

City of Columbus
Economic Development Authority
January 11, 2017

The January 11, 2017 meeting of the City of Columbus City Council was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by President Dave Povolny at the City Hall. Present were EDA Commissioners, Tracie Wilson, Denny Peterson, Mark Daly, Jeff Duraine and Bill Krebs, Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko, Attorney Bill Griffith, and Public Information Coordinator Jessica Hughes.

Also in attendance were: Kris King, Paul Peskar, Mary Preiner, Pat Preiner, Dennis Postler, and Jody Krebs.

A. APPROVAL – 09.14.2016 EDA Minutes

Motion by Daly to approve the 09.14.16 EDA minutes. Seconded by Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL – 01.11.17 EDA Agenda

Motion by Peterson to approve the agenda. Seconded by Daly. Motion carried unanimously.

C. NEW BUSINESS

EDA Organizational Appointments

At this time EDA Commissioners discussed the election of officers for 2017. The EDA Bylaws state that the EDA Annual Meeting shall be held on the second Wednesday of January. The Mayor serves as the President. The officers consist of a Vice President, Commissioners, Secretary, a Treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer. The Vice President and Treasurer shall be members of the board and are elected at the annual meeting. The City Administrator serves as the Assistant Treasurer, Secretary and Executive Director.

Motion by Peterson to maintain the 2016 appointments for 2017. Seconded by Wilson. Motion carried unanimously.

ColumBiz Event

The question was asked whether or not the City should go forward with the ColumBiz event this year. Commissioner Wilson suggested the City still hold the event, because it could be an opportunity to update the business community on concerns that were raised at the previous year's event. Executive Director Mursko also pointed out that there will be a number of construction projects going on in 2017 that these businesses should be made aware of. In addition, Mursko suggested that ColumBiz would be a good opportunity to discuss the branding of Columbus, and encourage business leaders make an effort to market their presence in Columbus (rather than Forest Lake, Wyoming...etc). Commissioner Daly noted that the format of small table discussion was too lengthy. The commissioners agreed and suggested the format be changed to

include shorter and more broad questions.

Motion by Wilson to hold the ColumBiz event in 2017. Seconded by Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Wilson to amend the previous motion to include the 04.20.17 date. Seconded by Daly. Motion carried unanimously.

Direction – Goals List

A 2017 Goals List was included in the agenda packet. Minor changes were made to the Goals List at this time.

PROPOSED 2017 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY GOALS

1. Legislative Project: I-35/TH97/CR23 Bridge Project Funding
2. ColumBiz Event (April 20, 2017 7:45 – 9:45 a.m. – RAHP)
3. Advertise/Branding of “Columbus”
4. Land Marketing
 - a. Purchase: “For Sale” Signage for Quad 35 Land
 - b. Purchase: Concept Plans for all Quad 35 Land
5. Attracting New Development and Businesses – Retaining Current Businesses
 - a. Approve: Concept Plan for Directional Signage East Side Businesses
6. Recruit EDA Member

The second point of conversation had to do with a Business District sign that Columbus business owners had petitioned to have installed. At the 10.26.16 City Council meeting, the City Council reviewed the petition and determined that the sign would be allowed, but it would not be paid for by the City. Executive Director Mursko presented the sign’s initial design concept to the EDA Commission for consideration. The general consensus was that the design is rather plain, and they would like to consider the possibility of lighting up the sign. The Commission would like the business leaders to consider using this sign temporarily (ie. 5 years or so), and then upgrading the sign once construction projects in the area are complete. The Commission wants to ensure that all of the signage is consistent after projects such as the I-35/TH97/CR23 Bridge and CSAH 54 relocation are complete. Mursko agreed to bring the design back to business leaders and relay these questions and concerns. The City Council will consider the updated design at a later meeting.

2016 Annual Report

The EDA Annual Report was handed out at the meeting. The Executive Director reviewed the report that was drafted by Jessica Hughes, Public Communications Coordinator, with the Commission. This report will be available on the website for public viewing.

D. OPEN BUSINESS

Legislation Discussion

At this time the Commission had a lengthy discussion on this Legislative Session as it relates to funding for the I35/TH97/CR23 Bridge Project. Executive Director Mursko explained that the City could receive money for the Bridge Project either through a bonding bill or a transportation bill going through the legislature. Commissioner Krebs asked if we should contact Columbus’ Representative in the House, Cal Bahr, to ensure he is on the same page as the City. Attorney Bill Griffith noted that in the past the City has worked with District 39A Representative Bob Dettmer on the project. Griffith suggested that we continue to do so because Dettmer is familiar with the project and supportive.

Update – TH97/I35 Bridge Project

Commissioner Krebs asked City Staff to explain in greater detail how the funding for the bridge will work. City Engineer Dennis Postler explained the situation; the Bridge is a \$25 million project, the funding for which will come from two main sources; Anoka County and MnDOT. Anoka County will be contributing \$9 million and MnDOT is contributing \$3.5 million. Therefore, there is still a funding gap of roughly \$12.5 million, and the City is hopeful that they will receive this money through a bonding or transportation bill.

E. COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

At this time Commissioner Tracie Wilson discussed the progress of a hotel being added to Running Aces Harness Park. She said that the project is moving forward, however Running Aces is also currently considering a more expensive design for the hotel; more meeting rooms, a restaurant in the hotel, and the possibility of an indoor/outdoor pool concept. Wilson reported they are expecting to have shovels in the ground by spring.

Lastly, Mursko suggested changing the EDA meeting dates from once every two months to quarterly, cancelling the May 10 and September 13 meetings. The Commission agreed.

F. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Treasurer’s Report

100 EDA General Fund Loan	\$(1,007,415.68)
240 EDA Fund	\$ 38,578.11

G. NEXT MEETING DATE

March 08 2017, 6:00 p.m.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Daly to adjourn. Seconded by Krebs. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jessica Hughes, Public Communications Coordinator