

**ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020
2:00 PM
MUNICIPAL PLAZA BUILDING**

Members Present:	Councilmember Rebecca Viagran, <i>Chair, District 3</i> Councilmember Shirley Gonzales, <i>District 5</i> Councilmember Melissa Cabello Havrda, <i>District 6</i> Councilmember Manny Peláez, <i>District 8</i> Councilmember John Courage, <i>District 9</i>
Staff Present:	Carlos J. Contreras, III, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Alejandra Lopez, <i>Director, Economic Development Department</i> ; Michael Sindon, <i>Assistant Director, Economic Development Department</i> ; Shahrzad Dowlathshahi, <i>Chief Diplomacy and Protocol Officer, International Relations Office</i> ; Amy Contreras, <i>Economic Development Manager, Economic Development Department</i> ; Nancy Cano, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
Others Present:	Lindsey Carnett, <i>Tech Reporter, Rivard Report</i> ; Jenna Saucedo Herrera, <i>President & Chief Executive Officer, San Antonio Economic Development Foundation</i> ; Al Keammeher, <i>Vice President, Cyber San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce</i> ; Carmen Lara, <i>Chief Administrative Officer, San Antonio Economic Development Foundation</i> ; Sophie Torrey, <i>VP of Policy and Business Advocacy, San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce</i>

Call to Order

Chairwoman Viagran called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of the Minutes from the Economic and Workforce Development Committee Meeting on January 7, 2020.

Councilmember Courage moved to approve the Minutes of the January 7, 2020 Economic and Workforce Development Council Committee Meeting. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. A briefing and possible action on consideration of the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation 2020 Business Plan; and update on the strategic planning process. [Carlos J. Contreras, III, *Assistant City Manager*; Alejandra Lopez, *Director, Economic Development Department*]

Jenna Saucedo Herrera explained that since the inception of the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation (SAEDF) in 1975, its mission was to bring quality jobs to the San Antonio Region and to ensure the residents were qualified for the jobs. She reviewed the

strategic transformation of the SAEDF over time into a streamlined operation with a refined focus on global development on targeted industries. She noted that in 2019, SAEDF secured over 80% of target industry jobs.

Ms. Saucedo Herrera presented the SAEDF six-month business plan with a five-phase implementation plan that was scheduled for launch in late FY 2020. She identified its most significant initiative as the Regional Economic Development partnership (REDO) with the Cities of Schertz, New Braunfels, and Cibolo. She identified two other targeted initiatives as high-wage job attraction and the creation of a Career Pathway Marketing Plan targeted to highlight manufacturing and trade jobs within a targeted geographic region and focused on the youth of San Antonio, with Toyota lending financial support to the effort.

Ms. Saucedo Herrera assessed the San Antonio Region as diverse and culturally rich with a majority minority community of 55.4% Hispanic and Latino population. She stated the 55.4% Hispanic and Latino population was the largest among metropolitan areas of one million or more residents. She added that San Antonio was projected to double in growth over the coming decades. She identified the San Antonio Region's major challenges to be educational attainment rates, and career readiness.

Ms. Saucedo Herrera presented the competitive scorecard for the San Antonio Region, other competitive metropolitan areas, and three areas the City aspired to compete with: Austin, Nashville and Denver. She cited their composite rankings: Austin: 1; Denver: 2; Nashville: 6; and San Antonio: 9.

Ms. Saucedo Herrera identified poverty as the biggest economic crisis for San Antonio. She proposed that educational attainment and a focus on developing local residents would be the means of driving economic mobility.

Ms. Saucedo Herrera cited SAEDF recommendations for the San Antonio Region:

- Focus on Jobs, People, and Place: Regionalizing and aligning existing programs, and development of new industry-led workforce programs
- Mega-Region Geography: Consider alignment south of Austin as well as north of Austin to increase FDI and trade potential
- Modernize BRE & Cluster Development: Recognize cross-sector opportunities in Research & Development and Military, and increase focus in assists and service after the sale

Councilmember Viagran referenced the quality of life score of 10 assessed for the San Antonio Region on the Competitive Scorecard and requested more information. Mr. Contreras replied that property damage crimes had a great impact on perception and that he would provide more information. Ms. Saucedo Herrera noted that residents surveyed overall stated that they felt the community was very safe.

Councilmember Viagran asked how SAEDF defined a high wage job. Ms. Saucedo Herrera replied that a job earning \$50,000 or more was considered a high wage job in San Antonio.

Councilmember Gonzales expressed concern that a regional approach would take away from job growth and workforce development within the City and would instead encourage urban sprawl. She stated that local poverty needed to be addressed through improvement in educational attainment and directed resources. Ms. Saucedo Herrera stated that SAEDF would continue to focus on local workforce development and that a regional approach would utilize more land and greater tools that would serve to create more employment opportunities for San Antonians to grow into.

Councilmember Courage moved to recommend and forward the SAEDF 2020 Business Plan to City Council for consideration. Councilmember Cabello-Havrda seconded the motion. The motion prevailed by the following vote:

AYES: Viagran, Cabello Havrda, Peláez, Courage

NAYES: Gonzales

3. Briefing and possible action on “#GoSATX-A Day in San Antonio for International Business Leaguers and Entrepreneurs”. [Carlos J. Contreras, *Assistant City Manager*; Alejandra Lopez, *Director, Economic Development Department*]

Amy Contreras stated that #GoSATX-A was an initiative designed to showcase San Antonio and promote the City as a potential business destination by hosting 50 international business leaders and entrepreneurs at the annual South by Southwest (SXSW) interactive music film festival in Austin, an event well attended by over 400,000. Ms. Contreras stated that entrepreneurs from nine different countries had already confirmed their attendance, with the majority being millennials. Ms. Contreras provided itinerary highlights that included a welcome event at the historic Pearl Brewery, a luncheon on San Antonio’s status as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, a river barge tour, and a “speed pitch” anchor event with at least twelve local community partners that would engage with the international business leaders and spotlight the City’s global accelerator program, workforce development, and tech-eco system; thereafter, the international guests would be shuttled to and from downtown Austin.

Ms. Contreras reported that the #GoSATX program aligned with the Passport San Antonio strategy and the Metro Priority Plan to deepen the City’s connections in priority international markets. She stated that staff had successfully re-engaged many of the 2019 Passport San Antonio 2019 international participants and liaisons from the City’s target countries of Canada, Germany, Japan, Korea, and Mexico. Ms. Contreras concluded by stating that the group would visit the foreign booth pavillions at the festival.

Chairwoman Viagran asked how much was the City investing in #GoSATX. Ms. Contreras stated the City’s budget was \$10,000 and that local partners were contributing the rest.

Future Agenda Items

Status of Poverty Report

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.



Rebecca Viagran, Chairwoman

Respectfully Submitted,



Nancy Cano
Office of the City Clerk