

BIG LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SPECIAL WORKSHOP MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Dickinson called the workshop to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Raeanne Danielowski, Jim Dickinson, Dave Gast, Greg Green, Steve Pflieger, Darek Vetsch, and Mike Wallen (arrived at 6:58). Commissioners absent: Doug Hayes, and Norm Leslie.

Also present: Planning Commission Chair Scott Marotz, Interim City Administrator/Police Chief Joel Scharf, Consultant Economic Development Specialist John Uphoff of WSB & Associates, Facilitator Philip Barnes (of WSB & Associates), and Administrative Assistant Sandy Petrowski.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Danielowski motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Gast, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

4. DISCUSSION: BLEDA STRATEGIC PLAN

4A. REVIEW REVISED VISION STATEMENT

Facilitator Philip Barnes reviewed the revised Vision Statement which was compiled from the discussions that took place at the April 2, 2015 BLEDA Special Workshop. The Vision Statement read:

“Big Lake will advance economic development through creating a fun, safe, diverse quality of life for residents. The City will be designed and supported through:

- Enhancing the area’s attractive appearance;*
- Leveraging natural recreational opportunities;*
- Ensuring respected schools;*
- Supporting a creative culture;*
- Developing a local business community that supports increases in population;*
- Developing a thriving city center with busy sidewalks;*
- Utilizing and developing business corridors that complement community strengths.”*

Barnes discussed the draft Vision Statement and asked for comments in order to refine/develop a more precise statement. He noted that this Statement will eventually mold into a plan and will be working on several tiers. After discussing the Statement and proposed changes, the Vision Statement was modified to read as follows:

“Big Lake will advance economic development through creating a fun, safe, diverse quality of life for residents. The Community will achieve this through:

- Enhancing the area’s attractive appearance
- Leveraging natural recreational opportunities
- Ensuring respected schools
- Supporting a creative culture
- Developing a local business community that supports increases in population
- Developing a thriving city center with busy sidewalks
- Utilizing and developing business corridors that complement community strengths.”

It was the consensus of the Board to approve the revised Vision Statement as discussed.

4B. INTRODUCE INFORMATION PACKAGE

Barnes briefly reviewed/discussed the following information included in the packet:

- Boundaries and ratings for Big Lake’s elementary school, middle school, and high school;
- Home sales and median house or condo values in Big Lake;
- Big Lake school ratings compared to average state, county, and city schools;
- 2015 general fund budget summary (including general fund revenues, general fund expenditures, five-year capital improvement plan, and summary by funding source)

Commissioner Wallen arrived at 6:58 p.m.

4C. CONTINUE PROCESS OF PRIORITIZATION

Participants discussed different scenarios/topics from a perspective 20 years into the future and rated if each would have a high, moderate, or low level of concern if new strategies were not developed and things continued to occur:

- Recreational: potential funding for parks, inventory of parks, understanding the allocation of assets, working together with other entities (i.e., Parks Committee, Community Education)

- Community engagement strategy: discuss different partnerships, potential creation of a regional plan
- Regional priorities
- General differences

4D. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Barnes and participants discussed in length their ideas/input on different strategies, issues of concern, strategic ways to assist in raising revenues, such as:

- Investigate potential solar garden on city-owned parcel
- Drawing developers to come to the City (i.e., open houses, etc.)
- School District levies
- Need for an aggressive marketing plan
- More involvement with social media
- Festivities, cultural events, music events
- Development of a regional brand
- Work on promoting the entire region
- Become more competitive with technology (i.e. broadband, etc.)
- Consider conducting a utility rate study; compile informational campaign on reason for current utility costs

Barnes stated that his staff will compile all of the data/information obtained from the two (2) workshop sessions and provide a draft to each participant for review and comment.

6. ADJOURN

Commissioner Vetsch motioned to adjourn the workshop at 8:56 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.