

**JOINT MEETING OF THE BELTON CITY COUNCIL AND  
BELTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
February 18, 2016 – 5:00 P.M.**

The Belton City Council met in special session with the Belton Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) Board of Directors in the Conference Room at Belton City Hall, with the following members present: Mayor Marion Grayson, Mayor Pro Tem David K. Leigh (arrived 5:08 p.m.), Councilmembers Jerri Gauntt, Dan Kirkley and Guy O'Banion. Councilmembers Paul Sanderford and Craig Pearson were absent. Staff present included Sam Listi, Amy Casey, Gene Ellis, Brandon Bozon, Angellia Points, Byron Sinclair, Paul Romer and Denny Lassetter.

Members attending from the BEDC were: Board Vice President Joe Shepperd, Board Secretary Griff Lord and Board Members Steve Jones and Barry Harper, along with Executive Director Cynthia Hernandez, Ana Borchardt, Director of Business Expansion & Retention and Legal Counsel Neal Potts. BEDC Board President Chris Moore was absent (telephoned into the meeting from remote location).

1. **Call to order.** Mayor Marion Grayson called the City Council meeting to order at 5:02 p.m., and BEDC Board Vice President, Joe Shepperd, called the BEDC Board meeting to order.
2. **Hold a joint meeting between the Belton City Council and the Belton Economic Development Corporation to discuss Belton's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, and City and BEDC goals, projects, plans and funding implications.**

Mayor Grayson welcomed everyone to the joint meeting. She then turned the meeting over to BEDC Executive Director Cynthia Hernandez. Mrs. Hernandez focused on the components of the Strategic Plan and the goals set out for BEDC within the Plan.

The first item she discussed was building space needs for light industrial uses. She said the market is tight in Belton, and in Central Texas, for this type of use. The BEDC is currently working with three industries that are in expansion mode, and unfortunately, there are no buildings for two of the industries to expand into, or that can meet their temporary needs until they find something suitable. She said that the lack of suitable buildings is also a challenge in business recruitment efforts. BEDC always offers to do a build-to-suit, but she stated that usually is not fast enough. BEDC is researching suitably sized land sites. The BEDC Board is also discussing constructing a spec building, and she hopes to bring that to Council in the near future.

The next goal Mrs. Hernandez discussed was the evaluation of land for future or expanded business park use. In 1997, the BEDC purchased almost 200 acres, and it has made an impact on Belton. This is evidenced by the businesses, the employees and the development around the business park since its construction. She stated that there are 60-70 developable acres left in the business park, but they are not

contiguous. She added that BEDC is always researching additional land sites, but other communities in the central Texas area have large land sites available, and that affects our competitiveness in attracting industries. She explained ways that the BEDC is researching and evaluating sites.

Board Vice President Joe Shepperd stated that City Manager Sam Listi reminded the BEDC Board there are properties already served by water and sewer that would be ideal, so they have kept that in mind as they do their search. He explained that there are a few really good sources – loopnet.com and landsoftexas.com – that they use when researching available land. He added that they are also approaching people who own desirable property to see if they would be interested in selling. He said that there aren't a lot of large tracts available in the 100-200 acre size. Tracts of that size are hard to come by, but he assured all present that they are working hard on finding some suitable property.

Mayor Pro Tem David K. Leigh asked if BEDC is working on a potential inventory of suitors. He added, "You don't have to own it [property] to sell it." Mrs. Hernandez agreed that BEDC doesn't have to own property. She stated that there are several property owners in town who have their properties listed, and BEDC has included some of these properties in proposals they have made. Sometimes the challenge comes when BEDC is negotiating the price, and they are competing with other communities who own property and have the ability to give it away. It is sometimes better for BEDC to have the land in their toolbox, so they can give it away if that becomes necessary for a successful negotiation. Board Member Steve Jones said that the problem with those types of properties is it doesn't give BEDC the ability to build a spec building on the property or to provide infrastructure.

Councilmember Jerri Gauntt asked if BEDC has an inventory of large land owners so that they would know who to approach in the event a company was inquiring. Mrs. Hernandez said that they have some identified. BEDC has mailed letters asking if landowners are interesting in selling. Sometimes they respond, and sometimes they don't. Sometimes they are willing to sell, but at a really high price. BEDC has several sites that they have identified, but she said that it might be time to regroup and solicit for potential sales again.

Councilmember Guy O'Banion asked the timeframe for finding something to make an offer on. Board Vice President Joe Shepperd said that Mrs. Hernandez has an inquiry into an estate that owns a large tract of land. They are talking to their board to see if they will sell. On another tract that BEDC is interested in, they have made contact with the owners and offered to get an appraisal. The landowners feel that the land is worth a lot more than the appraisal shows it is worth, and a portion of the tract has some topography issues. The first tract probably has a longer timeframe to purchase than the second one. The owner of the second tract has the appraisal in hand, and it is almost time for BEDC to make an offer to see if they accept. If they accept it, it should be six months or less to close. However, the first tract is a premiere tract, so they really want to wait to see if it is a possibility before making an offer on the second tract.

The final item Mrs. Hernandez discussed was the Rockwool property. BEDC is challenged in the Strategic Plan with developing a land plan for the property. She reminded the group that the City was prepared to convey the property to BEDC; however, BEDC learned that they first needed to do a Phase I Environmental on the property to protect BEDC from any liability as well as protect future land owners and future tenants. The Consultant who was hired to prepare the Phase I Environmental is nearing completion of the study, and BEDC should have his report very soon.

BEDC's goal this year is to develop the land plan. Part of that plan is to determine where utilities are currently located and develop a plan for utilities for future development of the property. BEDC has hired KPA Engineers to do the utility analysis on the property. She asked Mack Parker of KPA to give an update of the project. Mr. Parker provided the attached map showing the utilities currently on the property and some that are proposed, and he reviewed it with the group. Board Vice President Shepperd said that it would be hard to spend a large amount of money for infrastructure on the land since there are so many issues on the property.

Mayor Grayson asked if the existing infrastructure was usable, or if we will be spending a lot of money on maintenance. Director of Public Works Byron Sinclair stated that the existing lift stations are in very bad shape, and it will soon be time to rebuild them. City Manager Sam Listi said the cost of infrastructure to get the services to the property is going to shape land use and will influence the way Mrs. Hernandez is able to market the property.

Councilmember Dan Kirkley asked what type of business the BEDC thinks would be appropriate on this property. Mr. Shepperd said that BEDC had gotten some direction from Council on the type of business they would like to see there, but he said that it is not a good place for BEDC to construct a spec building. He added that with its proximity to IH-35, he felt there would be interest in the property, but they would just have to let it play out. There was a discussion on suitable types of businesses. Councilmember Gauntt said that we shouldn't limit ourselves on the types of businesses we allow on the property because many things can be addressed with screening.

Mayor Pro Tem Leigh said that it sounded like maybe the City should "bootstrap" it to make it work until a company is interested, and then determine from there what should be done with the utilities. He said, "We will need to build the infrastructure as we go, but we should not be short-sighted. It is not a true gateway to the City, but it is still somewhat of a gateway, so we don't need to put 'looks bad by smells bad.'" He added that the City does need to do something to get the smell problem taken care of. Mrs. Hernandez explained that BEDC has had some companies who were interested in the property until they went to the property on their own, and because of the smell, they were no longer interested.

City Manager Sam Listi thanked Mack Parker for his work on the project. He also discussed the expansion of the wastewater treatment plant. One part of the

expansion includes improvements to the headworks which should help with the odor situation.

Mr. Listi also stated that at the last City Council meeting, the Council authorized a contract for the design of sewer lines in south Belton along IH-35. This is a change in concept from the original concept of South Belton sewer service which had included a new wastewater treatment plant to serve the Lampasas Basin. Manager Listi said the City had originally planned to convey all three pieces of former Rockwool property to BEDC, but now it has been determined that Tract C, the 25 acre parcel on the south side of FM 93, may be needed for future wastewater treatment plant expansion. Mr. Shepperd said that expansion to the existing plant, on property currently owned by the City, made more sense to him than building a new plant. BEDC Board Members and Councilmembers concurred. Mayor Grayson asked how many acres the existing plant is on. Mr. Listi responded that he believed it was 48.

Councilmember O'Banion stated that as the City proceeds with the plant expansion project, we may have a better idea of how much land will be needed. He said that there might be some future conveyance of a portion of Tract C (the 25 acre parcel) if the City finds that it is not needed. Mr. Listi agreed, but stated that it is important that the City preserve the land for future plant expansion at this time. Board Member Jones said that in other cities, where plants are being built, you could put a house next to it and never know that there was a sewer plant there. Mr. Listi said that technology has significantly improved since the plant was constructed, and he believes with the expansion, some of the odor problems will be alleviated. Mayor Pro Tem Leigh said the composting operation is part of the odor issue, and that land would also be available for part of the expansion. Mr. Listi agreed the current compost area is another land area that could be converted to wastewater plant expansion if needed in the future.

Mr. Listi stated that BEDC had shared some expenses with the City in getting the property (Tract C) ready for platting, and he said that the City will reimburse BEDC the \$10,000 it spent for that since the City will be retaining the property.

Mr. Listi said that BEDC has evaluated property in the area that is owned by the Hubbards. There are approximately 125 acres available. The northernmost portion is developable, although it falls off pretty quickly to the river. Mr. Jones added that most of the property is in the flood plain. Mr. Listi said that there are some areas that would be suitable for practice fields which are needed and addressed in the Parks Master Plan.

Mr. Listi turned the meeting back over to Mrs. Hernandez. She said that BEDC will continue to evaluate how they want to develop the remaining former Rockwool property. She said that the utility plan is only about 40% complete, although it may be closer than that based on the changes discussed. Mr. Jones said that BEDC had two serious inquiries on the two tracts that he thought would be acceptable to the Council.

Mrs. Hernandez updated the group on other activities they had been involved with including trade shows and industry training that BEDC provides in conjunction with Temple College. She also gave an update on BEDC office location and developments. She stated that BEDC has committed to having a workshop about it in March, but they are focused on the downtown area.

Mr. Shepperd stated he would like to see a CNG (compressed natural gas) station located somewhere in the City. He believes that it would take advantage of a wonderful Texas resource and also fill in a gap in the Texas Triangle for those fuels.

City Manager Listi updated the group on issues with Dogridge Water Supply Corporation. They are replacing their entire board with an election scheduled in early March. He originally requested to speak to their board in September about releasing everything in the DRWSC CCN in the City limits east of Wheat Road, north of US190, to the City. They are unable to do anything, though, until their board is elected and educated on their system. The earliest the City could broach the subject with their board is April, but they may not be prepared to address the City's request for several months.


Mr. Listi also provided updates on the following Strategic Plan items:

- Growth Management Plan – annexation study possibly complete in the summer
- Comprehensive Plan Update – update by summer
- Nolan Creek Trunk Sewer Project – complete by July 4<sup>th</sup>
- MLK Bridge/Traffic Signal – estimated to be complete in late summer
- Connell Street Drainage – estimated to be complete in July
- Sparta Road – design nearing completion; phased construction
- Street Maintenance funding – Council funded Years 1 and 2 of 5-Year Plan; hope to bid in Spring with construction in Fall
- MLK Intersection at Main Street – under design
- Downtown Revitalization Plan – in-house project; working on recommendations
- Hike/Bike Trail – City received TxDOT grant; design should be underway toward the end of the year
- Lake-to-Lake Road – obtaining ROW parcels when possible
- Parks Master Plan Update – underway; online survey available

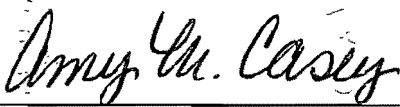
Mr. Listi introduced Angellia Points, the City's new Director of Internal Services/City Engineer. He also introduced Byron Sinclair, the City's new Director of Public Works.

Mayor Grayson said that it was beneficial to know what BEDC's plans were and for BEDC to know the City's plans. Councilmember O'Banion stated that the meetings were valuable to him as well. Mr. Listi reminded the group that the next joint meeting is scheduled for April 19th.

Board Vice President Shepperd adjourned the BEDC meeting, and Mayor Grayson adjourned the Council meeting at 6:15 p.m.

  
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Marion Grayson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Amy M. Casey, City Clerk









I. **Rockwool, etc.** → Council/Board Members.....if I might make a few comments.

- Let me acknowledge Mack/Cynthia's work on utility master planning for former Rockwool vicinity.
- Cost estimate is significant if all properties served at urban densities. Certainly not all work is required at one time. The current limited utilities certainly may suggest different type of development options (batch plant) and limited utility services in the end.
- I'd like to take a moment, while on this topic of Rockwool and Economic Development, to discuss several related matters involving sanitary sewer services:
  - First, T/B-WWTP Final Design for Phase 1 Plant expansion/headworks is underway, with design in 2016 and construction in 2017, early 2018.
  - Second, last week on February 9<sup>th</sup>, City Council took the significant step to approve the final design contract for design of the So. IH 35 sewer project. Design will be complete in October 2016 and, subject to anticipated funding, construction will occur in 2017. This project will give us sewer along IH 35 corridor, two highway bores to maximize service, and extend sewer pipe with lift stations to T/B-WWTP on FM 93.

However, this is a change in the concept of South Belton sewer service, where before a stand-alone Belton WWTP was envisioned in the Lampasas Basin. The lift station concept, the current approach, has many advantages – use of existing treatment plant, existing discharge permit, much quicker sewer service to IH 35, and lower capital and operating costs.

But, this plan for sewer service has another long term potential implication – and it involves the former Rockwool property adjacent to the plant. The 25 acre parcel we intended to convey to BEDC in mid-2014 may be needed in the future for on-site, single site, WWTP expansion, for ultimate Belton needs. We originally believed the 16 acre site was adequate for all known sewer expansion phases for the two cities at the time, with buffer. But that projection was exclusive of the Lampasas River Basin development, which anticipated a new plant site, so there is at least a possibility that long term the 25 acre site may be needed for sewer plant expansion. For this reason, I am recommending this site be removed from the proposed conveyance to BEDC. The City will certainly reimburse BEDC the \$10,000 cost share in platting and on-site improvements, make BEDC whole.

This would still leave the 13.76 acre tract and the 36.3 acre tract for BEDC development, which would also reduce the needed utility infrastructure to serve the sites.

I have discussed this conclusion with Cynthia, and know this is disappointing to BEDC, but for the potential long term sewer needs of the City, I believe this is the most prudent course of action.

Questions/comments?



## **II. DRWSC Water Service Area**

- 1 mile ETJ's along IH 35/US 190 corridors, especially IH 35 with contemplated sewer in 18-24 months.

## **III. Downtown Revitalization Plan**

## **IV. Development Growth Strategy – (map)**

## **V. Comprehensive Plan Update**

## **VI. Quality of Life**

- CIP Projects
- Street Maintenance Funding
- MLK/Main Intersection

## **VII. Connectivity**

- Hike/Bike Trail
- Lake to Lake Road
- Parks Master Plan Update