

**Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth  
September 16, 2025  
9:00 AM**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Malcom Mitchell – Chairman  
Neal Barber – Vice Chairman  
Theresa J. Saunders-Smith – Treasurer (9:04am)  
Anthony Brown  
Joe Harmon

**ALSO PRESENT:** Brian Donahue – Secretary  
Charles Bauman, III – Assistant Secretary  
Jeff Miller – Deputy City Attorney  
Kelsey Swieringa, Assistant City Attorney  
William Moody, City Council Liaison  
Vernon Tillage – City Council Liaison

**ABSENT:** Camille Cherry – Commissioner  
Alisa Winston – PRHA  
Lavonda Graham-Williams – City Attorney  
Steven Carter – City Manager

**GUESTS:** William Dodson – City Councilman  
Mark Hugel – City Councilman (9:09am)

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**Welcome & Call to Order**

- The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**Roll Call**

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

**Minutes**

- The minutes from the August 18, 2025, Regular Meeting were presented and adopted.

**ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the August 18, 2025, Regular Meeting as presented.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Mrs. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Cherry - absent; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 5-0 vote.

**Old Business**

- **EDA Property Updates**
  - **219 Pavilion Dr.** – Ms. Chop advised the EDA that the purchaser of 219 Pavilion Dr. continues to

work through engineering and design requirements related to the project. The current contract feasibility period has been extended through December 17, 2025.

- **53, 60 Afton Pkwy., 73 Farragut St.** – Ms. Chop briefed the Commissioners on the requirements for the demolition of blighted property at 53 Afton Pkwy. and assemblage of EDA and City owned property to support revitalization efforts in Afton Square.
- **Waterfront Development** – Mr. Donahue provided an update on the EDA’s efforts to solicit developer interest in the Crawford Bay waterfront development site.
- **LINC District**
  - **Project Updates** – Mr. Donahue shared updates on the following redevelopment projects within the LINC District.
    - **Bains Pointe** – Construction activity progresses on the 50-unit apartment community with a completion projected for 2026.
    - **Kings Landing** – Site development work moves forward on the 49-unit townhome community.
  - **Property Updates** – Ms. Chop provided the following updates on EDA owned property.
    - **1028 High St.** – The bid package for the demolition of 1028 High St. continues to be in procurement for issuance of an Invitation for Bids.
    - **1117-1121 High St.** – The big package for the renovation of 1117-1121 High St. continues to be in with procurement for issuance of an Invitation for Bids.
    - **1220 High St.** – Design work for exterior renovations and roof replacement at 1220 High St. is underway.
    - **934 High St.** – Economic Development staff is working to have the EDA’s property at 934 High St. prepared for a tour by Commissioners.
  - **LINC EDA Committee** – Mr. Mitchell advised the Commissioners that the LINC EDA Committee will begin meeting to identify priority items related to implementation of the Innovation District Plan.
  - **Branding** – Mr. Donahue provided an update on the status of branding initiatives within the LINC District.
- **Entertainment District** – Mr. Donahue advised the EDA that Economic Development staff continues its engagement with Rush Street Gaming on opportunities for complementary commercial development on EDA owned land adjacent to Rivers Casino.
- **Small Business Loan Program Update** – Mr. Donahue informed the EDA that Economic Development staff is working with Bridging Virginia to finalize program parameters for the EDA’s Small Business Loan Program for launch in the coming months.

**New Business**

- **FY26 PHCRF Grant Application 1117-1121 High St.** – Mr. Donahue presented the renovation of EDA property at 1117-1121 High St. for consideration for submittal to the FY26 Virginia Port Host Communities Revitalization Grant program for funding support in the amount of \$480,000. The program requires an EDA funding match of \$480,000.

**ACTION:** Mr. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, moved to approve a Resolution authorizing the EDA's submission of a funding application to the Port Host Communities Grant program in the amount of \$480,000.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Mrs. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Cherry - absent; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 5-0 vote.

**RESOLUTION  
(Port Host Community Application)**

WHEREAS, the Port Host Communities Revitalization Fund was established by the Commonwealth of Virginia to provide grants of state funds for port-related revitalization projects in five localities that are especially impacted by Port of Virginia operations, including Portsmouth; and

WHEREAS, the grants are funded annually from a pool of \$2,400,000; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Department conducts outreach to solicit applications from port-related Portsmouth businesses; and

WHEREAS, no applications from private entities were received for this round of grant funding; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth, Virginia desires to apply for a grant in the amount of \$480,000; and

WHEREAS, the grant, if awarded, would be used by EDA for the revitalization of 1117-1121 High Street (the "Property") for port-related uses (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, the Property is currently blighted and in need of renovation to turn it into commercially leasable space; and

WHEREAS, the Project improvements would include roof replacement, interior building renovations, façade improvements, utility improvements, paving, landscaping, and other development expenses; and

WHEREAS, the Project would further a port-related use that maximizes the benefits of Portsmouth's role as a Port Host Community, improve the aesthetics of the area, increase the future tax base, and provide an estimated five employment opportunities upon completion; and

WHEREAS, EDA acknowledges that receipt of the grant would require EDA to commit its own matching funds to the Project in the amount of at least \$480,000 (the "Matching Funds") and is willing to make said commitment;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby RESOLVED that:

1. The EDA authorizes the submittal of an application for a Port Host Community grant of \$480,000.
2. Subject to award of the grant, EDA hereby commits the Matching Funds to the Project.

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3. The Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary are each authorized to execute such applications, agreements, and other documents or instruments as they deem necessary or desirable to apply for, obtain, and comply with the grant.
  4. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.
- **Black Brand Black Diamond Weekend Event Sponsorship** – Mr. Donahue presented a sponsorship opportunity for supporting the Black Brand Black Diamond Weekend Event which is planned for November 13–15, 2025 at the Hampton Roads Convention Center in Hampton, VA.

**ACTION:** Mrs. Saunders-Smith seconded by Mr. Barber, moved to approve the EDA’s sponsorship of the 2025 Black Brand Black Diamond Weekend Event in the amount of \$2,500.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Mrs. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Cherry - absent; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 5-0 vote.

**Closed Meeting** –

**ACTION:** At 10:13 a.m. Mr. Barber, seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith moved to go into a closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A(6) for the purpose of discussing the acquisition and/or 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 the dispositions of 8 Crawford Parkway, 2 Crawford Parkway, 2 Harbor Court, and 3 Harbor Court and strategic acquisitions.

**Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Mrs. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Cherry - absent; Mr. Harmon - yes. Approved 5-0 vote.

**Open Meeting**

**ACTION:** At 11:15 a.m. Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Brown, 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, Mrs. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Cherry - absent; Mr. Harmon - yes. Approved 5-0 vote.

**Items Submitted by Commissioners**

- Mr. Brown shared a review of the City Council and EDA’s visit to Greenville, SC and beneficial economic impacts from event centers. Mr. Brown shared a conceptual plan for an event center in Portsmouth.

**Report Backs**

- Mr. Donahue advised the EDA of a City Council meeting on September 16, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Portsmouth Sportsplex to discuss the City’s Greenville, SC exchange mission and tour.

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- Mr. Donahue shared that Ms. Faith Griffin will be departing the City of Portsmouth Economic Development Department to accept a position with Portsmouth Public Schools.

**Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Donahue, Secretary

Malcom Mitchell, Chair