

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF COLUMBUS GEORGIA  
August 6 , 2020  
Via Zoom

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Alfred Blackmar, Russ Carreker, Selvin Hollingsworth, Jacki Lowe, Heath Schondelmayer, Lisa Smith, Chris Wightman

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

none

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Ben Adams, Richard Baxter, Josh Beard, Peter Bowden, Pam Hodge, Sendreka Lakes, Jim Lovett, Rob McKenna, Jerald Mitchell, Joe Sanders, Brian Sillitto, Katherine Kelly

Russ Carreker, Chairman, noting that a quorum was present and proper notice had been given in accordance with the requirements of Georgia law, called the August 6, 2020 meeting to order.

**MINUTES**

**Upon motion made by Selvin Hollingsworth and seconded by Chris Wightman, the Authority unanimously approved the minutes of the July 9, 2020 meeting attached as Exhibit "A".**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

- Heath Schondelmayer reviewed the reports and explained some variances. Matt Sellers is beginning the FY 2019-2020 consolidated audit. He told members they might get a questionnaire from Robinson Grimes so fill it out and return to Matt Sellers. **Upon motion made by Selvin Hollingsworth and seconded by Lisa Smith, the Authority unanimously approved the July 2020 Financial Reports attached as Exhibit "B".**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Brian Sillitto reported that Chairmans Food announcement was made via press release. He spoke about the scope of the project which is in the Enterprise Zone. He spoke about four new leads in July. He gave updates on the four active projects.
- Josh Beard reported that he continues to work with congressional staff on robotics. He reported that CSU has appointed a new director of the robotics program with about 30 students enrolled. He and Sendreka Lakes continue to work with the engineering department at Auburn which is very interested in partnering with us. This will also give additional congressional support. Another important initiative for Fort Benning is the storm water issue which is a risk for Lawson Airfield. Fort Benning has received permission to bid this out to third parties. The project would be \$22.6M over 3-5 years. Russ Carreker gave some background to the robotics funding to come out of Congress.
- Sendreka Lakes gave an update on the Welcome Home campaign to attract talented educated people to or back to our region. Campaign is in the data collection phase using a survey which is targeting employers, recent graduates, people recently relocating and those departing region. Employers are using the AmazingColumbusGa website to attract employees. When get survey results a more structured program will be developed. She reported that Columbus unemployment rate is 8.4% which is 1% higher than the Georgia average percentage. The next hurdle will be the opening of Muscogee County schools.

**CITY OF COLUMBUS REPORT**

Pam Hodge reported that applications for the CBDG COVID-19 funds have been received and are being reviewed with awards then Council will decide how to use the funds. The City has received \$34M from the CARES Act through the State and an agreement has been executed. The first allocation will be 30%. The first \$10M must be spend by September 1<sup>st</sup>. City has partnered with Media, Marketing and More to assist in getting information out to community, gathering applications and reviewing for qualification and then turning data over to City for input into the portal. A letter has been sent to the Governor asking for an extension since training has not taken place yet. The three areas considering are community assistance, medical activity, and small businesses. The website should launch on Monday.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Russ Carreker reported that the groundbreaking for Mercer University School of Medicine Columbus Campus is September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Members should be receiving an invitation soon. Governor Kemp will be here for that.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**OTHER ISSUES**

Russ Carreker welcomed Jerald Mitchell, new President and CEO of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce and introduced individuals present. Jerald Mitchell made stated that he is very excited to be joining the team and working with the Authority.

**LEGAL ISSUES**

- **Upon motion made by Jacki Lowe and seconded by Chris Wightman, the Authority unanimously approved the release of undeveloped land included in the GWC Land, LLC Bond Issue Series 2010 and Quitclaim the property back to the company.**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

**Upon motion made by Selvin Hollingsworth and seconded by Jacki Lowe, the meeting was adjourned.**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jacki W. Lowe, Secretary

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Russell D. Carreker, Chair

NOTE: These minutes were approved at the September 10, 2020 meeting of the Authority but were not signed since the meeting was held via Zoom.