

**Economic Development Authority of the City of Portsmouth
December 17, 2024
9:00 AM**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Malcom Mitchell – Chairman
Neal Barber – Vice Chairman
Theresa J. Saunders-Smith – Treasurer
Anthony Brown
Matthew James
Joe Harmon
Barbara Smith

ALSO PRESENT:

Brian Donahue – Secretary
Jeff Miller – Deputy City Attorney
Kelsey Swieringa – Assistant City Attorney (9:07am)
Alisa Winston – PRHA
Vernon Tillage – City Council Liaison

ABSENT:

William Moody – City Council Liaison
Lavonda Graham-Williams – City Attorney
Flora Berisha – Finance
Kyera Pope – Finance
Steven Carter – City Manager

GUESTS:

No guests present

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 November 19, 2024, Regular Meeting were presented and adopted.

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Mitchell and seconded by Mr. Brown, the Commissioners approved the minutes from the November 19, 2024, Regular Meeting as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

Old Business

- **Bains Pointe Groundbreaking Ceremony** - Mr. Donahue reported that the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Bains Pointe apartment community at 1100 High St. is scheduled to take place on January 28, 2025.
- **FY25 Business Investment Grant Program** - Mr. Donahue provided an update on the EDA's FY25 Business Investment Grant Program including the following:
 - **Smart Start Business Development Grant** – In FY25 YTD, there were 20 applications received with 13 grants approved, for a total of \$26,000 approved.
 - **Smart Start Business Acceleration Grant** – In FY25 YTD there were 3 applications received with 1 grant approved, for a total of \$5,000 approved.
 - **Real Property Investment Grant** – In FY25 YTD there were 22 applications received, and 22 approved for a total of \$351,000 approved and awarded. The RPIG program is currently closed due to funding limitations. Mr. Donahue requested that \$50,000 be reappropriated from the Smart Start Acceleration Grant to the Real Property Investment Grant to accommodate additional demand.

ACTION: At 9:11am Mrs. Saunders-Smith, seconded by Mr. Barber, moved to amend the EDA's FY25 Operating Budget to transfer \$50,000 from the Smart Start Acceleration Grant program to the Real Property Investment Grant program.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

New Business

- **1028 High St, 1013-1015 Queen St, 400 Hatton St. Demolition-** Mr. Donahue reported that a demolition plan has been provided by Kimley Horn at the cost of \$10,000.00.

ACTION: At 9:16am Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Brown move to accept the proposal for a demolition plan from Kimley Horn.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber - yes; Mr. Mitchell - yes; Mr. Brown - yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith - yes; Mrs. Smith - yes; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

- **Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA)** - Mr. Donahue provided an overview of the EVRIFA, including the current member localities and the opportunities it provides for revenue sharing and participation in projects within the Hampton Roads region. The Portsmouth City Council voted to join the EVRIFA on December 10, 2024.
- **Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line Railroad (NPBL) Rail Transloading Facility** - Mr. Donahue provided a summary of the NPBL Rail Transloading Facility project at 1040 Virginia Ave. A Port Host Community Grant in the amount of \$800,000 was recently awarded for this project.

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- **CSX Rail Transloading Facility** - Mr. Donahue provided a summary of the CSX Rail Transloading Facility project planned by the DeLong Co. at 1 Harper Ave. DeLong has requested a Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation Rail Industrial Access Grant in the amount of \$750,000.

Closed Meeting

ACTION: At 9:34a.m. Mr. Barber, seconded by Mrs. Saunders-Smith, move to go into a closed meeting: (A) pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.3 for the purpose of discussing the acquisition and 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 strategic acquisitions and the dispositions of 1220 High Street, 240 Beazley Drive, 1609 High Street, and 1021-1107 High Street; and (B) pursuant to Virginia Code Subsection 2.2-3711 A.6 for the purpose of discussing the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the governmental unit would be adversely affected, specifically regarding a funding request from the Bloom Market.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber – yes; Mr. Mitchell – yes; Mr. Brown – yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith – yes; Mrs. Smith – yes; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

Open Meeting

ACTION: At 11:24am 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; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

Items Submitted by Commissioners

- Ms. Saunders-Smith reported that the EDA’s investment in the Black Brand, Black Diamond Weekend event was worthwhile based on her experience attending the conference.
- Mr. Mitchell stated that Portsmouth is gaining a positive reputation in the Hampton Roads region as a location to start small businesses.
- Ms. Smith was recognized for her service to the EDA. Her term as a commissioner ends on December 31, 2024.

ACTION: At 11:32am Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Brown, moved that the sponsorship of Bloom Market be added to the agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber – yes; Mr. Mitchell – yes; Mr. Brown – yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith – yes; Mrs. Smith – yes; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

ACTION: At 11:32am Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Harmon, moved to approve the sponsorship of the Bloom Market for calendar year 2025 in the amount of \$66,500.

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Roll Call Vote: Mr. Barber – yes; Mr. Mitchell – yes; Mr. Brown – yes, Ms. Saunders-Smith – yes; Mrs. Smith – yes; Mr. James – yes; Mr. Harmon-yes. Approved 7-0 vote.

Report Backs

- Mr. Donahue recognized and thanked the EDA for sponsoring the 2024 Annual Business Appreciation Reception.

Adjourn

- The meeting adjourned at 11:36am.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Donahue, Secretary

Malcom Mitchell, Chair