

# City of San Antonio



## Minutes Economic and Workforce Development Committee

### 2021 – 2023 Council Members

Chair: Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8  
Mario Bravo, District 1 | Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3  
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Teri Castillo, Dist. 5

**Tuesday, April 25, 2023**

**2:00 PM**

**City Hall Complex**

The Economic and Workforce Development Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Media Briefing Room beginning at 2:09 PM. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

**Members Present:** Manny Pelaez, *Chair*  
Mario Bravo, *Member*  
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*

**Members Absent:** Phyllis Viagran, *Member*  
Teri Castillo, *Member*

### Approval of Minutes

#### 1. Approval of the minutes from the Economic and Workforce Development Committee meeting on February 28, 2023.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of February 28, 2023 Economic and Workforce Development Committee meeting. Councilmember Bravo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Pelaez, Bravo, Rocha Garcia  
**Absent:** Viagran, Castillo

### Public Comments

### Briefing and Possible Action on the following items

#### 2. Briefing and possible action on the Workforce Solutions Alamo 2021-2024 Local Plan

**Modification.** [Alejandra Lopez, Assistant City Manager; Michael Ramsey, Executive Director, Workforce Development]

Workforce Development Executive Director Mike Ramsey provided an update of the Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) Local Plan and noted that the purpose of the Plan was to reflect dynamics and changes of the labor force in the WSA area. He stated that the Plan had obtained feedback in several sessions of stakeholder and partner discussions. Ramsey stated that feedback led to Plan modifications to include a target average wage increase from \$15 to \$17 per hour.

Ramsey provided an update on workforce cluster make-ups to six different cluster areas which included education, health, aviation, etc. He reviewed target occupations for each of the clusters that the Plan addressed and noted that 14 new occupations were in line with Workforce guidelines.

Chair Pelaez asked for clarification on occupations for low voltage construction industry jobs. Adrian Lopez with WSA stated that the low voltage installation jobs fell under the construction industry and were included in the job and cluster modifications.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted that she was a member of the Committee of Six and had provided feedback to the Plan modifications. She asked what challenges were faced by the education sector in forms of competition. Lopez stated that workforce was to be thought of as an eco-system at all levels of education and the complexity of data tracking was the largest challenge in an effort to provide data for short and long term metrics. He stated that WSA worked closely with many education partners to provide and gather data for education metrics.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked for clarification on challenges to obtaining feasible education pathways for all students in an equitable manner. Lopez reviewed career pathways within the Plan in an effort to have different pathways for all levels of educational goals.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked how workforce ambassadors assisted digital divided residents. Lopez stated that WSA worked closely with local school districts, libraries, and other non-profits to provide outreach and education for those individuals who had digital divide challenges.

Chair Pelaez asked what support was needed from the City of San Antonio to have the Plan succeed. Lopez stated that the City was a large stakeholder of WSA and noted that continued opened dialogue was always needed for policy and service delivery.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve. Councilmember Bravo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Pelaez, Bravo, Rocha Garcia  
**Absent:** Viagran, Castillo

**3. Briefing on the mid-year review of the FY 2023 Partner Agreements with San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE), Westside Development Corporation (dba Prosper West**

**San Antonio), and Southside First Economic Development Council (Southside First).**  
[Alejandra Lopez, Assistant City Manager; Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, Director, Economic Development]

Economic Development Assistant Director Ana Bradshaw provided an update on business development organizations (BDO) and noted that contracts were approved by City Council on December 15, 2022 with SAGE, Southside First and Prosper West to provide technical assistance, workshops, referrals and other small business services.

Bradshaw stated that the contracts were put in place to support the City's Ready to Work Programs. She noted that the City had worked with UTSA to collect data for measuring outcomes of small business efforts. She reviewed the payment schedule of contracts with the contract partners and fund match statuses for each of the organizations.

Bradshaw reviewed metrics for each of the organizations for each of the BDOs and noted that Prosper West had met or exceeded their quarterly metric goals. She reviewed SAGE metric goals and statuses. She anticipated that SAGE had recently reorganized and fully expected them to meet their metrics. Bradshaw reviewed Southside First performance metrics and quarterly statuses and she noted that she fully expected them to meet their metric goals.

Bradshaw reviewed next steps of the BDO programs and reporting.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if the geographical area was not covered in the presentation which encompassed over 130 square miles. She noted that all stories needed to be reported accurately. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked of the number of small businesses located outside of Loop 410 and within Loop 1604. Bradshaw stated that data was still being gathered.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if a small business directory had been created. Assistant City Manager Alex Lopez stated that a full directory had not been created and the challenge of printing out a directory was that it became obsolete as soon as being printed. Assistant City Manager Lopez stated that staff continued to gather data and discussed the challenges of not having a business permit directory but she felt that staff had made great strides in collecting business data.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked what could be done for Southside First population and identifying strategies for challenges faced by SAGE. She noted that the large geographical area covered by Southside First was so large that it presented challenges and required additional attention for success.

Chair Pelaez asked to what extent did WSA work with BDOs. Bradshaw stated that preliminary conversations had occurred with WSA and that meetings would continue to address partnerships and education communications.

Chair Pelaez noted that prior to a John Wick movie at Santikos theater, he noted that a local film maker provided a piece of local community and arts and that this could provide a great avenue to market programs and services to a captured audience of movie-goers.

No action was required for Item 3.

**4. Briefing on the City's Economic Development Department Strategic Framework and FY 2023 Workplan.** [Alejandra Lopez, Assistant City Manager; Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, Director, Economic Development]

Economic Development Director Brenda Hicks-Sorensen provided a project update on the Economic Development Strategic Framework and FY2023 Workplan. She reviewed the guiding principles and goals for each. She noted that the FY2023 Workplan goals included business intelligence and data analytics and she noted the hiring of an Economic Development Manager to lead these efforts.

Hicks-Sorensen reviewed business recruitment, business retention and business expansion efforts and stated that an evaluation in Business, Retention and Expansion (BRE) efforts and investments were in line with partner organizations goals and objectives. She added that small business support efforts included placemaking efforts, Small Business Economic Development Advocacy (SBEDA) Program disparity study recommendations and on-going small business support efforts.

Hicks-Sorensen stated that incentive policies and process were currently being reviewed by the City and partner organizations to include San Antonio Economic Development Corporation (SAEDC) and other City departments. She noted that Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) funding was being reviewed at how it could be used to assist small businesses.

Hicks-Sorensen reviewed the economic development dashboard status and stated that it was expected to be fully implemented by the end of the current fiscal year. She noted that the dashboard would cover growth targets in different categories to include corporate investments, wages and industrial space.

Chair Pelaez stated that he was pleased with the framework and that it was exactly what he was looking for in reporting metrics and incentive outcomes. He thanked the staff for their efforts.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked what some of the initiative efforts for BREs were. Hicks-Sorensen stated that one of the areas was lease terms to identify strategic economic management. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked when business retention numbers would be updated. Hicks-Sorensen stated that the City was working with GreaterSATX to obtain data which was currently underway and would be provided once Economic Development website updates were completed.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if staff was working with the Aviation Department to identify international links for businesses. Hicks-Sorensen stated that her staff worked closely with the Aviation staff and Greater SATX staff to discuss international business efforts and connectivity.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if any TIRZ were being anticipated within the Southwest sector of the City. Assistant City Manager Alex Lopez stated that TIRZ expansion would be addressed with the City Manager and looked into for FY 2024 goals.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia expressed concern that business sectors of hospitality and military

were not included as major sectors in the strategic plan.

Councilmember Bravo asked how access to greenspace was being addressed since it was identified as an important issue to young professionals in terms of economic development. Hicks-Sorenson stressed the importance of collaboration between several departments to include Parks and Recreation, Arts and Culture, Development Services and Economic Development in the areas of business and talent recruitment and noted that it was a strong collaborative effort to gain strong business professionals to the area.

Chair Pelaez asked that the next update address international efforts and metrics on the strategic plan. He noted that the Bookings Plan Study be referenced by staff in creating metrics and strategies. Assistant City Manager Lopez stated that staff would provide data at the next presentation. Chair Pelaez asked that consideration of Sister City efforts be reflected in the Plan. He also requested that Workforce San Antonio efforts be included in the plan goals. Hicks-Sorenson stated that workforce and economic development went hand in hand and that both Workforce San Antonio was a key partner for both workforce and economic efforts. Assistant City Manager Lopez stated that anytime that workforce talent was mentioned by economic development plans, Workforce Department was brought in to make sure all components of business recruitment and retention were addressed.

No action was required for Item 4.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 PM.

**Approved**

---

***Manny Pelaez, Chair***

---

***Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk***