

**MINUTES
PRYOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRUST AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 9TH, 2021
12:00 P.M.**

THE PRYOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRUST AUTHORITY MET IN REGULAR SESSION IN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, 12 NORTH ROWE STREET, 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 12:10 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, Darrell Moore, Scott Miller, Gene Dillard, Jared Crisp and Larry Lees. Trustees absent: Arianna Derr, Don Berger and Larry Williams.

Others present: Kim Ritchie, Main Street Director Jennie VanBuskirk LaFave, Oklahoma Finance Authority Consultant Jody Harris, GRDA representative Tom Gray, MAIP representative Sherry Alexander, Hillcrest Hospital - Pryor representative Doug Weaver, Stanley's Rent-to-Own representative Craig Stanley, Vinthoma representative Greg James, Ober & Littlefield representative Christie Littlefield, Retail Attractions representative Rickey Hayes, Pryor Schools Superintendent Dr. Lisa Muller, FIT representative Chris Calvert, Hardy Enterprises representative Jack Hardy, PACC President Barbara Hawkins, Monty Littlefield, Tim Lawson and Terry Aylward.

3. APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 12TH, 2021 MEETING.

Motion was made by Moore, second by Miller to approve minutes from the July 12th, 2021 meeting. Voting yes: Moore, Miller, Dillard, Sordahl. Voting no: none.

4. PETITIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

There were no petitions.

5. PRESENTATION UPDATE - PRYOR MAIN STREET.

LaFave presented a number of renderings of ideas that Planning Design Group (PDG) has offered for the Downtown Corridor / Main Street area. These proposed changes include the information received from ODOT regarding what they will / will not allow.

Sordahl asked about the possibility of including the land East of City Hall into the downtown project. It was noted that an 80/20 TAP Grant is a possibility to help fund these projects, and the applications will open this fall.

6. PRESENTATION - JODY HARRIS.

Jody Harris, an independent consultant for the Oklahoma Finance Authority spoke regarding financial funding for cities, communities and businesses. She stated that approximately \$3 billion in funds is available through the EDA. Sordahl asked what these funds can be used for, to which

she stated, "Workforce development, cyber security training, applicable skills training, infrastructure needs."

Harris also stated that she has access to small business (SBA) loans, as well, so if anyone in attendance is interested in applying they need to speak to her after today's meeting.

7. FORUM OF PRYOR MAIN STREET CORRIDOR MERCHANTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS.

Mr. Craig Stanley spoke first regarding what he feels the downtown corridor needs most. He stated that he sees our goal as bringing in more business, beautifying the corridor and attracting more people to shop downtown.

He stated that parking makes our downtown "unshoppable." There are many corporate vehicles that park on Main Street and take up valuable consumer parking. He suggested that time-limit signs be posted for such vehicles for an hour or two hours. He stated that the town of Vinita has this signage and it works well. Whatever is decided needs to be uniform throughout the area.

LaFave pointed out an example of a parking area provided by PDG. It was stated that areas of shade trees along the streets would cause consumers to be more willing to park and walk further.

Mrs. Christie Littlefield stated that she sees the EDTA's mission to be (1) a finance vehicle to help make these things happen and, (2) getting existing business owners to maintain their properties. She stated that there are several buildings that have been abandoned and no one is keeping up their appearance. She recommended that hefty taxes be brought upon those property owners.

Mr. Hayes agreed that he knows of other cities that enforce this, such as Broken Arrow and Owasso. He also stated that whoever owns the real estate controls what happens. He also stated that the city of Guthrie has gone to great pains to provide parking downtown. Sordahl asked if there are some ways we can get these empty properties filled. Miller stated that offering TIFs would give these property owners incentives to make improvements.

Mr. Dillard stated that you have to spend money or all of your visions are worthless. He has built a new bank for less money than refurbishing would have cost. It is more efficient and will provide 40 new parking spaces for the downtown area.

Hayes stated that a gentleman named Nate Ellis from Oklahoma City is the "TIF Guru." He stated that he will contact him and ask him to speak to the group at the next meeting.

Dr. Muller stated that, due to the way some TIFs are structured, she wants to be certain that any TIFs presented will not adversely affect the Pryor School District. Hayes agreed that our school district is a treasure recognized state-wide and it draws families to Pryor.

Mr. Moore pointed out the excellent job Jared Crisp and MUB have done with infilling.

Mr. Gray stated that the data he has seen for Pryor Creek and Mayes County shows that our population is shrinking. People are looking for quality of life and livability, and housing.

Ms. Alexander stated that residential housing will be built as part of The District, and they are getting ready to roll out the housing plan. Phase 2 will provide 300 apartments and Phase 3 will provide single-family housing. MAIP wants to be a part of this community, and The District is already part of our city limits.

Alexander also pointed out that Pryor sits central between Tulsa and Bentonville. We are marketing this area as a family-oriented rural area to attract people. She did admit that, when Canoo came to town to consider opening in MAIP, they chose not to bring them to downtown Pryor.

Stanley stated that there are a lot of things that can be done with no money. Sordahl asked Harris if there are funds available to help with the issues mentioned, and she assured him there are.

Ideas for improvement were a parking garage and abatement of dilapidated properties.

LaFave agreed that we desire Pryor to be aesthetically pleasing and provide quality of life.

Mr. Calvert mentioned that we have a dilapidation process in the works for residential areas. Can we implement the same procedure for commercial?

Moore stated that perhaps Mr. Aylward could publish a schematic of the area showing property owners so people will know who owns the dilapidated properties.

Mr. Hardy stated that many years ago The University of Oklahoma had a philosophy that they wanted a university that the football team could be proud of. We want a city our school system can be proud of. He also pointed out that trucks and heavy traffic on Highway 20 impede the local traffic.

LaFave reported that the work with PDG will be done in phases. They expect to start at the intersection of Graham and Adair. Miller stated that at the next meeting with PDG, they will be provided with estimates of cost for each phase.

Miss Hawkins agrees with all that has been said and agrees that parking is priority.

Sordahl asked Hayes to do some research on some items discussed, which he will bring back to the September meeting.

Hawkins reported that the Governor signed off on the Jefferson Highway Proclamation this week. We will be receiving funding for its signage before long.

8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES - MAYOR LEES.

No more updates were given.

9. ADJOURN.

Motion was made by Moore, second by Miller to adjourn at 1:29 pm. All voted yes.