

MEETING MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
APRIL 21, 2021 8:00 AM

CALLED TO ORDER BY: The Economic Development Corporation Meeting was held electronically and called to order by Chairman Cantor at 8:10 am.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lew Cantor (Farmington Hills, MI), Mark Zachos (Farmington Hills, MI), TR Carr (Farmington Hills, MI), Scott Elliott (Southfield, MI), Fritz Beiermeister (Farmington Hills, MI), Sam Slaughter (Farmington Hills, MI), William Hartsock (Farmington Hills, MI), Kimberly Lindsey-Feagin (Detroit, MI)

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Anhut, Fritz Beiermeister

OTHERS PRESENT: Gary Mekjian, City Manager (Farmington Hills, MI); Ken Massey, City Council Member/EDC Liaison (Farmington Hills, MI), Samantha Seimer, AKT Peerless (Oxford, MI), Mark Stec, Joe Licovali (Farmington Hills, MI)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Elliott, support by Carr to approve the agenda as submitted.

Yeas: CANTOR, HARTSOCK, ZACHOS, CARR, ELLIOTT, SLAUGHTER, LINDSEY-
FEAGIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: ANHUT, BEIERMEISTER
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Hartsock, support by Zachos to approve the meeting minutes from March 17, 2021 as submitted.

Yeas: CANTOR, HARTSOCK, ZACHOS, CARR, ELLIOTT, SLAUGHTER, LINDSEY-
FEAGIN
Nays: NONE
Absent: ANHUT, BEIERMEISTER
Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

- Chair Cantor informed the Board that Mr. Anhut is not in good health. He is in hospice and his family is with him currently. Chair Cantor requested the Board keep him in their thoughts.

Innovation Center Update

- Chair Cantor stated that a presentation for the Business Incubator Market Feasibility Study was made to City Council on April 12.
- Unfortunately, Michael Stumpf of Place Dynamics was unavailable to attend our meeting on Zoom and did not have a PowerPoint presentation prepared for the meeting on Phase 1 of the research. As a reminder to the Board, Chair Cantor noted that Phase 1 was the Market Feasibility Study, to help substantiate that an incubator would be

beneficial in the Farmington Hills area, and refine the focus/scope of the future space, and Phase 2 is a deeper look into the day-to-day operations and set-up of the organization.

- Overall, after the presentation, Chair Cantor stated and Mr. Massey confirmed that Council did not have all of their questions answered.
- Place Dynamics will not be considered for Phase 2 of the study. The Phase I presentation did not meet our expected level of satisfaction.
- Chair Cantor stated that Mr. Licavoli has been invited to all our EDC Meetings because of his experience in working with entrepreneur and innovation centers. He added that Mr. Licavoli is knowledgeable about this area of expertise and spent six years working for Ann Arbor Spark.
- Mr. Zachos asked about target markets for engagement and would like to consult through the EDC to help facilitate business connections to match start-ups with corporations upon graduation from the innovation center. Mr. Licavoli added that success of an innovation center is dependent upon the local community, education community and government to help support a business.
- Mr. Massey and Chair Cantor determined a follow up meeting with City Manager Mekjian would be helpful to help review the meeting minutes from the City Council Study Session to help answer any outstanding questions. Chair Cantor added that council is owed a good presentation that gives a complete and comprehensive picture of the vision for the space. Additionally, a commercial kitchen space is not a viable option within the space available at The Hawk, however, individuals in the community could utilize space C.A.R.E.S. and rely on support from the innovation center for furthering their business goals.

REPORTS AND UPDATES:

City Manager

- Mr. Mekjian stated that budget presentations to City Council have been scheduled for the first week of May. There will be incubator funding for continued research presented in the budget.
- Mr. Mekjian informed the Board that the city will soon be welcoming a new Assistant City Manager with a hopeful start date of May 3. He noted that the new Assistant City Manager has former City Management experience, as well as economic development and human resources experience. At this time, it is unclear how engrained this candidate will be with the EDC, but Mr. Mekjian will have a better understanding after further communications with the individual.
- Mr. Mekjian updated the Board about discussion happening at the local level surrounding community initiatives for policing including listening sessions to help improve communications and policing with diverse groups across the community. He added that construction season has started and there are many planned road projects.

City Council Liaison

- None

BUSINESS:

New Business

- None

Old Business:

Small Business Support

- The Small Business Support Program discussed at the January and February EDC Meetings as a partnership between the Greater Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce, Farmington DDA, and EDC is moving forward. Following the January EDC Meeting, an email was sent by the Chamber along with a joint press release including the EDC to seek feedback from the business community about areas where we may be able to offer support.

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- Only three businesses responded to the engagement effort. The respondents were generally pleased with offerings from the local municipalities and Chamber's efforts to assist during the pandemic.
- There were no specific requests for assistance from any of the respondents.
- Mr. Zachos asked if the survey report was available to be sent to the group of if there was any additional data that could be provided. Mr. Cantor read the response from the Greater Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce.

Chair Cantor stated that at the very least, the effort let the business community know about the EDC and its willingness to assist and aid in its success.

Mentorship Program

- Mr. Beiermeister has been working with Mr. Slaughter and Mr. Hartsock to discuss the EDC mentorship program with Farmington Public Schools.
- Mr. Beiermeister had a meeting with the school district, Mr. Slaughter and Mr. Hartsock were not available to attend the meeting with Mr. Beiermeister.
- Mr. Slaughter added that he has been developing and relationship with Northwood University through an intern he had over the summer. There is a professor at the University eager to engage in new relationships and partner with businesses specifically to developing an understanding about careers in the car business. He mentioned involvement with Detroit Auto Dealers Association (DADA), Schools and the Michigan Auto Dealers Association to educate students about options and opportunities available to them within this career pathway.
- Chair Cantor added that from his conversations with Mr. Beiermeister, the school has a desire to be involved in the EDC mentorship program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- None.

BOARD MEMBER'S COMMENTS:

- Mr. Carr informed the Board of the Shanghai University Seminar on Entrepreneurship as something that could be included in the EDC mentorship program. He will explore and advise if he sees opportunity.
- Mr. Elliott explained to the Board that the office market has slowed due to Covid, however, there is a fair amount of new construction activity taking place.
- Mr. Zachos thanked Chair Cantor for his hard work on the innovation center and moving the program forward with City Council.
- Chair Cantor added that he would like to schedule a follow up meeting with City Manager Mekjian and Mr. Massey to discuss next steps with the innovation center, and a follow up meeting with Mayor Barnett. He will follow up to see if he has the presentation that was supposed to be given to City Council from Michael Stumpf of Place Dynamics.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Mr. Licovali reminded the Board to consider evaluating involvement in the Junior Achievement Program when refining its potential mentorship program. Junior Achievement program focuses on students at the high school and middle school levels and an entrepreneurship program could be created in conjunction with Junior Achievement and the goals of the innovation center at The Hawk. Additionally, he reminded the Board of additional programs to explore such as International Strategic Management, the Kauffman Foundation, Building Blocks and Oakland Schools programs.

ADJOURNMENT:

- The next meeting of the EDC is scheduled for May 19, 2021 at 8:00 AM.

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Motion by Slaughter, support by Carr to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 AM

Yeas: CANTOR, HARTSOCK, ZACHOS, CARR, ELLIOTT, SLAUGHTER, LINDSEY-
FEAGIN

Nays: NONE

Absent: ANHUT, BEIERMEISTER

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Minutes drafted by: Samantha Seimer