

**Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth  
December 19, 2023  
9:00 AM**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Malcom Mitchell – Chairman  
Neal J. Barber – Vice Chairman  
Theresa J. Saunders-Smith – Treasurer  
Barbara Smith – (9:34am)  
LaToya Boone – (9:08am)

**ALSO PRESENT:** Brian Donahue – Secretary  
Jeff Miller - Deputy City Attorney  
Vernon Tillage – City Council Liaison

**ABSENT:** Anthony Brown – Commissioner  
Flora Berisha - Finance  
Kyera Pope – Finance  
Mimi Terry – Interim City Manager  
Lavonda Graham-Williams – City Attorney  
Kelsey Swieringa – Assistant City Attorney  
Alisa Winston – PRHA  
William Moody – City Council Liaison

**GUESTS:** Alvin Keels, A4 Development Group  
Jack Claud, Hoggard-Eure Associates  
Mark Hugel – City Councilman

---

**Welcome & Call to Order**

- The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

**Roll Call**

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

**Minutes**

- The minutes from the November 14, 2023, Regular Meeting were presented and adopted.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Mr. Barber, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the November 14, 2023 Regular Meeting as presented.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - absent, Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Smith - absent; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 4-0 vote.

### **Old Business**

EDA Property Update

### **New Business**

- **Business Investment Grant Program Update:** Mr. Donahue provided an update on the first and second rounds of FY24 Business Investment Grant applications.
- **Real Property Investment Grant:** Mrs. Tracy presented Real Property Investment Grant application for 515 Washington St. for funding consideration.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, the Commissioners approved a Real Property Investment Grant application for 515 Washington St.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - absent, Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - absent; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 4-0 vote.

- **Annual Retreat:** Mr. Mitchell announced that The Board of Commissioners Annual Retreat is scheduled for Tuesday, January 16, 2024, from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

### **Closed Meeting**

**ACTION:** At 9:37 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, 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 1021-1107 High St.

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

### **Open Meeting**

**ACTION:** At 10:26 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 - absent, Ms. Saunders-Smith yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Ms. Boone – yes. Approved 5-0 vote.

### **Items Submitted by Commissioners**

- Mr. Mitchell requested an update on The Port Apartments, located at the previous Kroger shopping center in Churchland, and Mr. Donahue stated that the developer is securing financing and demolition will begin soon.
- Mrs. Saunders-Smith requested an update on reaching out to the franchise owners of the 7-11 in the Innovation District to begin a discussion regarding purchasing the property and relocating.
- Mrs. Saunders-Smith inquired about the owner of the Ollie’s Shopping Center near the Cradock

EDA Meeting  
December 19, 2023

neighborhood, stating the need for property improvements to ensure the safety of patrons and the attraction efforts of future development.

- Mr. Mitchell requested an update on the restoration of the water towers in Churchland and on Airline Blvd. Councilman Hugel provided an update, stating that the Churchland water tower has been repainted and the Airline Blvd water tower is in the process of being repainted.
- Ms. Boone inquired about the possibility of advertising Rivers Casino Portsmouth on highway signage. Mr. Donahue stated that the casino is considered an adult use by VDOT and is unable to advertise on highway signage.

**Report Backs**

- Mr. Donahue introduced the newest member of the Economic Development team, Christopher Tillett, the Manager of Business Development.
- Mr. Donahue provided an update and positive feedback on the 2023 Business Appreciation Reception, stating that there were over 150 in attendance.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Donahue, Secretary

Malcom Mitchell, Chair