



Development District of Central Texas

Board of Directors

Central Texas Council of Governments 2180

North Main Street, Belton, Texas 76513

Thursday, January 5, 2023—9:30 AM

Board Members Present:

Jamie LaDuke: Hamilton EDC

Ted Gonzalez: Central Texas College

Brian O'Connor: Nolanville EDC

Dean Roome: Bartlett Municipal Development District

Cynthia Hernandez: Belton EDC

Cheri Shepherd: Gatesville Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Charley Ayres: Workforce Solutions of Central Texas

Jim Gibson: Rockdale Municipal Development District

Michael Boyd: City of Killeen

Others Present:

Uryan Nelson: CTCOG

Anna Barge: CTCOG

Dominic Elizondo: CTCOG

Hope Geiger: KTMPO

Connie Quinto: CTCOG

Anita Janke: KTMPO

James McGill: KTMPO

Linda Bridges: City of Morgan's Point Resort

Jason Johnson: JJ Realty Group

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Cynthia Hernandez, Vice Chair of the Board, at 9:31 AM. A quorum was present.

2. **Public Comments.** No public comments were made.

3. **Staff Updates.**

Dominic Elizondo gave an update about CTCOG activities, including the advertising of the Discover Central Texas website and social media, the Opportunity Zone Summit, economic development newsletters, the Milam County Annex grant completion, EDA grant administration for Belton and Cameron, plans for an EDA FIRE event in early 2023, and other economic updates from Workforce Solutions' Economic Snapshot for Q3 of 2022. Uryan Nelson provided an update on the \$1.7 trillion appropriations bill for FY 2023, including \$800 billion in non-defense funding. Agriculture and rural development has nearly \$4 billion allocated to it, including \$455 million for broadband infrastructure; there is also \$1.7 billion for rural water and wastewater

infrastructure, business and industry loan funding, and \$11.2 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Commerce (including \$498 million for the EDA). Cynthia Hernandez asked if our rural communities are active in applying for resources like this and if they are able to meet local matches. Mr. Nelson responded that for some programs communities are able to utilize in kind labor or waivers to meet matches, but another hindrance is the amount of staff time and work to complete grant applications. Mr. Nelson said CTCOG staff may assist where needed to help with grants. Ms. Hernandez suggested that when a notice is sent out of what is being funded by the appropriations bill that staff also let cities know that they are there as a resource for applying.

4. Discussion and Action Item: Regarding Approval of Meeting Minutes from the October 6th, 2022 Meeting.

Michael Boyd made a motion to approve the minutes, and it was seconded by Jamie LaDuke; the motion passed unanimously.

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

A new member was before the Board for approval-Jason Johnson, the owner of JJ Realty Group in Morgan's Point Resort, as a replacement for Stan Briggs. Mr. Johnson introduced himself to the Board. Jamie LaDuke made a motion to approve his application to the Board, and Michael Boyd seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and Action Item: Regarding Approval of 2023 Leadership Central Texas and Rural Internship Programs

Dominic Elizondo provided an overview of the Leadership Central Texas and Rural Internship programs. Mr. Elizondo noted the only difference in the applications for 2023 was the deadline, now Mar.31, and the dates. Mr. Elizondo said that if they were approved, marketing could begin for the program.

Cynthia Hernandez asked how many applicants Leadership Central Texas had for 2022 and how it was marketed before. Mr. Elizondo said that there were 8 applicants in 2022 and notification of the program was sent out to city managers, county secretaries, EDCs, and Chambers, advertised in the Temple Daily Telegram and Killeen Herald, as well as posted on Facebook. Ms. Hernandez asked if the requirement was that participants must have previously attended a local leadership program and Mr. Elizondo clarified that there are three requirements, one being if they participated in a prior program and another including anyone with an interest in becoming a leader in the region. Ms. Hernandez asked how many students participated in the Rural Internship Program last year, and Mr. Elizondo said only one since the Kay Theatre at Rockdale had to return their scholarship since they could not obtain an intern. Mr. Elizondo also noted that a change in the Rural Internship Program for 2023 was that the requirement that the city population of the applicant be 20,000 or less is now based off of the 2020 Census. Michael Boyd asked what the participation goal was for Leadership Central Texas and Mr. Elizondo stated that there was no specific number CTCOG was looking for, but they would like more. Mr. Boyd suggested 20-25 participants as a goal. Cynthia Hernandez said that the initial idea for Leadership Central Texas was that it would function as the regional step up to local leadership programs and that staff should take note of how and to who the program is being promoted, maybe by visiting local leadership program graduations and reaching out to graduates. Uryan Nelson said promotion should be easier this year with CTCOG's more active social media presence. Dominic Elizondo said it was a possibility to advertise the program

through paid advertising on Facebook, similar to Discover Central Texas. Ms. Hernandez said that Leadership Central Texas was a great way to introduce rural community members to what regional resources are available, with Charley Ayres emphasizing that it shows participants the scope of what central Texas is, rather than just thinking in terms of their local communities. Mr. Ayres then asked when the last time the hourly rate for the Rural Internship Program was evaluated and Mr. Elizondo responded that interns were not required to be paid \$7.25 an hour and that the wording in the application was to give applicants an idea of how many hours the intern could work. Mr. Ayres suggested changing the scholarship up to \$1,000 and maybe reducing the number of awardees to two instead of four. Ms. Hernandez said that the program was not receiving many applicants and she was not sure if that was a result of the scholarship only being \$500. Mr. Elizondo noted he was also unsure as the program is marketed the same as Leadership Central Texas. Jason Johnson asked if there was a limit on the number of interns an awardee could have and Mr. Elizondo stated there was none, but the scholarship would have to be split up among the interns. Mr. Ayres suggested marketing the program to school districts as well. Mr. Nelson asked if there was one individual at Workforce Solutions that staff could send information to to distribute among CTE programs in schools. Mr. Ayres said that staff could send it to him and Workforce Solutions could distribute it. Jamie LaDuke asked if the number of awardees would be limited to two or if there were more applicants would they be accepted. Mr. Elizondo said that there would be money in the DDCT budget to accept more, and Mr. Nelson suggested that if there are more applicants that the Board decides whether to approve the additional applications based on the budget. Jim Gibson said that \$500 was too low as from a competitive standpoint students would be asked to give up a large part of their summer to work for a small amount instead of working a job that pays more. Ms. Hernandez suggested the idea of the program was not to compete with a job since overall the amount of hours they work would be small and the purpose would be to supplement economic development activity for a city. Ms. LaDuke said removing the hourly rate wording in the application and adding in the word "stipend." Mr. Ayres said it would be better to outline the rate students would be paid hourly up front to attract more, and Mr. Elizondo noted that since the program is marketed to cities staff didn't have a required hourly rate in the marketing as the awardees would market their own hourly rate to students directly. Ms. Hernandez said that the application could include an hourly range requirement so that students aren't spending the whole summer on a project and the student knows how long he or she would be working as an intern. Ms. Hernandez suggested two \$1,000 scholarships with a range of 60 to 100 hours and the Board voiced agreement. A motion to approve both applications, including the removal of the hourly rate example and changing 2010 Census to 2020 as well as the scholarship increase and hourly range in the Rural Internship Application was made by Cheri Shepherd. Motion was seconded by Michael Boyd. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Dominic Elizondo gave an overview on the implementation of the 2022-2026 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Action Plan Matrix throughout 2022, including the top five accomplishments: the Small Town Summit series, Veteran Employer Summit, Opportunity Zone Summit, the Newly Elected Officials Class, and Discover Central Texas. Mr. Elizondo noted that an ad campaign was started for Discover Central Texas after approval at the October meeting for \$10/day ads, resulting in 23,284 people being reached by the ads. Mr. Elizondo explained that around Dec.11 likes and visits to the Discover Central Texas page increased greatly due to the target audiences being changed to Texas and surrounding states.

The page had 1,415 visits and 711 likes. Many of the followers of the page were 35-54 year old females, due to Facebook users being skewed towards that demographic. Mr. Elizondo said that the Board can look at the long form accomplishments document with a list of everything accomplished, what strategies are recurring each year, and which staff is currently working on. Mr. Elizondo said that the CEDS Workshop would be Jan. 12th and the Board will determine what objectives and strategies are priorities and what specifically they would like staff to do to implement strategies, as well as amend the CEDS if needed.

Cynthia Hernandez said she wanted to know if attendance was good for the summits staff held and if surveys were sent afterwards. Connie Quinto responded that no formal surveys were sent for feedback afterwards, only more information and copies of presentations, though some attendees sent feedback. Jim Gibson asked if EDA grants required that projects need to be aligned with the CEDS to which Uryan stated they did need to be aligned. Anna Barge noted that there were 122 attendees across all Small Town Sessions.

8. Discussion Item: Regarding Updates on Regional Broadband Initiatives

Dominic Elizondo briefly discussed the State Broadband Plan and plans for a new grant program. The FCC also released new broadband maps and were receiving comments until mid-January. The NTIA also awarded \$8.1 million to Texas for the BEAD program to plan for deploying broadband.

Charley Ayres asked about the situation with Bell County and broadband, and Uryan Nelson said that a couple of years ago CTCOG applied for funding to do a regional broadband plan but the EDA ran out of funding for the project, but Bell and Coryell counties were now working with a consultant selected by CTCOG to plan for deploying broadband. The other counties will be working with CTCOG to obtain funding for broadband initiatives.

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

Dominic Elizondo discussed the IIJA and ARPA, and the opening of the Texas legislature session.

Cynthia Hernandez asked if staff were members of TEDC because they provide information on legislative actions relevant to economic development and staff responded that they were not but would look into receiving their updates.

10. Discussion Item: Regarding Updates on Grant Opportunities

Dominic Elizondo provided an update on State and Federal grant opportunities and their eligible projects and match, including the TxCDBG Community Development Fund and Downtown Revitalization Program, the USDOT RAISE grant, the FEMA BRIC and Flood Mitigation Assistance Program, the USDA Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program, and the TWDB State Water Implementation Fund (SWIFT).

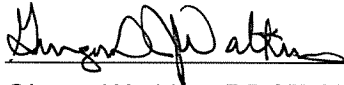
Cynthia Hernandez asked if RAISE projects have to be on the KTMPO Metropolitan Transportation plan, and Uryan Nelson responded that they did not have to be.

11. Board of Directors' Comments.

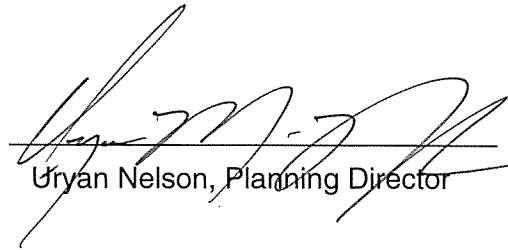
Ted Gonzalez asked if CTCOG had done any type of impact study for certain types of businesses coming in the region and around such as Samsung in Taylor, and how it might impact areas such as in real estate and broadband. Dominic Elizondo said he would look at Williamson County and see if they had any type of study done for their county. Cynthia Hernandez said that Belton's area is seeing an impact on business and investment growth due to Samsung and Meta.

12. Discuss agenda items for next meeting on Thursday, April 6th, 2023, at 9:30 AM.

13. Adjourned at 11:20 AM



Ginger Watkins, DDCT Chair



Bryan Nelson, Planning Director

