

JOHN F. COOK
MAYOR



JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL
ANN MORGAN LILLY, DISTRICT 1
SUSANNAH M. BYRD, DISTRICT 2
EMMA ACOSTA, DISTRICT 3
CARL ROBINSON, DISTRICT 4
MICHEL NOE, DISTRICT 5
EDDIE HOLGUIN JR., DISTRICT 6
STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7
CORTNEY NILAND, DISTRICT 8

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
10th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
AUGUST 15, 2011

The City Council met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. Mayor John Cook present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Ann Morgan Lilly, Emma Acosta, Carl Robinson, Michiel Noe, Steve Ortega, and Cortney Carlisle Niland. Late arrival: Susie Byrd at 1:37 p.m. Absent: Eddie Holguin

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AGENDA

1. Discussion and action on the City of El Paso's efforts, policies, and strategies related to Economic Development, including regional cluster growth, downtown redevelopment, workforce development, job creation, and industry recruitment. **(All Districts)**
[Planning & Economic Development, Mathew McElroy, (915) 541-4193]

Mr. Mathew McElroy, Planning and Economic Development, introduced Dr. Edward Feser, professor at University of Illinois and North Carolina Department of Commerce. Dr. Feser gave a PowerPoint presentation, on file in the City Clerks Office, titled "Strategy and Economic Development."

Key points of his economic development presentation were Trends, Framing the Problem, and Strategies.

After the presentation, Mathew McElroy stated he wanted to allow Council and guests to ask questions.

Representative Emma Acosta: Great people, great Ideas, great cooperation – El Paso has all the elements. She commented on the economic growth in Texas. She would like examples from other Texas cities, such as Austin who have successful economic development programs. She would like to hear from our business community, Universities and Upper Rio Grand Work Force.

Representative Cortney Niland: She would like to hear from business leaders. What we do not have is a very healthy relationship between the public and private sectors.

Mayor John Cook: commented that he looks at Governments role as 1) setting the environment where businesses are comfortable operating in: vibrant downtown, mobility issues, parks and open spaces, 2) offering incentives and incentive programs, and 3) measure and quantify what success is going to be.

Representative Susie Byrd: Framework issues: We have strong partnerships with MCA, REDCO, UTEP, and Hub of Human Innovation. Does it make more sense for the City to be the agency that collects data and brings people together then support the efforts by devoting our money to quality of life issues to attract businesses? Should we divest ourselves of an Economic Development department?

- 1) Economic brokering organization.
- 2) Dr. Feser remarked that if you were to devote all your energy and monies into quality of life issues, you need to think very carefully about it because you give up economic intelligent ground for the data.

Mathew McElroy explained that Dr. Feser will be working with REDCO, UTEP, MCA, etc. to determine how we would want to work with them.

Representative Carl Robinson: Concerned that we change course too often in our economic development efforts. We need to be inclusive and realistic.

Representative Steve Ortega: City should first focus on the economic framework. He would like more specific guidance on how the City can better our quality of life to catalyze economic development.

Dr. Feser explained that the New Urbanist elements are good catalysts: greater workability, denser neighborhoods, intermodal solutions. The current downtown development and revitalization efforts appear to make a lot of sense.

Representative Ortega: Intense focus on new Urbanism; private development downtown; Mayor's efforts on multi model hubs are all elements he likes to see.

Representative Niland: Questioned Dr. Feser on the setting of priorities.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jimmy Rogers, President of REDCO, explained that REDCO has 192 active company files for their recruitment efforts. REDCO is going to examine how they do things and make changes if they need to. They recognize they are on the same side as the City.

Rose Romero, El Paso REDCO commented on REDCO's efforts.

Dr. Feser: Job and income growth are key to economic development, helping companies become more productive. He would like us to move to broad base economic development. We should do fiscal input when we do incentive programs – so we can say that there is a fiscal input.

Mathew McElroy: There are a lot of one-on-one meetings with Dr. Feser over the next few days with public and private stakeholders to get their perspective and suggestions.

Joyce Wilson, City Manager: Organization Structure Model. We have a lot of talent and a lot of stakeholders.

Representative Byrd: wants to understand from this process. We have a lot of investment in the medical, bio-medical area. Bring in 2-3 business that serve as a catalyst.

Joyce Wilson: We will be looking at all of our policies and incentive programs for economic development.

Representative Ortega – Cross Border exposure to Dr. Feser.

Representative Robinson: Wants Council to determine the figure we need to get to be where we want to be.

A motion was made by Representative Robinson, seconded by Representative Ortega, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Richarda Duffy Momsen, City Clerk