

Waxahachie Community Development Corporation
February 14, 2023

A Work Session of the Waxahachie Community Development Corporation (WCDC) was held in the Council Conference Room at City Hall, 401 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas on Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Members Present: Daniel Morton, President
Elizabeth Tull, Vice President
David Hill, Mayor
Michael Scott, City Manager
David McSpadden
Jim Phillips

Member Absent: Bob Lynn

Ex-Officio: Amber Villarreal, City Secretary
Members Present: Chad Tustison, Director of Finance
Kevin Strength, President/CEO Chamber of Commerce

Others Present: Albert Lawrence, Deputy City Manager
Gumaro Martinez, Executive Director of Parks & Leisure Services

1. Call to Order

President Dan Morton called the meeting to order.

2. Hear presentation from YMCA for Cindy Hess Memorial Park

Jon McLaughlin, YMCA Waxahachie Executive Director, requested financial support from WCDC to fund the proposed Cindy Hess Memorial Park on the eight acres of YMCA property adjacent to their current facility. He explained the vision is for a community park that would provide an 18,000 square foot pavilion with multi-sport courts, a mile-long track that connects to the trail at The Avenue Church, an all-inclusive playground, pickleball courts, sand volleyball courts, artificial turf practice fields, a welcome atrium, and 100 additional parking spaces. He explained the community park could be utilized throughout the week, with the option of allowing different civic groups to sponsor night activities for the community. He expressed there are organizations interested in contributing to funding.

Mr. David McSpadden inquired about the project estimate and Mr. McLaughlin reported the complete project is estimated about \$3.7 million, including engineering and architectural fees. Mr. McLaughlin explained about \$400,000 has been raised and he has submitted a request for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through Ellis County.

Mr. Jim Phillips asked what is being requested of WCDC and Mr. McLaughlin explained funding for the parking lot, playground, trail, lighting, and electrical would cover the beginning of the project.

Mr. McLaughlin explained some of the YMCA group classes would utilize the pavilion at times and the courts and trail would be available for public usage. He explained fields would be reserved through a system, possibly through the Parks Department. He noted the YMCA would

manage all other reservations which would be free to the public. Membership would continue to operate for the YMCA for primary use of their existing facility and classes held at the pavilion.

The Board discussed the cost and responsibility of ongoing maintenance, liability, and staffing. Mr. McLaughlin explained the YMCA would provide staffing, carry the liability since it is their property, and provide ongoing maintenance budgeted by the YMCA; however, there may be a request for WCDC in the future to fund larger items other than ongoing maintenance.

The Board discussed projected costs, project phasing, and the future of the funding campaign.

It was the consensus of the Board to support the project and requested Mr. McLaughlin provide a financial update on fundraising efforts at the June 13, 2023 WCDC meeting, present a revised budget, and make a formal request for a specific amount of funding.

3. Discuss other projects/initiatives from WCDC

Mr. McSpadden reviewed the following projects for the Board to consider funding:

- Railyard Park amenities, including coordinating with Boyce Feed and Grain for constructing an all-weather walking trail to connect downtown parking and parking at the Wags-a-Hachie Dog Park. Complete renovation of the old rail bridge to enhance the access and beautification of Railyard Park.
- Collaborate with Navarro College for use/purchase of the southwest 287 property for expansion of college campus.
- Explore options for a city recreation center.
- Participate in funding a full-time grant writer or consultant.
- Add murals funded by WCDC at strategic locations within the downtown area.

Mr. Phillips asked for cost estimates before prioritizing the projects. Mr. McSpadden expressed his support to prioritize completing Railyard Park as a priority. Mr. Martinez explained the Capital Improvements Plan identifies improvements to the trestle in FY 26.

City Manager Michael Scott explained the Deputy City Manager Albert Lawrence has been talking with Navarro College about their campus expansion to provide visibility to Highway 287. Mr. Scott explained the City has talked to TxDOT about connectivity and they are agreeable.

Ms. Elizabeth Tull inquired about the cleanup of the junk yards along IH35 and staff noted those properties are not in the city limits; however, new developments along the IH35 corridor within the city limits must comply with development standards of the City.

Mr. Scott reviewed a proposal from Bob Lynn to use the heavily vegetative area of the recently acquired 58 acres behind Lions Park, as a nature passage trail with multiple nodes along the path to extend from Matthews Street to Lions Park. Each node would have a different theme and be sponsored by a community organization. Mr. Martinez explained the estimated cost for staff to remove some of the vegetation is \$4,000, about \$25,000 to add native Texas trees, and \$5,000 for miscellaneous expenses.

President Morton inquired about the status of the lake park improvements. Mr. Martinez explained the project will go out for bid mid-March. Mr. Scott reported there is \$3.5 million in general fund bonds allocated to fund the basic improvements and WCDC can contribute to the other improvements identified in the Lake Parks Master Plan.

4. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Villarreal
City Secretary