



**STATE OF TEXAS  
 COUNTY OF WALLER  
 CITY OF HEMPSTEAD**

**BE IT REMEMBERED** that on the 12th day of February 2024 at 6:00 P.M., the Type A and Type B Board of Directors of the Hempstead Economic Development Corporation of the City of Hempstead, met in joint session at the Hempstead City Hall, 1125 Austin Street, Hempstead, Texas.

The Open Meetings Act will make the minutes available to the public upon written request.

The HEDC meeting agenda is available online on the City of Hempstead’s website at [www.hempsteadcitytx.com](http://www.hempsteadcitytx.com).

Mayor Erica Gillum	4B President	Present
Brad Austin	4B Vice President	Present
Mildred Jefferson	4B Treasurer	Present
N/A	4B Secretary	Open Position
Rosa DeLoera	4B Member	Absent
Kenneth Pilcher	4B Member	Present
N/A	4B Member	Open Position
Brent Rystrom	4A President	Present
Overton Stewart	4A Vice President	Absent
Z’audria Warren	4A Treasurer	Absent
Soraya Rodriguez	4A Secretary	Present
Jackie Jackson	4A Member	Present

Also on attendance,

Dr. Ramiro Bautista, HEDC Director

Mary Ann Powell, City Attorney

1. Call to order.

Quorum A and B confirmed.

Type B President Erica Gillum called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. Public Comments.

Mr. Dave Burkey presented potential business opportunities involving hemp wall panels, noting their presence could have been in the new courthouse. He identified two potential locations for a hemp facility: one, a 1-acre property next to the city park with four structures, including a warehouse and office, requiring rehabilitation, priced at \$150,000, and the other, a 14,000-

square-foot property formerly a fish farm, owned by a friend who seeks a partnership with HEDC for a hemp facility. Burkey aims to assemble a team for the project and has spoken with a South Texas farmer who is experienced in growing watermelon and rotational crops and is willing to discuss hemp production. Despite inquiries, discussions were discouraged by the attorney overseeing the matter.

Public comments ended at 6:09 P.M.

**3. Discussion and action on minutes dated January 8, 2024.**

No discussion.

Type B: Kenneth Pilcher motioned to approve the January 8, 2024, minutes. Seconded by Brad Austin. All in favor, the motion carried.

Type A: Jackie Jackson motioned to approve the January 8, 2024, minutes. Seconded by Soraya Rodriguez. All in favor, the motion carried.

**4. Discussion and action on paying the monthly bills.**

Type B: Kenneth Pilcher motioned to pay all bills except for Smith Lawn Services, seconded by Mildred Jefferson; all in favor, the motion carried.

Type A: Soraya Rodriguez motioned to pay all bills except for Smith Lawn Services, seconded by Jackie Jackson. All in favor, the motion carried.

**5. A Public Hearing of the Board of Directors of the Hempstead Economic Development Type B Corporation to hear comments from the public on a project to purchase vintage light poles and benches to revitalize the Hempstead Gazebo Park.**

The public hearing opens at 6:18 p.m.

No public comments.

The public hearing closed at 6:18 p.m.

**6. Discussion and action on a resolution of the Hempstead Economic Development Corporation (HEDC) Type B Board of Directors approving as a project the Hempstead Gazebo Park Project 2024 for the installation of benches and vintage light poles at Hempstead Gazebo Park.**

Type B: Mildred Jefferson motioned to accept the resolution, seconded by Kenneth Pilcher. All in favor, the motion carried.

**7. Discussion on enabling HEDC meetings and the meeting room with a virtual call system that allows both the public and board members to join the meeting when traveling or remotely.**

Mayor Erica Gillum, Mildred Jefferson, and Kenneth Pilcher discussed the challenges of board members traveling and suggested exploring remote work meetings with improved technology, potentially using Zoom or other virtual call platforms. Mayor Gillum highlighted that while Zoom was initially utilized during COVID-19 restrictions, it's no longer mandatory. However, it's still an option. She presented a proposal like what the county employees use, which could cost between \$20,000 to \$40,000 depending on equipment needs. Costliness and the lack of ADA compliance for bathrooms were concerns raised. It was suggested to explore a more cost-efficient solution, possibly with a camera focusing on the speaker to reduce the need for Zoom meeting requests.

Kenneth Pilcher supported the idea of keeping Zoom for the time being. Brad Austin raised a question about virtual attendees' voting rights. Dr. Bautista and Attorney Mary Ann Powell clarified that a quorum must be physically present, with the presiding officer being visible and audible. Only in-person members can vote. Attorney Mary Ann Powell will look further into this matter and come back with the legalities pertaining to the matter. Mayor Gillum sought further suggestions on the matter of virtual meetings until the HEDC has a permanent headquarters.

**8. Discussion and action on approving HEDC Board Meeting, Governance, Financial, and Travel Policies and Procedures.**

Type B: Mildred Jefferson commended Dr. Bautista for his efforts and subsequently motioned, seconded by Kenneth Pilcher. All in favor, the motion carried.

Type A Soraya Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Jackie Jackson, resulting in unanimous approval.

**9. Discussion on the City Tax Abatement Policy.**

Dr. Ramiro Bautista's proposal to market the city as an opportunity to attract large businesses. Emphasized the importance of seizing this moment to present the handout detailing businesses and projects and the incentives they would receive. Mildred Jefferson stressed viewing these initiatives as investments, potentially leading to new revenue streams from land, real/personal property, and inventory. Mayor Erica Gillum highlighted the process of bringing proposals to the City Council, involving the HEDC director and board, with the final decision resting with the Council. This was identified as a crucial step that hadn't been undertaken before, necessitating the establishment of a policy. Kenneth Pilcher inquired about the tax implications over 10 years, which Dr. Bautista addressed, stating there would be specifications. Brent Rystrom sought clarification on the types of assets the tax policy would cover, with Dr. Bautista indicating a focus on incentives for only real and personal property.

**10. Discussion and action on approval of an agreement with a realtor, Crystal Fife Realty, LLC, for possible relocation of the HEDC Office**

Two motions were presented: Type B, Kenneth Pilcher motioned to approve the agreement and seconded by Mildred Jefferson, garnered unanimous agreement.

Type A: Soraya Rodriguez motioned to approve the agreement, seconded by Jackie Jackson. All in favor, the motion carried.

Attorney Mary Ann Powell clarified that the approval was for the realty agreement. Dr. Bautista provided insights into the available space, mentioning the possibility of an executive session for further discussions, which the attorney deferred for another time.

**11. Discussion and action on a Resolution authorizing the lease of an HEDC vehicle.**

Type B: Kenneth Pilcher motioned to accept the resolution, seconded by Mildred Jefferson.

Type A: Soraya Rodriguez motioned to accept the resolution, seconded by Jackie Jackson.

The meeting progressed with unanimous agreement on each motion.

**12. Discussion on conference registration and attendance for ICSC, TEDC, IEDC, and TML.**

Dr. Ramiro Bautista distributed materials regarding conference attendance, emphasizing that rates would increase monthly, making this month the most economical time to register.

TML has several conferences scheduled for 2024 with a local conference planned in Houston. Kenneth Pilcher expressed support for board members attending, which Mayor Erica Gillum endorsed. Dr. Bautista agreed with this approach.

Mayor Gillum shared her experience attending ICSC, emphasizing the need for multiple representatives due to the vastness of the event. She encouraged active participation beyond merely having a booth and prioritizing networking. Brent Rystrom inquired about previous ICSC attendance, prompting the mayor to confirm the intent to attend and schedule meetings rather than setting up a booth. She shared her successful experience of networking and gathering business contacts.

Brent suggested engaging with real estate investment trusts (REITs) and building relationships with SBA program banks at these conferences. Kenneth recommended strategic planning for conference attendance due to the overwhelming amount of information available, suggesting a coordinated calendar. Mayor Gillum highlighted the benefits of smaller, more focused sessions for engaging with retail developers, suggesting a targeted approach to maximize the conference experience.

**13. Discussion and action on securing a date for the Economic Development Sales Tax Workshop for Type A&B boards.**

Kenneth Pilcher inquired about the duration of the workshop. Dr. Ramiro Bautista responded, indicating it would last between 2 to 4 hours, covering topics such as the training authority of the corporation, city council involvement, and open meeting requirements. Kenneth suggested scheduling the workshop for the next meeting in the afternoon, which received agreement from Brent Rystrom, who mentioned travel considerations. Dr. Bautista also agreed with the proposed timing.

Potential dates were discussed, with March 11th and April 8th being suggested. Questions regarding regulations were directed to the attorney. Dr. Bautista inquired about the workshop's timeframe, to which the attorney responded that it should be held within 60-90 days, but efforts should be made regardless. Brent asked if the workshop needed to be conducted annually, which the attorney was unsure of. Dr. Bautista committed to looking into the matter, indicating his belief that it should be held bi-annually. The possibility of live or recorded sessions was discussed.

Mildred Jefferson expressed her availability for any date. Mayor Erica Gillum suggested April 8th from 1-5 pm as a potential time slot, which received tentative agreement from Dr. Bautista, who stated he would confirm the date.

**14. Discussion on the revitalization of city-owned poles and purchase of pole banners.**

Mayor Erica Gillum initiated the discussion. The attorney clarified that this project would fall under Type B.

Dr. Ramiro Bautista provided an update, stating that out of the 30 banners planned, 23 have been installed, with positive feedback received. Dr. Bautista intends to return to the board for approval of the additional 60 banners, having received a quote for 30 but opting to expand the project.

**15. Comments from the Director.**


Dr. Ramiro Bautista provided updates and comments to the board, referencing a handout.

Type B Treasurer Mildred Jefferson was pleased with the meeting's progress and efforts; everyone agreed and was satisfied with the information shared. The board appreciated Dr. Bautista's contributions as they applauded him for his efforts. Mayor Erica Gillum requested a day and time for further communication, and Dr. Bautista expressed gratitude for the opportunity to lead the HEDC.

16. Adjourn.

Mildred Jefferson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m., seconded by Kenneth Pilcher.  
All in favor, the motion carried.

Type A President: 

Type B President: 

Type A Secretary: 