

**Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth
October 17, 2023
9:00 AM**

- COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Malcom Mitchell – Chairman
Neal J. Barber – Vice Chairman
Theresa J. Saunders-Smith – Treasurer
Anthony Brown
Barbara Smith
LaToya Boone (9:16 am)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Brian Donahue – Secretary
Jeff Miller - Deputy City Attorney
William Moody – City Council Liaison
Vernon Tillage – City Council Liaison (9:51 am)
- ABSENT:** Flora Berisha - Finance
Kyera Pope – Finance
- GUESTS:** Alisa Winston – PRHA
Michelle Wren – Portsmouth Partnership, Bloom Coworking
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Welcome & Call to Order

- The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Roll Call

- Mr. Donahue called the roll. There was a quorum.

Minutes

- The minutes from the September 19, 2023, Regular Meeting were presented and adopted.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mrs. Smith, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the September 19, 2023 Regular Meeting as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes; Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - absent; Ms. Boone – absent. Approved 5-0 vote.

Election of Officers

- Chairman Mitchell introduced an agenda item for the election of the vacant position of Treasurer. Mr. Mitchell nominated Commissioner Saunders-Smith for the position of Treasurer.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Mrs. Smith, the Commissioners approved the motion to elect Mrs. Saunders-Smith as Treasurer.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes; Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Ms. Boone – absent. Approved 5-0 vote.

Old Business

None

New Business

- **Pop-Up Retail Program:** Michelle Wren, Executive Director of the Portsmouth Partnership and Bloom Coworking and Ms. Autumn Bailey, Senior Business Development Specialist presented a Pop-Up Retail Program for Portsmouth based small businesses. The program was presented as pilot program to assist in growing start-up manufacturers and retailers into brick-and-mortar retail space. The Program is seeking \$85,000 in funding support for retail space upfit and operation costs.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, the Commissioners approved a motion to provide \$85,000 in EDA grant funding in support to the Pop-Up Retail Program.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 6-0 vote.

- **Business Investment Grant Program Update:** Mr. Donahue provided an update on the first round of FY24 Business Investment Grant applications.
- **Real Property Investment Grant:** Mr. Donahue presented Real Property Investment Grant applications for 2850 Airline Blvd. and 2860 Airline Blvd. for funding consideration.

ACTION: On a motion by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Mr. Brown, the Commissioners approved Real Property Investment Grant applications for 2850 Airline Blvd. and 2860 Airline Blvd.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 6-0 vote.

- **EDA Property Update:** Mr. Donahue provided an update on the disposition of EDA owned properties and those under contract for acquisition.
- **Downtown Waterfront Development:** Mr. Donahue provided an update on the status of the performance of a market study in support of the redevelopment of the City's downtown waterfront. The project consultant AECOM has begun the stakeholder engagement phase of the study. The EDA's November meeting will include a discussion with AECOM as part of the stakeholder engagement process.

Financials

- Ms. Kyera Pope presented the board with the EDA's Quarterly Financial Report.

Closed Meeting

ACTION: At 9:54 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Brown, the EDA moved to go into a closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.3 for the purpose of discussing the disposition of real property where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, specifically regarding 301 Columbia Street, 3336 Victory Boulevard, and 1117 High Street.

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Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown – yes; Ms. Saunders-Smith – yes; Mrs. Smith – yes; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 6-0 vote.

Open Meeting

ACTION: At 10:56 a.m., on a motion by Mr. Barber, seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, the EDA moved that each Commissioner certify that, to the best of his or her knowledge: (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting just concluded.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 6-0 vote.

Items Submitted by Commissioners

- Mr. Brown proposed the idea of an Economic Development Business Appreciation Day with an EDA sponsored golf tournament. There was consensus on EDA support for business networking events and that additional discussion was warranted.
- Mrs. Saunders-Smith inquired about the ability to provide electronic signage in the downtown area to assist visitors with locating businesses and City events. Mr. Donahue suggested that the City's Marketing and Tourism Departments may be the most appropriate offices to discuss this item. They will be requested to attend a future meeting.

Report Backs

- None

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Donahue, Secretary

Malcom Mitchell, Chair