

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF COLUMBUS GEORGIA  
January 7 , 2021  
Via Zoom

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

none

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Josh Beard, Peter Bowden, Austin Gibson, Pam Hodge, Rocky Kettering, Sendreka Lakes, Jim Lovett, Rob McKenna, Jerald Mitchell, Joe Sanders, Brian Sillitto, Ty Webb, 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 January 7, 2021 meeting to order.

**MINUTES**

**Upon motion made by Jacki Lowe and seconded by Lisa Smith, the Authority unanimously approved the minutes of the December 3 and 19, 2021 meetings attached as Exhibit "A".**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Heath Schondelmayer reviewed the reports and explained some variances. He reported that net year to date income was on budget. **Upon motion made by Selvin Hollingsworth and seconded by Alfred Blackmar, the Authority unanimously approved the December 2020 Financial Report attached as Exhibit "B".**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

- Brian Sillitto reported that the last week in December was very active. The announcements for 2020 were for 665 jobs and \$57 million. He spoke about the Path-Tec expansion and the need to expand the parking capacity. He suggested the Real Estate Committee (Alfred Blackmar, Lisa Smith and Heath Schondelmayer) discuss ways to facilitate the parking expansion. Ty Webb talked about the proposed temporary and the permanent parking drawings. Brian Sillitto spoke about these and the need for additional acres. The Real Estate Committee will make recommendations to the Incentive Committee. Brian Sillitto gave updates on the active projects and talked about the leads. The Economic Development report is attached as Exhibit "C". He gave an update on the MEI efforts. About 190 major employers and investors of the Chamber were contacted to reach out to them and see how they are doing. There were 11 companies which will have a follow-up on workforce development to determine how the Chamber can assist them.
- Josh Beard gave an update the recent National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) activities. The 2021 Defense budget has \$80 million for ground robotics at Ft. Benning. This can be used to seek out robotics industries interested in locating here to support what is going on at Ft. Benning. Conversations are taking place with Columbus State University, Columbus Technical College, Auburn, Georgia Tech and Mercer. They all are receptive to creating a partnership to support robotic development in the defense industries.
- Brian Sillitto asked Chris Wightman to speak about the Midland Commons announcement several weeks ago. Chris Wightman reported that Publix is building a new 48,000 sq ft prototype

in the development. There are a group of retailers which normally follow Publix. There will also be a 100,000 sq ft of mixed-use space in the middle of Midland Commons which would include restaurants.

- Lisa Smith suggested that board members and other individuals could assist with projects if needed and appropriate.

### **CITY OF COLUMBUS REPORT**

Pam Hodge reported that sales tax continues to be above that of last year. In November the sales tax was 2.2% above that for November 2019. The budget process for FY 2022 will begin in a few weeks. The deadline for T-SPLOST projects application to the Regional Committee is May 31. Any projects for consideration need to be sent to Pam Hodge. The projected amount for the region is \$350 million. In response to a question, she will send members the spreadsheet of where revenues are coming from. She reported that the 13<sup>th</sup> Street project of GDOT is scheduled to be let in the spring, the MOU with Columbus Water Works is under review, and projected start date is in the summer. She reported that a request from CCVB for \$17,681.93 has been received since motel hotel taxes fell below the \$125 thousand threshold. An invoice has been sent to the Authority which will pay CCVB and then invoice the City for that amount. The Council has approved \$100 thousand to a Truth Spring Trade School program in the North Highland community. The one-year program involves individuals getting a GED, rehabbing houses and job training which would lead to job creations. The money from the Economic Development funds of the City would flow through the Development Authority. She would like for Carrie Strickland to give an overview of the program at the next Authority meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

### **LEGAL ISSUES**

- **Upon motion made by Selvin Hollingsworth and seconded by Lisa Smith, the Authority unanimously approved the Project Agreement for Project Zummit.** Documents are on file.
- **Upon motion made by Selvin Hollingsworth and seconded by Chris Wightman, the Authority unanimously consented to a non-institutional buyer acquiring the Independence Place Bonds** Documents are on file.
- **Upon motion made by Chris Wightman and seconded by Selvin Hollingsworth, the Authority unanimously approved entering into a new lease with the lender under the same terms and conditions of the current lease if the bankruptcy court terminated the existing lease for the Independence Place Project.** Documents are on file.

### **OTHER ISSUES**

None

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Upon motion made by Chris Wightman and seconded by Lisa Smith, the Authority went into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a real estate matter.**

**Upon motion made by Jacki Lowe and seconded by Chris Wightman, the Authority came out of Executive Session.**

There was no action taken during the Executive Session.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

**Upon motion made by Jacki Lowe and seconded by Heath Schondelmayer, the Authority meeting was adjourned.**

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

Approved by:

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

NOTE: Minutes were approved by Authority at February 4, 2021 meeting but not signed since met via Zoom.