MINUTES
CUERO DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2026 5:00 P.M.

The Cuero Development Corporation Board of Directors met Tuesday, July 21, 2026 at The City of Cuero Council Chambers, 212 E. Main Street, Cuero, Texas.

PRESENT: Board Members: President Tyler McClellan, Constance Donels, Mayor Emil Garza, and Ben Zimmerman

ABSENT: City Manager Wayne Berger, Brad Kocurek, and Lynn Falcone

CDC STAFF: CDC Executive Director Maggie Cromeens

GUESTS: Chris Bonitz, owner of Top Bean, LLC. and Shelby Ohrt, owner of Still Room Spa

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Tyler McClellan called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

II. CITIZENS INPUT

None.

III. MONTHLY FINANCIALS

Mrs. Cromeens reported that, due to the transition within the City of Cuero Finance Department, the financials were not available for review. She noted that Jessa Lee, the City's new Finance Director, will attend the August Board meeting to present the financial report.

MOTION MADE BY BEN ZIMMERMAN, SECONDED BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, TO TABLE THE MAY AND JUNE FINANCIAL REPORTS. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

IV. BUSINESS

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON AN APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM FOR HOTEL TEXAS

Mrs. Cromeens noted that Kevin Patel, owner of Hotel Texas, has requested funding through the Business Retention and Expansion Program. Mr. Patel is requesting assistance with replacing the hotel's water softener, citing a decline in business due to poor water quality.

Mrs. Cromeens explained that the Cuero Development Corporation (CDC) has previously assisted Hotel Texas and that more than one year has passed since the previous assistance was provided. She noted that Mr. Patel has continued to make efforts to improve the quality of the hotel and enhance the experience for guests.

Ms. Donels questioned how replacing the water softener would improve business and hotel occupancy. She clarified that she was not opposed to the grant request but would like additional information regarding how the proposed improvement would impact the hotel's occupancy.

Mrs. Cromeens stated that she was unsure of the answer and offered to meet with Mr. Patel to obtain further clarification. She noted that she would bring the application and additional information back to the Board for consideration at the August meeting.

MOTION MADE BY BEN ZIMMERMAN, SECONDED BY CONSTANCE DONELS, TO TABLE THE BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM REQUEST FOR HOTEL TEXAS UNTL THEY ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON THE PLUMBING ISSUE CAUSED BY THE HARD WATER PROBLEM TO THE CUERO DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BOARD. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON AN APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM FOR STILL ROOM SPA

Mrs. Cromeens reported that Shelby Ohrt, owner of Still Room Spa, has applied for a Business Retention and Expansion Program grant for her spa. Mrs. Ohrt reported that she has been an esthetician for the past six years, two of which were spent at Rae Spa. When Rae Spa announced its closure, Mrs. Ohrt, along with her co-workers, was displaced. She decided to open Still Room Spa at 100 Hutcheson Road.

Mrs. Ohrt explained that the spa offers a variety of services, including facials, massage, waxing, and hair services, as well as professional skincare products. The inclusive spa provides customers with a peaceful and convenient location to receive a variety of services in one place.

Mrs. Cromeens noted that she and Mrs. Ohrt discussed sales tax collections and that the sale of professional skincare products will generate sales tax revenue. Mrs. Cromeens also referred Mrs. Ohrt to the Small Business Development Center for additional assistance as her business continues to grow.

Ms. Donels questioned whether Mrs. Ohrt could provide additional information regarding the lease agreement for the equipment. Mrs. Cromeens explained that the equipment is expensive and stated that the CDC has previously assisted businesses by paying one-half of each payment made toward the equipment, up to the approved grant amount.

Mrs. Ohrt reported that the equipment is a HydraFacial machine, which is highly requested and one of the few machines of its kind offered in the Cuero area. She explained that the machine also offers additional treatment options, including scalp treatments and services for various areas of the body. Mrs. Ohrt anticipates that offering these services will increase her clientele.

MOTION MADE BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, SECONDED BY CONSTANCE DONELS, TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM GRANT FOR STILL ROOM SPA IN THE AMOUNT OF UP TO $10,000.00 ON A MONTHLY PAYOUT BASIS FOR EQUIPMENT EXPENSES. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON AN APPLICATION FOR FAÇADE PROGRAM FOR BRANDY'S THRIFT & MORE

Mrs. Cromeens reported that Brandy Crawley, owner of Brandy's Thrift & More, has recently opened a new business at 109 E. South Railroad, the former location of Rae Spa, which is owned by Hedrick Properties.

Mrs. Crawley previously worked closely with SNYPD and enjoyed working in the thrift store business but decided that she wanted to establish a business of her own. Brandy's Thrift & More offers a variety of thrifted items, as well as new merchandise that Mrs. Crawley purchases for resale.

Mrs. Cromeens noted that she has met with Mrs. Crawley numerous times to discuss her business plan. Mrs. Crawley is currently in a two-year lease agreement with Hedrick Properties. She has requested funding assistance for a decal on the front of the building. Mrs. Cromeens explained that the property owners are planning additional façade renovations to the building.

MOTION MADE BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, SECONDED BY CONSTANCE DONELS, TO APPROVE THE FACADE PROGRAM GRANT FOR BRANDY'S THRIFT & MORE IN THE AMOUNT OF UP TO $81.19 FOR SIGNAGE AT 109 E. SOUTH RAILROAD. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON AN APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAM FOR STILL ROOM SPA

Mrs. Cromeens noted that Still Room Spa is leasing the building from Mr. George Bishop. She explained that the Business Start-Up Program typically requires a one-year lease agreement; however, due to previous issues with lessees, the Bishops have changed their lease agreements to a six-month term.

Mrs. Cromeens reported that she has met with the landlords and verified that, upon successful completion of the initial six-month lease term, the Bishops will enter into a new lease agreement with Still Room Spa.

MOTION MADE BY CONSTANCE DONELS, SECONDED BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAM GRANT FOR STILL ROOM SPA IN THE AMOUNT OF $350.00 FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2026 AND ENDING JANUARY 1, 2027. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON AN APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAM FOR BRANDY'S THRIFT & MORE

Mrs. Cromeens reiterated that she has spoken with Mr. Hedrick and confirmed that Brandy's Thrift & More is operating under a two-year lease agreement. Mrs. Crawley is requesting assistance equal to one-half of the cost of her rent for the first six months of the lease.

MOTION MADE BY CONSTANCE DONELS, SECONDED BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAM GRANT FOR BRANDY'S THRIFT & MORE IN THE AMOUNT OF $500.00 FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2026 AND ENDING JANUARY 1, 2027. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON AN APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAM FOR TOP BEAN, LLC.

Mrs. Cromeens noted that Mr. Chris Bonitz, owner of Top Bean, LLC., has applied for the Business Start-Up Program. She explained that Mr. Bonitz recently joined Mr. Joel Jackson's food truck lot, where he operates his coffee business.

Mr. Bonitz reported that he has approximately 20 years of experience operating restaurants and has brought his knowledge and passion for coffee to the business. He moved from Florida to Texas to work in the oilfield but eventually realized that his passion was making coffee.

Mr. Bonitz explained that in September 2025, he paid to have a trailer built but was unfortunately scammed out of his money. Despite this setback, he decided to make another investment in a trailer to pursue his dream of owning and operating a coffee shop.

Mr. McClellan questioned the business hours for Top Bean, LLC. Mr. Bonitz stated that the business is open from 4:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. He explained that these hours were established specifically to accommodate oilfield workers.

Mayor Garza questioned how Mr. Bonitz is promoting his business. Mr. Bonitz stated that he primarily markets the business through Facebook and also offers delivery through DoorDash. He plans to expand his marketing efforts by distributing menus to local hotels and handing out business cards.

MOTION MADE BY CONSTANCE DONELS, SECONDED BY BEN ZIMMERMAN, TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAM GRANT FOR TOP BEAN, LLC. IN THE AMOUNT OF $400.00 FOR THE NEXT SIX MONTHS, BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2026 AND ENDING JANUARY 1, 2027. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON MAKING AN OFFER AND THE POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND FROM LAXMI

Mrs. Cromeens noted that the CDC currently owns six acres near the Holiday Inn Express, while two additional acres adjacent to the property are owned by Laxmi. She reported that the additional property was appraised at $170,000.00, and the owners have agreed to accept $200,000.00 for the property.

Mrs. Cromeens explained that, after speaking with Mr. Berger, a potential plan was discussed in which the CDC could acquire the additional two acres, bringing its total property ownership in the area to eight acres. The CDC could then potentially market and sell the eight acres as one tract to a prospective buyer, allowing the CDC to potentially make a profit from the sale.

The Board suggested that Mrs. Cromeens negotiate with the property owners regarding the purchase price, as the Board was not comfortable with the proposed purchase price of $200,000.00. The Board suggested negotiating the purchase price to $170,000.00, which is consistent with the appraised value of the property. The Board agreed that owning the highway frontage would be a valuable and marketable asset for the CDC.

MOTION MADE BY BEN ZIMMERMAN, SECONDED BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, THAT THE CDC BOARD GRANTS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ON BEHALF OF THE CDC TO PROCEED WITH MAKING AN OFFER TO LAXMI OR THE CURRENT OWNER OF THE TWO ACRES WITH THE PRICE OFFERED BEING THAT, THAT WAS IDENTIFIED IN THE APPRAISAL AND FOR HER TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PARAMETERS GIVEN TO HER BY THE BOARD. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 BUDGET AND RECOMMEND APPROVAL FOR SUBMISSION TO THE CUERO CITY COUNCIL

Mrs. Cromeens presented the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget to the Board. She noted that she and Mr. McClellan had met to review the proposed budget. Changes include the purchase of new cell phones for CDC staff, with the Executive Director's stipend being utilized to purchase the new phones.

Mrs. Cromeens stated that the most significant change to the proposed budget is under revenues, which includes a transfer from the CDC's reserves. She explained that the CDC is facing difficult decisions as the community experiences continued growth and new businesses locate in Cuero. She noted that the CDC's TexPool account is in good standing; however, utilizing a portion of these funds would assist the City with road infrastructure costs associated with the growth.

The Board agreed that there is significant growth occurring in Cuero and expressed its support for the continued development and expansion of the community.

MOTION MADE BY CONSTANCE DONELS, SECONDED BY BEN ZIMMERMAN, TO ACCEPT THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 BUDGET AS PRESENTED FOR SUBMISSION TO THE CUERO CITY COUNCIL. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON A PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CUERO DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND THE CITY OF CUERO

MOTION MADE BY CONSTANCE DONELS, SECONDED BY BEN ZIMMERMAN, TO TABLE ANY ACTION ON THE SERVICE AGREEMENT PENDING FURTHER DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE CDC

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND THE CUERO CITY MANAGER AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONSENT AGENDA

Included in the director's agenda packets for review were: Regular Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, June 16, 2026, Special Meeting Minutes, Thursday June 25, 2026, and the December Events Committee's May and June Financial Reports.

It was reiterated that the May and June Financial Statements were not available.

MOTION MADE BY MAYOR EMIL GARZA, SECONDED BY CONSTANCE DONELS, TO ACCEPT THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. AYES: 4 NAYES: 0 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

V. CDC COORDINATOR'S REPORT

1) December Events Committee – Mrs. Cromeens reported that Ms. Solis was out of the office. She also reported that all of the Christmas displays are anticipated to arrive in the near future.
2) Texas Coastal Bend Regional Tourism Report – Mrs. Cromeens reported that Ms. Solis was not attending the July monthly meeting for the Texas Coastal Bend, as she would be on vacation.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1) Sales Tax Comparisons – A copy of the sales tax revenue report was included in the Board package. It was reported that the sales tax remittance has decreased by 1.83% for the calendar year and has increased by 0.34% for the fiscal year.
2) Discuss upcoming conferences/meetings – Mrs. Cromeens reported that she does not have any upcoming meetings and conferences.
3) Current Projects – A copy of the current projects was included in the agenda packet. A separate attachment included the new Business Start-Up + Program.

VII. ADJOURN

PRESIDENT TYLER MCCLELLAN ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 6:32 P.M.

Tyler McClellan

TYLER MCCLELLAN
PRESIDENT

ATTEST:

Constance Donels

CONSTANCE DONELS
SECRETARY/TREASURER