



## DESOTO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**JULY 27, 2020**

The DeSoto Economic Development Corporation (DEDC) Board met at **9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 27, 2020** by videoconference at [www.gotomeeting.com](http://www.gotomeeting.com) and was live streamed on the City of DeSoto's website at [www.desototexas.gov](http://www.desototexas.gov).

**Present:** Curtis Krohn, Board President  
Dr. Delva King, Board Vice President  
Michelle Jordan, Board Secretary/Treasurer  
Bobby Waddle, Board Director  
Paul Griffin, Jr., Board Director

**Staff Present:** Joe Newman — Chief Executive Officer  
Cynthia Noble — Administrative Assistant

**Also Present:** Melissa Adams — Accounting Manager, City of DeSoto  
Tracy Cormier — Director of Accounting, City of DeSoto  
Isom Cameron — Deputy City Manager, City of DeSoto  
Mayor McCowan — Mayor, City of DeSoto  
Kenneth Govan — Board Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce  
Kevin Laughlin — Attorney, Nichols, Jackson, Dillard, Hager & Smith, LLP  
Terry Toomey — Executive Director, The Industry HUB  
Monte Anderson — Owner, Options Real Estate  
Tom Figert — Director of Information Technology, City of DeSoto

**Absent:** Paul Griffin, Jr., Board Director  
Andre' Byrd, Sr. — Councilmember, City Council Liaison, City of DeSoto  
Brandon Wright — City Manager, City of DeSoto  
Natalia Aumedes — Assistant to the City Manager, City of DeSoto

**At 9:10 a.m., Board President Curtis Krohn called the meeting to order and acknowledged the presence of a quorum.**

### **A. REGULAR SESSION – CALL TO ORDER**

1. Invocation was given by Board President Curtis Krohn.

### **B. CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Minutes and income and expenses:
  - a. Consideration and approval of the June 12, 2020 DEDC Board Meeting Minutes.

- b. Consideration and approval of the May 31, 2020 income and expenses.
- c. Consideration and approval of updating the DeSoto's City Aerial Maps Photo Murals taken by Flyer View Group, LLC's in the amount of \$3285.

**Board Director Bobby Waddle motioned to approve the consent agenda items as presented Motion seconded by Board Vice President Dr. Delva King. Motion approved by Board members Curtis Krohn, Bobby Waddle, and Dr. Delva King. Board Director Paul Griffin, Jr. and Board Secretary/Treasurer Michelle Jordan were not present for the motion.**

### **C. REGULAR AGENDA - NEW BUSINESS**

1. Grow DeSoto Market Place (GDMP) Incubator Financial Status Report. Presentation by Monte Anderson, Owner, Options Real Estate.
  - a. Mr. Monte Anderson, Options Real Estate, said he had the best news to report on the financials for the GDMP since it has been open. He points out totals for the last three as follows: the month of March had \$23,000 in income, the month of April had \$9,000 in income, the month of May had \$7,900 in income; whereas, he noted in the month of June the income increased to \$28,265. He expounded the unreported July to date collected is \$32,413 so far.
  - b. Furthermore, Mr. Anderson said currently the occupancy of the GDMP has only one retail space available which is the largest retail space near the gym that may be divided into three spaces. Then he reported all of the restaurants are full now. He mentioned the two offices and the three small cubicles are currently the only vacancies. He said several of our tenants have received a great amount of attention and press; as a result, he reported many of the tenants are currently doing outstanding. He also pointed out that we keep it clean and well organized. He mentioned in addition we replaced a dead tree outside as well. He said we have been making sure we keep everything at the highest level of cleanliness and maintenance.
  - c. Board President Curtis Krohn said he noticed that the foot traffic picked up at the GDMP. He exclaimed there has been a large amount of people at the GDMP. In response, Mr. Anderson explains that the GDMP received a large amount of attention; as a result he said that many of our people are starting to learn. He said we are at a tipping point in our momentum, where we received more of a good response rather than a weak one. He expressed that although, it is natural for this to happen, but he emphasized it is unusual that GDMP bounced back so well.

**Board Secretary Treasurer Michelle Jordan arrived at the Board meeting at 9:15 a.m.**

2. The Industry HUB's Activity Summary Report for March 2020 presented by Terry Toomey, Executive Director, The Industry HUB.
  - a. Terry Toomey reported the Grow DeSoto Market Place (GDMP) has been very busy; and she thinks much of the upturn comes from being central in helping with the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Small Business Loans (SBL) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) loans. Likewise, our outreach to the community, she explained, has brought



more attention to the GDMP. She said currently she is onboarding five new tenants. She explained that this consists of sending the tenant manual so they know how to operate within the Grow DeSoto Market Place. Also, she explained she is now gathering information from them so that she can add them to our virtual community, and to put out a published list on how the community can interact with our tenants which is an ongoing process. She said her goal is to get them into the GDMP community as quickly as possible.

- b. Ms. Toomey said there are some stellar contributors for example the “Two Neighbor’s Restaurant” has had a phenomenal rebound since they reopened producing a continuous line to their restaurant. She exclaimed within a couple of days they served more than a hundred meals during that time frame. Of course she pointed out that this has a halo effect on other businesses. She mentioned she will pay more attention to many of the retailers who are not opening on time. Unfortunately, she said people arriving at 11:00 a.m. to visit a specific retailer or to shop while picking up their lunch order are unable to. She concluded that constant maintenance of good business practices is what she will be working on with the tenants.
  - c. Ms. Toomey mentioned that one thing that is driving traffic is the article in the Dallas Business Journal which she included in this month’s report. In addition, she said we are receiving coverage from people looking for Black Owned Businesses which she felt is driving traffic as well. Also, she pointed out that with COVID-19 people are staying closer to their homes, so they are currently shopping local. But she said she kept warning everyone and reminding them to be prepared for COVID-19 to remain longer.
  - d. Finally, Ms. Toomey said they are strictly enforcing the mask policy at the GDMP. She explained that she walks through the GDMP several times a day to make sure everyone is complying by wearing a mask. In summary, she concluded that she wants everyone healthy, well and able to return and use our services.
3. Financial Status Report. Presentation by Melissa Adams, Accounting Manager, City of DeSoto.
- a. Melissa Adams, Accounting Manager, City of DeSoto, explained the Financial Status Report which included: A General Fund Balance Sheet, Summary of Revenues and Expenditures, and Details of Revenues and Expenditures as of June 30, 2020.
  - b. Ms. Adams reviewed with the Board of Directors the Balance Sheet, Summary of Revenue and Expenditures, Summary of Sales Tax Revenue, Summary of Expenses Year to Date, and Budgeted Expenses Year to Date and answered any questions they had regarding June 2020 financial report.
4. City Council Liaison’s update regarding city events, meetings, etc. by Councilmember Andre’ Byrd, Sr., City Council Liaison. Mayor Curtistene McCowan gave the City Council update due to Councilmember Andre’ Bryd, Sr. absence.
- a. Mayor Curtistene McCowan reported on the DeSoto City Council’s action taken at the last City Council meeting regarding Type A and Type B corporation status for the DEDC. She explained the numerous discussions by the DeSoto City Council on this subject. She said this is the purpose of the Desoto City Council to try to find ways to leverage how we promote our city in partnership with the DEDC as the Board is currently organized as a Type A Corporation. Furthermore, she expounded that the recommendation that was made by the staff and approved by the DeSoto City Council is to approve an ordinance ordering a special election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 for the purpose of

submitting a proposition to the qualified voters of the City of DeSoto abolishing the current sales and use tax at the rate of .375 percent and adopting in its place a local sales and use tax at the rate of 3.75 percent to be administered by the Type B corporation to be used for the promotion and development of new and expanded business enterprises and all other public purposes pursuant to section 505.251 of the Texas local government code.

- b. Mayor McCowan clarified as a Type A Corporation currently stands it is very limited to the kinds of things a Type A Economic Development Corporation can do. She explained those funds are restricted to the creation and retention of primary jobs which are typically found in manufacturing, industrial, research, military, recycling and small warehouse facilities. She continued what a Type B Corporation will do is allow a wider use of those funds. She said a Type B will allow for a broader set of development uses including land, buildings, equipment, facilities and improvements found by the Board of Directors to be required or suitable for use for professional and amateur sports, including children sports, athletic, entertainment, tourist, contingent and public parks purposed and events. Also she said exhibition facilities and related stores, restaurant, concessions, automobile parking, related area transportation facilities, related roads, streets, water and sewage facilities.
  - c. Mayor McCowan said regarding the compensation for the DeSoto City Council that she feels a little uncomfortable doing it as a sitting council member because she knew she was signing up for a volunteer position. However, since the DeSoto City Council has approved to put the compensation for the DeSoto City Council on the ballot for Tuesday, November 3, 2020, she felt it needs to have a set amount and some controls in place. She informed the Board Directors that there is a meeting tonight to discuss this item to give further directions. She reiterated it needs to have a minimum standard amount if the voters approve this. Lastly, she explained she abstained on putting it on the ballot because of her philanthropic views regarding the giving of her time to serve her community.
  - d. Mayor McCowan said we are heavy into strategic planning. Finally, she said tomorrow night is a Town Hall meeting with the police and community together to update the community on the changes in policies that have been presented by the Police Department. Also, the DeSoto City Council has approved the creation of a Citizen's Police Advisory Committee (CPAC). She explained that at this meeting the DeSoto City Council and the Police Department will discuss the changes in the policies and the role of what the CPAC will be.
5. DeSoto Chamber of Commerce Update – Kenneth Govan, Board Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Kenneth Govan, Board Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, gave the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce Update as follows:
- a. MEMBER SERVICES:
    - i. Member Networking are as follows:
      - 1. There was a "Good Morning DeSoto" held on Tuesday, July 6, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. on ZOOM sponsored by Thorntree Golf Club.
      - 2. We had a virtual zoom presentation on the Top 10 Ways to Stay "of Mind" During a Quarantine.
      - 3. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce partner with the DeSoto Economic Recovery Advisory Task Force – Mask Distribution to DeSoto businesses



including businesses in the Grow DeSoto Market Place held on Monday, June, 18, 2020 which was featured on News Channels 4, 5, and 11's evening and morning news casts. Also there was a DeSoto Economic Recovery Advisory Task Force Mask distribution held on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 and Wednesday, June 24, 2020.

- b. The Ribbon-Cutting Ceremonies and Ground Breaking Ceremonies are as follows:
  - i. The Ribbon-cutting for Urgent Care Texas that was scheduled to be held on Thursday, June 11, 2020 was rescheduled to Friday, August 14, 2020 so as to allow them to participate in the "DeSotoOpoly Community Game".
- c. New Members are as follows:
  - i. Edward Jones, Lex Webster, became a member on Wednesday, June 10, 2020.
  - ii. Fuzzy's Taco Shop became a member on Wednesday, June 17, 2020.
  - iii. Fairfield Inn & Suites, Cedar Hill became a member on Thursday, June 25, 2020.
- d. Group Health Insurance is now available to the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce members only.
  - i. Liberty Mutual met with local businesses to offer this service to them as a member benefit.
- e. ECONOMIC/ BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT/BREP/SHOP LOCAL:
  - i. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce continued to present ZOOM meeting updates to local businesses on grant and loan programs, City of DeSoto programs, BSW Region programs and Dallas County COVID-19 programs.
  - ii. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce participated in the DeSoto Economic Recovery Advisory Task Force, implemented by Mayor Curtistene McCowan.
  - iii. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce regional collaboration with Best Southwest partners to promote Cedar Valley Campus of Dallas College for the Skills Development Training Initiative and TWC grant for COVID-19. (The Chamber member, Opulent Group has signed up as a new contractor.)
  - iv. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce had a joint meeting with the City of DeSoto's Parks and Recreation Department and Zoe Communications regarding revamping the City of DeSoto Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB) center, the website and the program of work.
- f. COMMUNITY EVENTS (leading, assisting, or promoting):
  - i. The DeSoto Chamber of Commerce presented and hosted the "DeSotoOpoly", which is a game created for a family friendly, get to know the community, and support local businesses type of experience. First, the players register, then they pick up a game board and make their way around the City of DeSoto to local businesses and community sites. It will be held on Wednesday, August 12, 2020 through Monday, August 31, 2020.
  - ii. The Desoto Chamber of commerce participated and supported the Disciple Community Church for a "COVID-19 Testing Event" held on Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at the Disciple Community Church.
- g. TOURISM ACTIVITIES:
  - i. There are no tourism events at his time.
- h. FUNDRAISING/ BUDGET:
  - i. The Desoto Chamber of Commerce is continuing the current marketing campaign.
- i. PERSONNEL CHANGES:

- i. Currently they are narrowing down the search and will be interviewing for a new Chamber of Commerce President.
  - j. The Site Visit Report by Mr. Kenneth Govan, Board Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, is as follows:
    - i. Mr. Kenneth Govan, Board Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, submitted a monthly site visit report for discussion during the Board meeting with the Board of Directors.
- 6. Discussion and consideration of the DEDC Annual Work Plan Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and projects to be considered in the next fiscal year.
  - a. Joe Newman, CEO, announced that along with President Curtis Krohn, he will give a DeSoto Economic Update Report to the DeSoto City Council on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at the DeSoto City Council meeting. He conveyed that he wants to be sure that the DEDC and the DeSoto City Council are aligned on their Annual Work Plan and the Strategic Plan for 2021.
  - b. Similarly, President Krohn said that as a result Brandon Wright, City Manager suggested that the DEDC Annual Work Plan Fiscal Year 2020-2021 is revisited after the DeSoto City Council Retreat in August. Likewise, Mayor Curtistene McCowan reiterated the same sentiment, and confirmed the date of the Desoto City Council Retreat will be held from Friday, August 7, 2020 to Saturday, August 8, 2020.
  - c. Board Director Bobby Waddle mentioned the Desoto Heliport and gave an update regarding activity and the success of the Heliport to the Board Directors. He said we have a great amount of things working well out there. He reiterated that when someone comes in that has a great amount of jobs involved that we need to be a key player to attract them and not just merely something that looks good in the city. Board Director Waddle and Mayor McCowan agreed that there must be visionary leadership from those who have a vision for the City of Desoto.

**No Action.**

- 7. Discussion and consideration of a draft update of the DEDC Five Year Strategic Plan 2020-2025.  
**No Action.**
- 8. Discussion and consideration for approval of the DEDC Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Joe Newman, CEO, discussed the proposed DEDC Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget details with the Board of Directors.
  - a. Joe Newman, CEO, explained to the Board the two changes he made to the DEDC Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.
    - i. Mr. Newman explained that the first change is based on a 20 percent sales tax decrease that was predicted by the City of Dallas due to the pandemic.
    - ii. Mr. Newman said the second change on this Budget is to move the funds back from the 2021 budget to this year's budget to pay out the existing grant commitments.

**Board Secretary/Treasurer Michelle Jordan motioned to approve the DEDC Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 as Joe Newman, CEO has stated with the changes. Motion seconded by Board Vice President Dr. Delva King. Motion approved by Board members Curtis Krohn, Dr. Delva King, Bobby Waddle, and Michelle Jordan. Board Director Paul Griffin, Jr. was not present for the motion.**



9. Discussion and consideration to approve a Façade Renovation Grant to Leticia Carter, Owner, Euphoria Bridal Boutique, located at 201 Executive Way Suite 120, DeSoto Texas for the amount up to \$623. **Board Vice President Dr. Delva King move to approve a Façade Renovation Grant to Leticia Carter, Owner, Euphoria Bridal Boutique, located at 201 Executive Way Suite 120, DeSoto Texas for the amount up to \$623. Motion seconded by Board Secretary/ Treasurer Michelle Jordan. Motion approved by Board members Curtis Krohn, Dr. Delva King, Bobby Waddle, and Michelle Jordan. Board Director Paul Griffin, Jr. was not present for the motion.**

At 11:05 a.m., the Board President Curt Krohn called for the following Executive Session items to be tabled until the next Board meeting since there were no updates on the items to be discussed by the attorney at this time.

**D. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Texas Government Code, Section 551.071: Consultation with General Counsel:

1. Consultation with general counsel to seek legal advice regarding contemplated litigation regarding Jeremiah Quarles.

**E. RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION**

No Discussion.

**F. ACTION AS A RESULT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Action.

**G. BRIEFING BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REGARDING THE STATUS OF PENDING DEDC PROJECTS**

Mr. Joe Newman, CEO, earlier gave a brief summary of the list of commercial projects the DEDC orchestrated and what activities were performed over the past month in the report to the Board of Directors. Mr. Newman pointed out to the Board that sales tax increased remarkably to 22.09 percent this month due to COVID-19. He said the city manager will open up the Small Business Grant up again for new loans which DEDC matched the \$180,000+ that the city received in federal money for that program. He mentioned to the Board directors that he is the president-elect of the Rotary Club which is a volunteer position much like the DEDC Board and the DeSoto City Council.

Next, Mr. Newman said at their meeting, Best Southwest Partners asked about funding the Hospitality Training Program which was mentioned in a previous meeting by Councilmember Dinah Marks. Then Mr. Newman explained to Mr. Kenneth Govan, Board Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, and to the Board Directors that he was in the process of consulting with the DEDC attorney to see if it could be done legally since hospitality is not considered as primary jobs. Also, without any feedback from the attorney as of yet and feedback regarding the contingency of area cities' participation in that program; he felt it is important to know beforehand whether the DEDC's Type A Corporation can do it from a legal standpoint first. Notably, he apologized to Councilmember Marks for not following up on it timely enough to get it on this month's agenda. In addition, Mr.

Kenneth Govan emphasized he has not received any feedback from the Best Southwest Partnership on this program either but assured Mr. Newman that he will find out immediately. Likewise, Vice President Dr. Delva King asked Mr. Newman whether this program was put on hold due to COVID-19. Mr. Newman responded although the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is involved in most of the COVID-19 programs now, he feels it is a program that is still needed.

Vice President Dr. Deva King discussed the meeting which she attended with the Dynamic DeSoto Citizen's group. She said the DeSoto Independent School District's (DeSoto ISD) chief of staff was in attendance and presented the DeSoto ISD's back to school plan for the 2020-2021 school year and the implementation of distance learning. She said it was very interesting and very thorough. She said eighty percent of the parents wanted to keep their students at home versus twenty percent in the classroom as a result of a survey they conducted.

Also, she said the Dynamic DeSoto Citizens group was concerned about the Wildwood Project and how it will impact the development on Beltline Road, for example: the corner of Beltline Road and Cockrell Hill Road with all of the up for sale with no activity as far as new development. She felt that they are afraid that people will spend money at Wildwood instead of at the businesses currently on Beltline Road. Board Director Bobby Waddle interjected Wildwood is a project that is in progress; we need to think about the new homes being built there which need to have something interesting to keep them here. Director Waddle explained that you have to be visionary looking down the road; because, Wildwood working will shift more retail to the southern sectors of the metroplex which will change the overall area long term. Vice President Dr. King said the Dynamic DeSoto Citizens group have a vested interest in DeSoto, do their homework and research, and want to do what is best for the community. When the group asked about the Retail Coach, she explained that no one is doing retail development right now everyone is just trying to survive. Board Director Waddle reiterated that we all are interested in the same thing unfortunately the timing is not right.

Lastly, Mr. Newman discussed with the Board some of the retailers and restaurants that are interested in the area as a result of the efforts by the Retail Coach, DEDC's request for more retailers, upcoming conventions which were postponed, and the recent publicity of the Grow DeSoto Market Place. In conclusion, Mr. Newman announced that the next Board meeting will be moved to one week later on Monday, August 31, 2020.

#### **H. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In addition to his earlier presentation for the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce Report during item 5, Mr. Kenneth Govan, Chairman, DeSoto Chamber of Commerce announced the Best Southwest Partnership will be hosting our TGIF Legislative Breakfast Series. He continued the first one will be held on Friday, August 7, 2020 the speaker will be Adriana Cruz, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, the Texas Office of the Governors. We will be doing something different this time. Normally we have the content expert interview the elected official. But this time we will be having the elected official interview the content expert instead. Therefore, he said the State Representative Carl Sherman will be interviewing Adriana Cruz on the topic "How COVID-19 has affected Economic Development and Tourism has affected Texas- specifically North Texas". Second one will be held on Friday, August 14, 2020 the speaker will be State Representative Tony Rose will be interviewing a mental health panel on how COVID-19 affected mental health for employers and employees". Third one, will be on Friday, August 21, 2020 the speaker State Senator Royce West will interview the Best Southwest school superintendents on the 2020-2021 school year will be in regard to funding, in person or distance teaching, and the morale of the teachers. He said each one of the superintendents will give their overview of how they planned their school year. The fourth one will



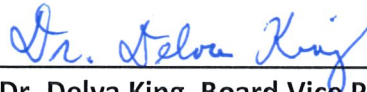
be on Friday, August 28, 2020 the speaker will be State Representative Carl Sherman will have a very sensitive discussion in regards to "Policing and criminal justice and our interactions and how that is affecting us in this COVID-19 Era". Finally, he said the date will be every Friday, from 8:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss Board President Curtis Krohn adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "C. Krohn", written over a horizontal line.

Curtis Krohn, Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Dr. Delva King", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Delva King, Board Vice President