeds Mr. Stevens planted ten years ago.

Mr. Stevens stated that economic development is not about retail, it is about good jobs. He stated that it does not just happen, either. You must be willing to put money into it. Recruiting high-paying jobs is good, but business retention is more important.

Mr. Stevens spoke regarding TIF's. He explained that "TIF" stands for Tax Increment Financing. Broken Arrow has a \$15.5 million TIF for South Broken Arrow development, which will take 25 years to pay in full. You have to be willing to invest, and not everything works out. He stated that when they built the Rose District, some small businesses became casualties, and you cannot keep that from happening. The TIF for the Rose District will take 50 years to pay for itself. He stated that, when you decide to take out a TIF, you need to take out one large enough to accomplish everything you want.

Their suggestion to building up our downtown corridor is to narrow Main Street and widen sidewalks for dining. The goal is quality of life and walkability. Economic development is about relationships and innovative thinking. You need to produce the environment that allows for wealth of the citizens. There are two opposite ways of thinking: "Poor Man's Mentality" vs. "You Can't Afford Not to be a Part of This."

There is an advantage to having a full-time Economic Development Director, but they need to know where to get their contacts. There is so much networking involved. Mr. Hayes' advantage is that he has the contacts.

Mr. Sordahl concluded the discussion by stating that he sees now that the goal of the EDTA is to bring all the city groups together and strive to get us on the same page.

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES.

Jared Crisp reported that sewer work is being done on the North end of town.

7. ADJOURN.

Motion was made by Miller, second by Derr to adjourn at 1:45 p.m. All voted yes.