

Meeting Minutes
Alvarado Economic Development Corporation (AEDC)
Date: Monday, February 10, 2025
Location: Council Chambers, 104 W. College, Alvarado, Texas 76009
Time: 6:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order

President Marty Douglas called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. The following individuals were present:

Name	Title	Present	Absent
Tom Durlington	Place 1	X	
Martin Douglas	Place 2	X	
Robert Brake	Place 3	X	
Carrie Keeton	Place 4	X	
Jerry Pritchard	Place 5		X
Cherry Bryant	Place 6	X	
Larry Pool	Place 7	X	

Staff present:

- **Hillary Cromer**, Economic Development Director
- **Ashley Dierker**, City Attorney

2. Invocation

Marty Douglass led the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

4. Citizen Participation and Public Input

Jameye Jones thanked everyone who participated in an event she was involved in hosting on Saturday, January 8, 2025.

5. Board Comments

No board comments were made.

6. New Business

i. Consideration and possible action to approve the November 14, 2024 Alvarado EDC board meeting minutes.

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Motion: Larry Pool made a motion to approve the November 14, 2024 Alvarado EDC board meeting minutes.

Second: Robert Brake seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 6-0.

ii. Consideration and possible action to move the April 28, 2025 Regular Quarterly Board Meeting up to Monday, March 24, 2025.

Robert Brake made a motion to reschedule the April 28, 2025 Regular Quarterly Board Meeting to Monday, March 24, 2025. Tom Durlington seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

***iii. Consideration and possible action to approve the Alvarado EDC's Food Truck Incubator Program and Guidelines.**

A brief presentation was made by Hillary Cromer. Key highlights are as follows:

Program Mission:

- To support local entrepreneurship.
- Enhance Alvarado's food scene.
- Drive economic activity and support business growth.

Program Overview:

- Duration: 90-day trial, with up to 180 days total participation.
- Cost: \$500/month for use of an EDC-owned, fully equipped food truck.
- Location: Downtown Alvarado, Pecan Orchard, and designated community events.
- Selection: One entrepreneur per cycle selected by the EDC Board.

Economic Benefits:

- Increased foot traffic and awareness of downtown businesses.
- More diverse food options and enhanced community appeal.
- Sales tax revenue growth.
- Activation of local events and mentorship for aspiring restaurateurs.

Selection Process:

- Submission of applications and business plans.
- EDC Board reviews and hears presentations.
- One entrepreneur selected per cycle based on concept and potential impact.

Next Steps:

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- Staff will update the program and guidelines based on Board feedback.
- The EDC Board will vote to approve the revised program.
- City Council will conduct two readings of the resolution before taking final action.

Closing Remarks: The Director emphasized the program as a launchpad for local culinary talent and small business development, with potential long-term economic benefits for the community.

Here are the Board discussion highlights:

- **Tom Durlington** asked what would happen if the selected entrepreneur drops out after two months—would we begin the selection process again? Hillary responded that she anticipates restarting the program in such a case but is open to alternative ideas.
- **Larry Pool** asked whether the plan still includes a food trailer instead of a truck. Hillary replied that using a trailer could limit participation to entrepreneurs who already own a vehicle capable of hauling it.
- **Robert Brake** requested that a non-discrimination clause be added to the application. The City Attorney confirmed that standard non-discrimination language would be included in the agreement between the EDC and the entrepreneur.
- **Several board members** raised concerns about insurance coverage. Hillary assured them that the agreement would include appropriate protections for both the City and the EDC.
- Hillary also shared that she plans to install trackers on the food truck.
- **Larry Pool** brought up signage, asking how much would be permitted. Hillary explained that all signage must be removable—a wrap featuring the Alvarado EDC, a detachable sign for the business name, and menu signage that can be reused by future entrepreneurs.

Motion: Tom Durlington moved to approve the Alvarado EDC Food Truck Program and Guidelines with the discussed revisions.

Second: Cherry Bryant seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

**Note: Because a Public Hearing was not conducted at this meeting, the vote was rendered null and void. The item was returned to the Board for reconsideration on March 13, 2025.*

iv. Presentation and training from the City Attorney on Chapter 171 of the Local Government Code, Conflict of Interest.

City Attorney Ashley Dierker delivered a concise presentation on conflict of interest provisions under Chapter 171 of the Texas Local Government Code. Highlights included:

- **Substantial Business Interest:** Applies to ownership of 10% or more in voting stock/shares or market value of \$15,000+, or if 10%+ of the official's income comes from the entity. Also applies if the official's action would have a distinct economic impact on the entity.

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- Substantial Real Property Interest: Includes property worth \$2,500+ that would be directly affected or is within 200 feet of the impacted area.
- Disclosure Requirements: Officials must file a conflict affidavit and abstain from participating if they have a qualifying interest.
- Family-Related Conflicts: Applies to interests held by immediate family (parent, child, spouse, stepchild, or parent-in-law). Same rules for disclosure and abstention apply.
- Penalties: Violations are a Class A misdemeanor (up to 1 year in jail, \$4,000 fine, or both). Any city action taken under conflict may be voided.
- Final Guidance: When in doubt, disclose and abstain.

No board action was required.

v. Consideration and possible action to authorize the City of Alvarado to proceed with necessary environmental and structural remediation efforts, including asbestos abatement, mold remediation, and demolition, for the Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) property located at 201 E. College Avenue; and to reimburse the City approximately fifty percent (50%) cost of the work, up to a maximum amount of \$30,000, upon successful completion of the project.

A brief presentation was made by Hillary Cromer. Key highlights are as follows:

- Background: The building has suffered extensive deterioration due to years of deferred maintenance. It contains asbestos, mold, and structural damage, rendering it uninhabitable. Assessments determined that renovation is not financially viable.
- Project Scope: Includes asbestos abatement, mold remediation, and demolition. The City of Alvarado will oversee the project.
- Estimated Cost: \$59,265 total.
- Funding Plan: Cost will be shared between the EDC and the City's general fund. EDC has budgeted \$50,000 for demolition in the current fiscal year.
Council previously approved contracts with:
 - Southside Environmental Services (asbestos abatement)
 - Midwest Wrecking (demolition)

Motion: Robert Brake made a motion to approve the authorization as outlined.

Second: Tom Durlington seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion carried 6-0.

vi. Workshop and Discussion on the First Downtown Alvarado Art Mural Project

A brief presentation was made by Hillary Cromer. Key highlights are as follows:

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- **Project Overview:** The proposed mural will serve as a colorful, inviting landmark for Historic Downtown Alvarado. It will highlight the city's character and promote photo opportunities for visitors.
- **Design Elements:** "Historic Downtown Alvarado" text, cotton candy sky, butterflies, wildflowers (bluebonnets, milkweed, Indian paintbrush), stagecoach/buggy, Ferris wheel, water tower, pecan trees, Texas flag.
- **Design Packages & Pricing:**
 - Base Package: \$11,250 (low complexity)
 - Value Package: \$16,750 (medium complexity – recommended)
 - Design Package: \$23,550 (high complexity)
All include materials, two rounds of revisions, and a 5% donation to the Anise Reed Fund.
- **Timeline:** Installation is targeted for Spring/Early Summer 2025.
- **Next Steps:** Select a package and sign a contract with Made by Crisp. A 50% non-refundable deposit is required to begin.

Following discussion, the board opted to pause and initiate a Public Art Contest to gather ideas from the community. The selected artwork will then be shared with a muralist following an RFQ process. Steps will be: 1) Art Contest, 2) RFQ, 3) Mural installation.

vii. 2025 International Council of Shopping Centers' Red River Conference & Deal Making Event

Hillary Cromer presented on the value of attending the ICSC Red River event. She asked the board:

1. Should we have a booth next year?
 2. Would you be willing to help with the booth?
- Board members agreed to both and expressed willingness to assist.

viii. TML Economic Development Conference, November 13-14, 2025

Hillary asked if any board members were interested in attending. Carrie Keeton, Marty Douglas, and Robert Brake confirmed they would like to attend. Hillary will follow up via email with others.

ix. 2025 Alvarado Economic Development Corporation Job Fair

A brief presentation was made by Hillary Cromer. Key highlights are as follows:

- **Event Date & Location:** Wednesday, May 7, 2025, from 10 AM–2 PM at the Alvarado ISD Admin Building.
- **Purpose:** Connect job seekers with employers across various industries for full-time, part-time, and seasonal positions.

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- For Job Seekers: On-site interviews, resume help (EDC booth), mock interviews (Goodwill), free professional headshots (City booth), and a Job Fair Challenge with free meals for the first 100 attendees.
- For Employers: 40 booth spaces available. Chamber members get free booths; non-members pay tiered rates which include a one-year Chamber membership.
- Support Opportunities: Sponsorships and volunteer support are welcome. Contact Hillary Cromer or Patti Beckham (Chamber) for more information or to register.

The Board expressed support for the event and several members offered to assist with planning and day-of logistics.

7. Executive Session

The board entered executive session at 7:50 P.M. to discuss:

- **§ 551.071. Consultation with Attorney**
 - Any item on the agenda
- **§ 551.087. Deliberation regarding economic development negotiations**
 - Project Meatball
 - Project Cornerstone
- **§ 551.072. Deliberation regarding real property**
 - Project Yellow-NC-01
 - Project Blue-NE-01
 - Project Red-C-02

The board reconvened in open session at 8:26 P.M.

8. Post-Executive Session Action

No action was taken. The meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.



Martin Douglas, Board President

Respectfully Submitted,



Hillary Cromer, Economic Development Director