

**Joint Economic Development Organization Board Minutes
June 3, 2015**

City Council Chambers, 214 SE 8th Street, Topeka, Kansas, Wednesday, June 3, 2015.

The Joint Economic Development Organization (JEDO) Board Members met at 6:00 p.m. with the following voting Board Members present: Deputy Mayor Karen Hiller, Councilmembers Michelle De La Isla and Jeffrey Coen; and Shawnee County Commissioners Kevin Cook and Bob Archer -6. City of Topeka Mayor Larry Wolgast presided -1. Absent: Commissioner Shelly Buhler -1.

Nonvoting Members present: Councilmembers Sandra Clear, Jonathan Schumm, Brendan Jensen and Richard Harmon. Absent: Councilmembers Sylvia Ortiz and Elaine Schwartz.

Mayor Wolgast called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL of Minutes of the May 13, 2015 JEDO Board meeting.

Commissioner Archer moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cook.

Timothy Zurawski thanked JEDO Board members for their service and stated he appreciates efforts being made to improve area economic development. He stated he is a member of the Citizens for Accountability in Government, a group working to better the community and offering suggestions to improve area economic development.

The motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously. (6-0-0)

APPROVAL of Contract with Garner Economics, L.L.C. was presented.
(JEDO Contract No. C-1-2015)

Mayor Wolgast reported as a result of the discussion by JEDO Board members from the JEDO Board meeting of May 13, 2015, page 12 of the contract will include the following amendments in the first paragraph:

- Garner will facilitate six (6) focus groups instead of four (4).
- Additionally, Garner Economics, L.L.C. will hold one public “listening session” to solicit broader community feedback.

Deputy Mayor Hiller stated the agreement does not reflect the details of JEDO Resolution No. 2015-1 as approved by the JEDO Board on March 25, 2015. She asked who will be responsible for making sure the details outlined in the resolution are followed and reflected in the work that would be performed as well as who will serve as the point of contact through the process.

Mayor Wolgast reported there have been general discussions with Garner representatives regarding a tentative schedule to discuss the process on June 24, 2015, and upon approval of the agreement, they

would move forward with the meeting to provide JEDO Board members the opportunity to submit names to be included in the focus groups as well as discuss the purpose of the JEDO Board in regards to the process. He stated he believes it would be the responsibility of the Board to make sure the consultant follows the objectives and expectations outlined in the resolution and RFP and the Mayor's office would serve as the point of contact.

Deputy Mayor Hiller expressed concern with the amount of time that will be required of JEDO Board members and the importance of them understanding their responsibility in the process. She noted Garner outlined a six week calendar with no start or end date.

Mayor Wolgast reported that primarily in the first month, tentatively set to begin June 24, 2015, the process will consist of implementing community engagements and focus groups.

Joseph Ledbetter referenced page 2, paragraph 6 of the contract and expressed concern with conflicting language. He stated the Garner contract makes reference to all documents and records related to the Agreement being available to JEDO for a period of five years and the GO Topeka contract only requires three years. He spoke in support of the process being open to the public and allowing citizens to offer additional comments, such as those members of the Citizens for Accountability in Government.

Clark Trammell spoke in support of the positive direction taken by JEDO Board members in working to improve the economic development model in Topeka-Shawnee County. He stated he believes this will provide a great opportunity to bring the community together and move towards an excellent end result. He commended Board members for hiring the right guy for the job and doing a great job in getting them to a point where they could implement the plan.

Mayor Wolgast stated the payment process was outlined on page 2, Section 3 and 4 of the contract. He reported GO Topeka does not have a line item for this expense so any action authorizing execution of the Garner contract will by implication, approve an amendment to GO Topeka's budget.

Deputy Mayor Hiller moved to authorize the Chair to execute the Garner agreement and authorize payment to Garner from GO Topeka's budget, the amendment of which is hereby approved. The motion was seconded by Councilmember De La Isla.

Councilmember Schumm expressed concern with authorizing payment by GO Topeka for the consulting services and the mistrust it will generate by the public.

Commissioner Cook stated the JEDO Board approves the annual operating budget GO Topeka as well as they have the authority to amend the budget, providing them the authority to authorize the use of the funds for a specific purpose.

The motion to authorize the Chair to execute the Garner agreement and authorize payment to Garner from GO Topeka's budget, the amendment of which is hereby approved, carried unanimously. (6-0-0)

Joseph Ledbetter appeared to speak under public comment and distributed a handout regarding open record requirements by contractor's use of JEDO funds. He stated he supports the contract; however, he does not support using GO Topeka funds to pay for consulting services by Garner Economics. He stressed the importance of JEDO having direct access to funding and the need to conduct business differently. He noted the JEDO Board approves GO Topeka's annual budget; however, they do not authorize funds being paid to The Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce. He reported the current GO Topeka contract requires them to provide records to the public when requested and they continue to deny the public access to records.

Timothy Zurawski appeared to speak under public comment. He stated he concurs with Mr. Ledbetter and believes there needs to be a different funding source to pay for the consulting services as the arrangement may affect the way Garner performs the job. He encouraged Board members to reconsider this part of the process. He commended JEDO Board members for doing a great job; however, there needs to be some slight adjustments to the processes.

Carol Marple appeared to speak under public comment. She expressed concern with the lack of records being supplied by GO Topeka when requested by the public. She stated it was her understanding the JEDO Board has direct access to its own funding in the amount of \$15,000. She expressed concern with the financial activity between private investors and GO Topeka and distributed a handout concerning the amount paid by GO Topeka to Bartlett & West Engineering since 2012. She reported taxpayers continue to pay property taxes on the building located on SW 77th Street because GO Topeka failed to remove it from the tax statement.

Clark Trammell appeared to speak under public comment and distributed a handout concerning the Topeka Community and Economic Development Plan. He stated he disagrees with the decision to have GO Topeka pay for consulting services provided by Garner Economics and believes it was handled unfairly. He requested to be allowed to comment further on the matter.

Scott Griffith appeared to speak under public comment. He stated he respectfully disagrees with statements made regarding the lack of access to records by GO Topeka; Bartlett & West Engineers receive payment through public funds not private funds; and the funds used to pay for the property taxes on the building located on SW 77th Street have been reimbursed and the tax statement is in the process of being modified.

No further business appearing the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.