

**Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth
March 19, 2024
9:00 AM**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Malcom Mitchell – Chairman
Neal J. Barber – Vice Chairman
Theresa J. Saunders-Smith – Treasurer
Barbara Smith
Anthony Brown
Matthew James

ALSO PRESENT: Brian Donahue – Secretary
Jeff Miller - Deputy City Attorney
Kelsey Swieringa – Assistant City Attorney
Alisa Winston – PRHA
Flora Berisha – Finance

ABSENT:

LaToya Boone - Commissioner
Lavonda Graham-Williams – City Attorney
Vernon Tillage – City Council Liaison
William Moody – City Council Liaison
Kyera Pope - Finance

GUESTS: Mark Hugel – City Councilman
Steve Edwards – Interim City Assessor
Dorothy Morgan – Deputy City Assessor
Trey Burke, Budget Officer
Dr. Rhonda Russell, Planning Director
Cliff Copley, HR Alliance

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 February 20, 2024, 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 February 20, 2024, Regular Meeting as presented.

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

Financials

- **FY2025 Proposed Budget** – Mrs. Saunders-Smith presented the EDA’s FY2025 Budget proposal and identified budget changes, including two additional city positions to assist with EDA initiatives. Mr. Donahue answered questions related to the proposed FY2025 budget. Flora Berisha, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, advised that the “Lease Income-Renaissance Hotel” line item within the proposed FY2025 Budget should be increased by \$50,000 to \$125,000 and updated how it is reflected under Operating Revenue.

Old Business

- **Minority Participation** – The presentation on Minority Participation was rescheduled for the EDA’s April 16th meeting.
- **1220 High St.** – Mr. Donahue gave an update on the EDA’s acquisition of 1220 High St. and stated that the contract’s due diligence period ended on March 15, 2024. After an inspection of the air conditioning unit determined it was not operating correctly, the seller has agreed to replace the unit before closing. The inspection also revealed that there are (2) additional HVAC units on the roof that need to be removed and we have a contractor providing us with a cost proposal. Mr. Donahue stated the anticipated closing will be in the next 30 days.
- **1117-1121 High Street** – Mr. Donahue gave an update on the former Shiny Computers location (1117 High St.) and adjacent suite, Clean Way Environmental (1121 High St.), stating that Mosley Architects is currently preparing design documents for roof replacement. Mosely Architects is also preparing a proposal for interior and exterior building improvements.
- **Waterfront Redevelopment** – Mr. Donahue provided a recap on the redevelopment of the waterfront. AECOM has completed a market study and development strategy for the Crawford Bay Site. AECOM will provide their final report after gathering internal feedback from City staff. After review by the Board, AECOM can provide support with conversations with City leadership and City Council, in addition to preparing an RFO solicitation package.

New Business

- **Real Property Investment Grants** – Mrs. Aimee Tracy, Business Development Specialist, presented a second 90-day completion date extension request for a July 2023 Real Property Investment Gant applicant at 2701 Columbus Ave.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Brown, the Commissioners approved the extension of the Real Property Investment Grant for 2701 Columbus Ave.

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

- **Small Business Event Support** – Ms. Autumn Bailey, Senior Business Development Specialist, provided an overview of the Small Business Event Support Program. She presented a Block Party Experience, How to Do Business with Portsmouth Expo, and a Small Business Month Networking Event. The expense for the events totals \$35,000.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mrs. Smith, the Commissioners approved \$35,000.00 in funding support for events.

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

- **Business Investment Grant Program Committee** – Mrs. Saunders-Smith and Mrs. Smith will serve on the Business Investment Grant Program Committee with Mr. Donahue, Mrs. Tracy and Ms. Bailey. The committee will plan to meet the 1st week of April.
- **Small Business Finance Committee** – Mr. Barber and Mr. James will serve on the Small Business Finance Committee with Mr. Donahue and Ms. Bailey. The committee will plan to meet the 1st week of April.

Closed Meeting

ACTION: At 10:11 a.m. Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Brown, moved to go into a closed meeting: (a) 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 700 Crawford St. and 1130 High St.; and (b) pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.8 for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, specifically regarding 0 Harbor Center Court.

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

Open Meeting

ACTION: At 10:39 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, Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Ms. Boone – absent; Mr. James - yes. Approved 6-0 vote.

- **ADD ITEM: 700 CRAWFORD ST. AND 1130 HIGH ST TO AGENDA**

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Ms. Saunders-Smith, the Commissioners added 700 Crawford St. and 1130 High St. to the agenda

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

- **700 Crawford St.:** Mr. Miller read resolution regarding the amendment of the Agreement to extend the Outside Closing Date through September 27, 2024, at 700 Crawford St.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Mr. Brown, the Commissioners approved a resolution regarding the amendment of the Agreement for the conveyance of 700 Crawford Street to extend the Outside Closing Date through September 27, 2024.

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

- **1130 High St.:** Mr. Miller stated the resolution titled (Woda Cooper – Extension of Permitting Period) went out with the agenda package for the purpose of extending the Permitting Period through September 5, 2024. The amendment further requires the Developer to provide an additional deposit of \$15,000.

- **ACTION:** On a motion by Mr. Barber and seconded by Ms. Theresa Saunders-Smith, the Commissioners approved the resolution titled Woda Cooper - Extension of Permitting Period.

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

Items Submitted by Commissioners

- Mr. Mitchell introduced an item from the EDA Retreat on providing funding every quarter to a community organization. The board discussed using the rental revenue from the billboard in the 1600 block of High St. of \$400 a month or \$1,200 a quarter. Mr. Mitchell would like to have the Commissioners submit names or to have a discussion on the subject at the April meeting. The Board will decide on the criteria of details. It was decided to provide funds to non-profits. Mr. Mitchell would like the Board to bring recommendations to the April meeting.
- Mr. Mitchell stated that he was approached about the shipyard in Norfolk having a limited number of parking spaces. The discussion was how many people trying to park at the shipyard originated in Portsmouth. Mr. Mitchell stated HRT could create an early morning spot to reduce some of the parking needs there. Mr. Hugel added there are (2) shipyards. Ms. Saunders-Smith stated there should be some dialogue with HRT. Mr. Brown and Mr. James stated the contractors want to drive and not ride a bus. Several riders pay to park in driveways. Mr. Hugel suggested to invite HRT to a meeting to encourage more support for Portsmouth. Mr. Donahue stated that staff will coordinate with the city's transportation planner and a representative from HRT to present at a future meeting.

Report Backs

- Mr. Donahue reminded the Board of upcoming scheduled tours and events:
 - Fairlead Wavy Street Tour – Scheduled on Tuesday, March 20th beginning at 9:00am. Please plan to meet at 201 Wavy Street.
 - Railyard Lamberts Point Tour – Scheduled on Tuesday, March 26th from 2-4pm. Everyone will meet at Nothing Bundt Cakes.
 - The Mustard Seed Ribbon Cutting – Scheduled for Wednesday, March 27th at 9:00am. The address is 340 High Street.
 - Bloom Market Ribbon Cutting – Scheduled for Thursday, March 28th at 10:00am. The address 719 High Street.

- Mr. Donahue stated that the EDA discussed the possibility of having a database for small and minority businesses in Portsmouth at its Retreat in January. The Economic Development Department currently maintains a business registry on its website. Staff is researching modifying the existing registry to meet this request.

- Mr. Donahue advised the EDA that bid results have been received for the demolition of 73 Farragut St. in Cradock. Staff is working with the City procurement office on the contract award process.

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Donahue, Secretary

Malcom Mitchell, Chair