

MEETING MINUTES  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
OCTOBER 20, 2021, 8:00 AM

**CALLED TO ORDER BY:** The Economic Development Corporation Meeting was called to order by Chairman Cantor at 8:14 am.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lew Cantor, Scott Elliott, Fritz Beiermeister, Sam Slaughter, William Hartsock, T. R. Carr

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Fritz Beiermeister, William Hartsock, Kimberly Lindsey-Feagin

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Ken Massey, City Council Member/EDC Liaison, Samantha Seimer, AKT Peerless; Joe Valentine, Assistant City Manager; Diane Holcomb, Resident; Danielle Ware, Resident; Cristia Brockway, Economic Development Director

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Moved by Elliott to approve the agenda as submitted, support by Slaughter.

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

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Carr, support by Beiermeister to approve the meeting minutes from September 15, 2021, as submitted.

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

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

- Chair Cantor invited Mr. Carr to give an update about the Innovation Center.

**Innovation Center Update:**

- Board Member Carr stated that Public Sector Consultants plans to give an update at the November EDC meeting. He noted that the consultants are active and engaged in the process.

- PSC has toured MLSIC, and are thorough and responsive to the needs of the EDC. They have conducted interviews with city administration, and have a good relationship with the Special Serviced Department which will be integral in the management of the facility.
- PSC is also conducting interviews with industry specialists. Mr. Carr added that the initial observation from PSC state that there is a strong demand for wet lab space which is what is reserved for us on the third floor. Other space utilization has more competition.
- Preliminary facility assessment has been conducted by the architect and they are looking at revenue streams. They understand that the EDC and City want to be at least revenue neutral. PSC is currently looking at preliminary governance structure and marketing study for coworking and wet-lab space. They are going to conduct a needs assessment of companies in Farmington Hills that can be leveraged for the innovation center.
- Plans are on track to present to City Council at goals setting session in January.
- Mr. Zachos asked about the potential hazard of bio-tech. Mr. Massey informed that there are levels of clean room. There is the ability to control what can be done in the space. The governance structure plans will likely dictate that each business will need to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. The governance structure will help guide the process. Bio-tech and its potential hazards need to be taken into consideration because the space will be mixed use. Mr. Carr added that the discussion highlights the importance of the architects being utilized in the consulting process. The administrator will have oversight of the operation and policies in place that will help guide the day-to-day operations of the facility. Operational documents will provide a framework for the facility and its functions.
- Resident, Ms. Ware included that there is a need to connect to the younger community to get them to want to stay in the community. There is opportunity to tap into OCC and broadcast to see how they want to be involved.

## **REPORTS AND UPDATES:**

### **Assistant City Manager**

- Mr. Valentine introduced the new Economic Development Director to the Economic Development Corporation, Ms. Cristia Brockway who comes to Farmington Hills from the City of Taylor and has a passion for Economic Development
- Ms. Brockway spoke about her background and experience to the EDC.

### **City Council Liaison**

- Mr. Massey Ken spoke about the memorial service for John Anhut earlier in October where the EDC presented the plaque for “John Anhut Way” that will be displayed at the third floor entrance to Hawk. Ms. Holcomb added that she wrote an article that made the front page of the Observer for Mr. Anhut.
- Mr. Massey stated that he recently met with the Chamber and the Superintendent spoke about mentorship programs and is aware of the EDC’s goal of increased mentorship opportunities and future potential partnership with the schools and innovation center. He added that the Chamber

has an upcoming retreat and plans to continue to discuss both the mentorship and opportunities at the future innovation center

**BUSINESS:**

**Old Business  
Mentorship Program**

- Chair Cantor stated that the mentorship program is on hold until the Hawk Innovation center is complete, adding that this will be a focal point. He noted that the Superintendent of the schools has great plans and wants to be involved in economic development.

**Connected Farmington Hills Newsletter**

- Mr. Zachos gave an overview of the Connected Farmington Hills Initiative. Originally, Connected Farmington Hills that was about connecting the community to resources, and a component of autonomous and connected vehicle technologies. Moved into more of a broad initiative around branding, marketing, and awareness as well as connected technologies.
- Mr. Zachos will be connecting with Jen Herman to work on a video series for the EDC, possibly biweekly. As a business owner you can reshare the content and help connect information to others on social media. The board discussed an application process to maintain equity between the business community.
- The Board discussed different meanings of innovation for different types of businesses additionally this could be part of the package for new businesses locating at the hawk.
- Resident Ms. Ware cautioned about the word innovation, is it innovation as technology, or innovation about creative business promotion. Noting that the Board should be intentional about its approach with the business owners about how they can take advantage of the word to best serve their clients.

**New Business:**

- Mr. Massey introduced Councilmember Matt Strickfaden. Mr. Strickfaden was appointed to Council following Samantha Steckloff's election to the Michigan House of Representatives. His appointment was unanimously supported by Council. .
- Mr. Strickfaden gave a presentation "20XL Farmington Hills." He discussed challenges with declining school enrollment, and vacant office spaces. Farmington Hills has over 11 million SF of office space. Based on Mr. Strickfaden's projections, if offices are converted to multifamily and mixed use, that redevelopment could translate to 5,000 new families, and \$20 million in tax revenue to the general fund. Outlot development could also increase density and taxable value.
- There are challenges and opportunities for the EDC to help guide smart redevelopment programs throughout the community.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- None.

**BOARD MEMBER'S COMMENTS:**

- None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Resident, Ms. Ware asked when the replacement to the EDC will be announced. Chair Cantor responded that it has not been made official, but it is anticipated that the Mayor will appoint Mr. Mark Brucki to the EDC Board.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- The next meeting of the EDC is scheduled for the third Wednesday on November 17, 2021 at 8:00 AM.

Motion by Slaughter, support by Zachos to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 AM

Yeas: CANTOR, ZACHOS, ELLIOTT, SLAUGHTER, CARR

Nays: NONE

Absent: BEIERMEISTER, HARTSOCK, LINDSEY-FEAGIN

Abstentions: NONE

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Minutes drafted by: Samantha R. Seimer