

Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth

April 19, 2022

9:00 AM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ray A. Smith, Sr. – Chairman
Bette "Cathy" Drewry
Barbara Smith
Theresa J. Saunders-Smith
Neal J. Barber
Anthony Brown

ALSO PRESENT:

Brian Donahue - Secretary
Pam Croom – Assistant Secretary
Jeff Miller – Deputy City Attorney
Kelsey Swieringa - Assistant City Attorney
Angel Jones – City Manger
Flora Berisha – Assistant CFO
Paul Battle – Councilman
Alisa Winston – PRHA

ABSENT:

Malcom Mitchell -Vice Chairman

Welcome & Call to Order

- The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Roll Call

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

Minutes

- The minutes from the March 15, 2021, Regular Meeting were reviewed.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Ms. Saunders-Smith, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the February 15, 2022, Regular Meeting as presented. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Ms. Drewry - yes; Mr. Mitchell - absent; Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Ms. Smith - yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Brown - yes.

Financials

- Flora Berisha reviewed the March 2022 financial statements. It was agreed that March 2022 statements would be filed for audit.

Old Business

- Mr. Donahue updated the board on the success the Business Incentives Workshop on March 31, 2022. He stated that there will be a follow up event in late spring on “How to Start a Business”.
- Mr. Smith updated the board on the Joint EDA/City Council Meeting on April 26, 2022 at 5 p.m. in City Hall on the 6th Floor City Council Conference Room.
- Mr. Donahue updated the board on the RFP for Commercial Real Estate Services for the EDA. The RFP has been advertised and posted and will run to May 17, 2022. The selection should be completed by July and a contract in place by August. Mr. Barber asked if the board could be part of the selection. Mr. Miller noted that historically Procurement handles this process. Ms. Jones stated that the board should be represented on the panel process as Mr. Barber suggested, the board agreed and in a consensus Mr. Barber will represent EDA.

New Business

- Michelle Wren from Bloom CoWorking provided the board with a presentation on Portsmouth Partnership’s coworking space in the old Allen furniture building.
- Mr. Donahue gave an update on the 2022 Business Investment Grants. He provided the number of Applications and approvals to date. He stated that the program will be closing to all applicants on April 30, 2022.
- Jenny Osborne presented the Real Property Grant Application for 5900 Churchland Blvd. for the amount of \$8,393.00.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Ms. Drewry, the Commissioners approved the Real Property Investment Grant Application for RealMark Sharp, at 5900 Churchland Blvd. for \$8,393.00 as presented. **Roll Call Vote:** Mr. Barber - yes; Ms. Drewry - yes; Mr. Mitchell - absent; Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Ms. Smith - yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Brown - no

- Mr. Donahue noted to the board that it is time to review the EDA Budget for submittal. Mr. Smith appointed Ms. Drewry and Mrs. Saunders-Smith as the Budget Committee and suggested that they meet with staff to discuss and then present suggestions to the board in May.

Closed Meeting

ACTION: At 10:15 a.m. Ms. Drewry, seconded by Ms. Saunders-Smith, move to go into a closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.3 for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real property where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, specifically regarding strategic acquisitions.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber yes; Ms. Drewry – yes; Mr. Mitchell - absent; Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Ms. Smith - absent; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Brown yes.

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ACTION: At 11:07 a.m. Ms. Drewry, seconded by Ms. Saunders-Smith, 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; Ms. Drewry – yes; Mr. Mitchell - absent; Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Ms. Smith -yes; Mr. Smith – yes; Mr. Brown yes.

Open Meeting

Items submitted by Commissioners:

Ms. Drewry asked who on staff handles Social Media questions and requests for Economic Development and EDA. Mr. Donahue replied that Staff does monitor many platforms on Social Media and any issues could be sent to him.

Ms. Saunders Smith spoke about having guest speakers at the meetings on various subjects. Mr. Donahue advised the board to send speaker requests to Chairman Smith, and he will forward them to Mr. Donahue for action.

Report Backs:

None

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Donahue, Secretary

Ray Smith, Chair