

**DURANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**January 9, 2017 AT 4:00 P.M.**

**Durant Industrial Authority Conference Room**

**I. Call To Order.....Tommy Kramer**

Tommy Kramer called the regular monthly Durant Economic Development Council Meeting to order.

**II. Opening Invocation .....Robert Holliday**

**III. Roll Call.....Laura Voorhies**

The following members were present: Curtis Armor, Billy Blackburn, President Sean Burrage, Kara Byrd, Bob Delveaux, Scott Dewald, Tammye Gwin, Stewart Hoffman, Robert Holliday, Ketan Jain, Denny Koenders, Darrell Mendez, Fran Mickle, Jeff Monroe, Janet Reed, Rick Roy and Tim Rundel

The following members were absent: Shaun Banner, Robert Bourne, Ron Boyer, Bert Davison, Eddy Dempsey, James Dunegan, Chris Glendening, Mike Goodwin, Bryan Hallmark, Jeff Hammock, Greg Massey, Kyle McLemore, and Jeff Tarrant

The following guests were present: Charles Calhoun, Jim Thorpe, Alan Jackson, Representative Dustin Roberts, Brian Post, Dan Pennington and Chris Duroy

**IV. Consideration and Action of December 12, 2016 Meeting Minutes .....Tommy Kramer**

Robert Holliday motioned to accept with a second by Stewart Hoffman. The motion carried by:

Aye: Curtis Armor, Billy Blackburn, President Sean Burrage, Kara Byrd, Bob Delveaux, Scott Dewald, Tammye Gwin, Stewart Hoffman, Robert Holliday, Ketan Jain, Denny Koenders, Darrell Mendez, Fran Mickle, Jeff Monroe, Janet Reed, Rick Roy and Tim Rundel

Nay: None

**V. Present City of Durant Monthly Sales Tax Report .....Mayor Stewart Hoffman**

Mayor Stewart Hoffman advised that the City Manager Tim Rundel should present the sales tax report.

Tim Rundel advised there is a slight increase over last year, 1.1% and should continue to increase throughout 2017.

**VI. Oklahoma Employment Report for November 2016 .....Tommy Kramer**

Tommy Kramer presented two Oklahoma maps showing the current unemployment for the State of Oklahoma. Mr. Kramer stated that Southeast Oklahoma is the highest in unemployment for the state, but Bryan County is the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest in the Southeast area at 4.0%.

**VII. Rural Enterprises New Market Tax Credit Program ..... Scott Dewald-Executive Director**

Scott Dewald advised that the New Market Tax Credit Program is a federal subsidiary to help businesses in low income and high poverty areas of the United States. The YTD allocations total \$320,000,000 and of that, 21 projects totaling \$97,003,173 are located in Southeastern Oklahoma with 7 of those projects being in Durant totaling \$43,570,000 and of the \$320,000,000 there is \$65,000,000 remaining to allocate for new projects. The allocations are in manufacturing, healthcare, real estate, service and hotels.

The breakdown between urban and rural areas is: \$118,219,476 (46%) urban and \$136,780,524 (54%) for rural.

There is \$3,000,000,000 allocated per year for the New Market Tax Credit Program and we are requesting for another \$75,000,000 to help with projects that have high quality of jobs in Oklahoma.

**VIII. 2016-2017 Oklahoma Legislative Update .....House Speaker Charles McCall**

Tommy Kramer introduces House Speaker McCall to the council members.

Speaker Charles McCall stated it is an honor to be in this roll for the next two years. I do this job because I am concerned about the State of Oklahoma and I want to see Southeast Oklahoma move forward and jobs being created.

We will struggle with a tough, challenging budget this year but there is opportunity. We have a hole of \$860,000,000 in contract to last year of \$1,300,000,000. The State of Oklahoma has 32 new members and it will take a bit of time to educate them.

My belief is there is an underlying problem of the economy of Oklahoma. The way you generate money is to bring in more businesses to Oklahoma and to have the existing businesses expand within the State of Oklahoma. Population is on the decline in rural Oklahoma and we must work together to bring more businesses to rural communities. I do congratulate you here in Durant and Bryan County for your work over the last decade.

The rainy day fund went from \$580,000,000 to \$135,000,000. My observations are that in the 1980's we had an energy collapse and businesses and banks closed, it was a terrible situation. This time, we have seen layoffs but not bank closings. We have diversified the state's economy and we needed more money in the rainy day fund. As oil prices rebound, there will be more funding over time and within three decades we will have a stabilized economy. We are focused on funding education with teacher pay raises, healthcare and we must comply with the Federal Real ID and we must have a solution in place in six months.

Revenue raising measures take 75% of both bodies of the legislature to pass, that is 76 votes and neither caucus has the votes to pass, so it will take a bipartisanship support. If there are not 76 votes, then you have to solely focus on the expense side to modify them to free up money.

Right now the things we are hearing about are increased teacher pay raises and the Real ID compliance. I want to roll out a plan for teacher raises but it will have to be phased in like the Oklahoma Department of Transportation 8-year roads and bridges plan.

We had a ballot item that was passed to make changes to correction facilities. We want to keep people who have non-violent crimes from going to jail. We would rather rehabilitate them and slow down the inflow of incarcerations, but maintain public safety. The State of Oklahoma is #1 for incarcerated women and #4 for men in the United States.

The State is largely a reflection of our individual cities. I thank you for what you do and I wish more cities had a more organized economic development team such as Durant's TEAM DURANT for progress.

**X. Present the Webstaurant Store Distribution Center Project Update ..... Tommy Kramer**

Tommy Kramer advised that the old Cornerstone building was sold and the closing took place on 1/6/17. This was the last industrial building for the Durant Industrial Authority to sell.

It sold to Webstaurant Stores headquartered in Pennsylvania, who had \$900,000,000 in sales last year. They will begin renovation in February.

**XI. New Business ..... Tommy Kramer**

Tommy Kramer advised that Chief Batton, Greg Massey and the State Chamber of Oklahoma are hosing a free luncheon on January 19, 2017. We will email the information to all members and businesses in our community.

**VIII. Adjournment..... Tommy Kramer**

Janet Reed motioned for adjournment with a second from Darrell Mendez.  
Tommy Kramer called the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.