



**Development District of Central Texas
Board of Directors**

Central Texas Council of Governments 2180
North Main Street, Belton, Texas 76513

Thursday, April 7, 2022—9:30 AM

Board Members Present:

Cynthia Hernandez: Belton EDC
David Williams: Kempner City
Manager
Dean Roome: Bartlett Municipal
Development District
Jamie LaDuke: Hamilton EDC
Charley Ayers: Workforce Solutions
Ted Gonzalez: Central Texas College
Cheri Shepherd: Gatesville Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Others Present:

Uryan Nelson: CTCOG
Anna Olvera: CTCOG
Anna Barge: CTCOG
Dominic Elizondo: CTCOG
Hope Geiger: CTCOG
Connie Quinto: CTCOG
Kerry Fillip: Nolanville EDC
Charlene Heydinger: TxPACE Authority
Randy Pittenger: Belton Area Chamber of Commerce
Lindsey Lillard: Treat Yourself Boutique

MINUTES

- 1. Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Cynthia Hernandez, Vice Chair of the Board, at 9:32 AM. A quorum was present.
- 2. Public Comments.** Connie Quinto, new Assistant Director for CTCOG's Planning and Regional Services Division introduced herself to the Board.
- 3. Staff Updates.**
Dominic Elizondo gave an update about CTCOG activities, including the Leadership Central Texas and Rural Internship Programs, economic development newsletters, the Discover Central Texas project, plans for a Small Town Summit series in the Summer, the Veteran Employer Summit in May, 2022-26 CEDS implementation, and other economic updates from Workforce Solutions' Economic Snapshot for Q1 of 2022.
- 4. Discussion and Action Item:** Regarding approval of minutes from the January 6, 2022 Meeting.

Charley Ayres made a motion to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Ted Gonzalez; the motion passed with David Williams abstaining.

5. Discussion and Action Item: Regarding Approval of New Board Member

One new member was before the Board for approval-Kerry Phillip, the coordinator for Nolanville Economic Development. David Williams noted that he had worked with Kerry a number of years and that she had done great work bringing in businesses and working with them in Nolanville, and made a motion to approve Kerry's application to the Board, and Charley Ayres seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and Action Item: Regarding Approval of Small Business Resiliency Awardees

Dominic Elizondo provided background on the nomination process and advertising for the Small Business Resiliency Award, and presented two awardees selected by their respective Counties-Schoepf's BBQ for Bell County and Treat Yourself Boutique for Milam County. Lindsey Lillard, the owner of Treat Yourself Boutique in Rockdale, introduced her business and how it adapted to COVID-19 while Randy Pittenger with the Belton Area Chamber of Commerce discussed Ronnie Schoepf's Schoepf's BBQ in Belton and discussed how it was their Business of the Year in 2021 and hosted various community services during COVID. David Williams made a motion to approve, with Charley Ayres seconding. The motion was passed unanimously.

7. Discussion Item: Regarding Approval of Leadership Central Texas 2022 Applicants

Dominic Elizondo provided background on the nomination process and advertising for Leadership Central Texas, and presented the ten applicants for Leadership Central Texas 2022. These were

- David Richardson, City of Kempner
- Erin Hughley, Bell County Public Health District
- Camron Cochran, Killeen and Copperas Cove ISDs
- Dean Huard, U.S Army, Ft. Hood
- Jennifer Shidler, City of Nolanville
- Jamie LaDuke, Hamilton EDC, DDCT Board
- Dawn Orange, Belton Area Chamber of Commerce
- Lindsey Lillard, Treat Yourself Boutique
- Ronnie Schoepf, Schoepf's BBQ
- Connie Quinto, CTCOG

David Williams noted that he attended the program last year and that it was a great experience and exciting to see participants from around the region. David Williams made a motion to approve all the applicants. Ted Gonzalez seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

8. Discussion Item: Regarding Approval of the Rural Internship Program 2022 Applicants

Dominic Elizondo gave an overview of the 2022 Rural Internship Program, with up to \$2000 scholarships being offered at \$500 each to Chambers of Commerce, EDCs, and Departments of Tourism for the interning of high school students. Dominic Elizondo presented the two applicants-the Kay Theatre Foundation in Rockdale and the City of Kempner. David Williams

noted that he would recuse himself from the vote as he is the City Manager of Kempner. Charley Ayres made a motion to approve, with Ted Gonzalez seconding and David Williams abstaining. The motion was approved.

9. Discussion Item: Regarding the TX-PACE Program

Charlene Heydinger, President of the non-profit Texas Pace Authority, gave a presentation on the Texas Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (TX-PACE), a long term financing tool for improvements to energy efficiency, water-conservation, and on-site generation for commercial, industrial, and multifamily properties. Charlene Heydinger explained that the program allows property owners to finance 100% of their project costs with private funding paid off through an assessment lien as long as the useful life of the equipment, allowing all PACE Projects to be cashflow positive. Texas PACE Authority administers the financing and is paid a user fee by the property owner. Charlene Heydinger then presented a series of examples of projects financed through TX-PACE. The Texas Pace Authority had also created a "PACE in a Box" toolkit for local governments to use to create uniform and sustainable local PACE programs.

10. Discussion Item: Regarding Updates on the 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Implementation

Dominic Elizondo gave an update on the implementation of several high priority strategies in the 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Action Plan Matrix. One strategy was developing a regionally based tourism brand, which was being developed with the Discover Central Texas project. CTCOG and RGVision were planning on holding their final stakeholder meeting for the project on Apr.18, after having shot footage at cities and towns across the region to use on the website for events and site listings as well as a promotional video for the region which was shown to the Board. The draft website was also shown to the Board with the final version being displayed at the stakeholder meeting. Dominic Elizondo also discussed plans to provide access for cities on the WordPress for the website. Cynthia Hernandez asked how CTCOG would engage those cities who have not submitted content yet for the website, and Dominic Elizondo explained that they would reach out individually to cities to obtain content or visit their City and Chamber sites to gather photos and events. The next strategy in the Action Plan Matrix for the CEDS was to hold an Opportunity Zone Summit. Dominic Elizondo provided a list of Opportunity Zone Funds that operated in Texas from the National Council of State Housing Agencies, and summarized their typical investment projects. Dominic Elizondo noted that he would reach out to as many of these Funds as possible to bring to the Summit planned for late 2022. Anna Barge gave an overview of the Small Town Summit/Texas Downtowns agenda planned for Summer of 2022 as hour long webinars every other week covering topics such as digital literacy, CTCOG services, emergency preparedness, and downtown development. Dominic Elizondo covered the strategy for building community resiliency by posting and distributing information on the Post Pandemic Toolkit from the CEDS on the CTCOG website and newsletter. For the strategy on helping transition Ft.Hood personnel into the private sector, Anna Barge covered the agenda for the CTCOG-Texas Veterans Commission-Workforce Solutions of Central Texas Veteran Employer Summit in May, which will provide employers with best practices for reaching out to veterans. A flier for the event was shown to the Board. For the final strategy of building additional capacity for grant identification/writing/administration, Anna Barge presented a "Grant Wish List Form" that local governments can use to identify their needs for CTCOG to identify funding for.

11. Discussion Item: Regarding Application for ReInvent Healthy Funds for CTCOG's Implementation of the 2022-2026 Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan

Dominic Elizondo gave an overview of CTCOG's plans to hold a Transportation Summit at the end of 2022 with United Way of Central Texas as part of the implementation of the 2022-2026 Regionally Coordinated Transportation Plan. The previous summit in 2019 was for Bell County only, so CTCOG would like to utilize funding from ReInvent Healthy, a community health non-profit that provided grant funding to UWCT to host the Summit. Since CTCOG's funding from TxDOT is for the coordination and monitoring of the RCTP rather than implementation, they are seeking to apply for ReInvent Healthy funds to assist other counties and cities in assessing their transportation needs as well as what work they have already completed towards addressing these needs to prepare them for the Transportation Summit. CTCOG also would use part of the funds for implementation of RCTP strategies. Because only non-profits are eligible to apply, DDCT will act as the applicant on behalf of CTCOG in an application to be approved at the next DDCT meeting. Dominic Elizondo showed the application form in the packet. David Williams asked if CTCOG had reached out to the TxDOT Waco District to be a part of this planning and Dominic Elizondo stated that they had not as TxDOT was only involved in the coordination and monitoring of plan implementation rather than the implementing itself.

12. Discussion Item: Regarding Updates on Regional Broadband Initiatives

Anna Barge discussed various broadband opportunities and initiatives for the region, including the Connected Nation Broadband reports for Milam, San Saba, and Lampasas, and Bell and Coryell Counties' hiring of Foresite Group as a broadband consultant for usage of ARPA funds. CTCOG will also work with cities and Counties over the summer to apply for broadband funding as available through IJA programs. David Williams brought up the shutoff of Wi-Fi service in Lampasas the previous few days and mentioned that now would be a great time to reach out for public input on broadband needs.

13. Discussion Item: Regarding Federal and State Legislative Updates Pertaining to Economic Development

Anna Barge discussed the programs funded by the recently signed Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA).

14. Discussion Item: Regarding Updates on Grant Opportunities

Dominic Elizondo provided an update on State and Federal grant opportunities, including the TxCDBG Community Development Fund, Downtown Revitalization Program, and the FAST fund, the Rural Energy Pilot Program, the NTIA Broadband grants, and the Texas Workforce Commission's JET program. Cynthia Hernandez noted that if anyone had a school district interested in applying for the JET program, Charley Ayres would be their contact. Charley Ayres stated that he had already been working with school districts and providing them all the information they needed for the program. Cynthia Hernandez asked if CTCOG could help with grant writing as well as identification, and Dominic Elizondo responded that they do and are using the Grant Wish List form to improve their reach in identifying and administering other localities' grants. Charley Ayres asked if these grants were being sent out to interested parties and Dominic Elizondo explained that the grant list is for the DDCT Board but many of the resources are sent out in the weekly economic development newsletters or to only

EDCs/Chambers/ISDs when something only pertains to certain organizations.

15. Board of Directors' Comments.

Dean Roome made a comment on Bartlett property assessed values rising out of synch with the growth in the city, and asked that CTCOG/DDCT provide information that citizens could use to help dispute these values.

16. Discuss agenda items for next meeting on Thursday, Jul 7th, 2022, at 9:30 AM.

17. Adjourned at 11:04 AM

Ginger Watkins, DDCT Chair

Uryan Nelson, Planning Director