

322 Belknap, Stephenville Texas
Thursday, May 15, 2025, at 4:00 PM

The Stephenville Type B Economic Development Authority convened on Thursday, May 15th, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the SEDA Conference room at 322 Belknap, Stephenville, Texas with the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting, giving time and date, place and subject thereof, having been posted as prescribed Chapter 551, Government Code, Vernon's Texas Codes of Annotated, with the following members present to wit:

Directors:

Marion Cole
Metta Collier
~~Justin Haschke (absent)~~
Ricky Thurman
Kelijon Nance
Mark McClinton
Connie Wooley

Also in attendance: ex – officio members, President Jeff Sandford and Staff Ashleigh Feuerbacher, Lauren Moore Council member David Baskett, County Judge Brandon Huckabee and July Danley, Jacey Wood, Luis Ramirez, and Sara Hansen.

1. Call To Order

The meeting of the Stephenville Type B Economic Development Authority was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Presentation of Grant Funds – Career Club

Jacey Wood, Luis Ramirez and July Danley announced the selection of the Stephenville Leadership Class of 2025 project, The Independence Grant, aimed at supporting local graduating youth as they transition into the workforce. Leadership Stephenville successfully raised \$9,000 to fund this initiative and is proud to partner with SEDA's Career Club to implement the program. The goal is to create a lasting, supportive structure that prepares young people for employment and contributes to strengthening the local talent pipeline. Mrs. Wood added that their goal in providing students with job preparation support, including interview readiness, resume development and professional networking would impact the local workforce and major employers.

3. Recognition of 10 years of SEDA / Growth in Stephenville, Texas

Chairman Cole announced that SEDA will celebrate its 10th anniversary this October. "Ten years is a decade of service to the community," she recommended hosting a community event and inviting former board members to honor the milestone. Board Member Nance was appointed as Chair of the planning committee. President Sandford confirmed that staff would assist in any way necessary. Sandford also emphasized this and reminded the board of several significant announcements from just this fiscal year, including Amazon Distribution Center, Trojan Steel, Ingram concrete plant, Bosque River Taphouse, Spring Hill Suites, Cielo Restaurant Estate, Cavender's, The Bridge, and multiple façade grants.

4. Discussion Economic Development Impact on other sectors

Chairman Cole addressed the local conversations around housing shortages and the impact on economic development. She noted that during recruitment efforts, one common question staff fields from prospects is "where are your rooftops?" She expressed concern over the number of housing projects denied at the city level and urged the board to discuss status quo and what role SEDA can play in supporting or facilitating successful developments. She emphasized the reciprocal relationship between housing and economic growth. Board Member Ricky Thurman proposed that SEDA consider engaging earlier in the rezone request stage of housing projects to better understand and address potential barriers. President Sandford shared that in recent denied projects, city staff developed solutions, but it seems they were not effectively

communicated. Board Member Kelijon Nance requested group input on SEDA's operational scope and strategic parameters to better define how SEDA can assist housing developers and serve the community. Board Member Connie Wooley added that with the City being short several hundred homes, the issue is urgent and demands focused attention. Sandford shared insights from a recent housing conference, citing the "30% rule" as a helpful tool for first-time buyers to determine affordability. Judge Huckabee noted the need to understand how the housing market has changed: "large lots and large homes are no longer affordable for many. Regulations, buyer expectations, and developer needs are evolving." Board Member Mark McClinton referenced a past student housing project where SEDA led a successful public engagement effort that resulted in positive outcomes for both neighbors and the developers. Board Member Ricky Thurman proposed that staff formally request a meeting with the City to explore collaboration strategies focused on communication and development support. Councilman Baskett agreed and advised staff to schedule the meeting without delay to avoid further inaction. President Sandford confirmed that staff will secure a meeting date and report back at the next board meeting.

5. President's Report

President Sandford opened his report by officially **introducing new staff member Lauren Moore**, who joins the organization as **Director of Workforce Development and Community Engagement**. Lauren brings over a decade of experience with the **Texas Department of Agriculture**, where she built strong regional partnerships and gained deep insight into workforce and rural development. It was also noted that **Emily Sword**, a Tarleton State University intern, has joined the team and will be formally introduced at the next board meeting. Staff recently supported a **Texas Enterprise Fund nomination** for **TechnipFMC**, a major employer and valued manufacturer in the Stephenville area. City Council approved the nomination, marking a significant step forward in retaining and supporting this long-standing community partner. **Marketing & Outreach Initiatives have included** meetings with the following key partners such as: **Tarleton State University, KSTV Radio, Texas Rangers Baseball Organization and the Dallas Cowboys Organization**. These partnerships are part of a broader effort to increase **visibility, engagement, and brand alignment** for Stephenville across various sectors. Sandford also shared photos and key takeaways from the recent tour of the **new Amazon Distribution Center**. The facility is now **fully constructed**, and operational activity is scheduled to begin **mid-July**.

6. Consent Agenda

Minutes from April 17th, 2025

Financials from April 30th, 2025

Motion by Metta Collier second by Mark McClinton to approve consent agenda as presented,
Motion carried unanimously.

7. Adjourn

Chairman Cole adjourned the meeting at 5:44 p.m.