

**City of Columbus
Economic Development Authority Meeting
Alternative Meeting Format
Minnesota Statutes, 13D.021
01.13.21**

The 01.13.21 meeting of the City of Columbus Economic Development Authority was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Jesse Preiner at the City Hall. Present were EDA Commissioners Robert Busch, Sue Wagamon (via teleconference), Mark Daly, Bob Berens, Shelly Logren (via teleconference), and Janet Hegland; Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko, City Attorney Bill Griffith, and Assistant Secretary Jessica Hughes.

Also in Attendance (via teleconference) were: none.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER – 6:00 p.m.**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. APPROVAL – 10.14.20 EDA Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Daly to approve the 10.14.2020 EDA meeting minutes. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Busch – aye; Logren – aye; Berens – aye. Motion carries.

- 4. APPROVAL – 09.09.20 EDA Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Busch to approve the 09.09.2020 EDA meeting minutes. Seconded by Daly. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Busch – aye; Logren – aye; Berens – aye. Motion carries.

- 5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Hegland to approve to agenda. Seconded by Berens. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Busch – aye; Logren – aye; Berens – aye. Motion carries.

- 6. OPEN BUSINESS**

No report.

- 7. NEW BUSINESS**

2021 Annual EDA Meeting

Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko explained that this is the EDA's annual meeting where the election of officers is held. President Preiner took nominations for this election.

Daly nominated Berens for Vice President.

Motion by Daly to nominate Berens as Vice President of the EDA. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Busch – aye; Logren – aye; Berens – aye. Motion carries.

Hegland nominated Logren for the position of Treasurer.

Motion by Hegland to nominate Logren as Treasurer of the EDA. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Busch – aye; Logren – aye; Berens – aye. Motion carries.

Motion by Hegland to nominate Mursko as assistant treasurer and secretary and Public Communications Coordinator Jessica Hughes as assistant secretary. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Busch – aye; Logren – aye; Berens – aye. Motion carries.

2020 EDA Annual Report

Public Communications Coordinator Jessica Hughes presented the 2020 EDA annual report to the group. The EDA indicated they will approve the report at the next EDA meeting.

2021 Goals

Fiscal Disparities Legislative Initiative

The City Council has expressed interest in lobbying the legislature to improve the City's situation in relation to the state's fiscal disparities program. City Attorney Bill Griffith explained that the fiscal disparities program was designed to level the playing field between metropolitan cities. Over time, unique scenarios have arisen for certain Cities, causing them to be net losers in the program. Columbus has been a net loser in the program for some time.

Griffith offered to do an initial investigation with help from Anoka County to understand the mechanics of the program and why the City is a net loser. He would also analyze a 2017 bill which altered the fiscal disparities program for a subset of Cities.

The EDA agreed they would like Griffith to take on this effort. The cost will be \$10,000 per month, for the five months leading to the completion of the legislative session. The City Council will be able to review Griffith's initial findings after one month, to determine if they would like to pursue the additional four months. The City would fund this initiative through the EDA's operating budget.

Motion by Daly to authorize City Attorney Bill Griffith to begin a fiscal disparities legislative initiative for one month at a cost of \$10,000 to assess prior legislation, assess the issue with fiscal disparities experts, and meet with legislative leaders. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Berens – aye; Wagamon –

aye; Logren – aye; President Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

EDA Webpage and EDA Marketing Photos

As the City is updating their website, there is interest in hiring a photographer to develop a library of professional photos of various locations around Columbus. City Staff are recommending assembling an RFP to receive bids from photographers for this initiative. The EDA agreed that the RFP should clearly state that the City will own all images, who will have access to the photos, and how the photos will be used.

Motion by Hegland to approve seeking an RFP for photographic services covering the four seasons for an amount not to exceed \$5,000. Seconded by Daly. Roll call vote; Daly – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Berens – aye; Wagamon – aye; Logren – aye; President Preiner – aye. Motion carries.

Citizen & Business Internet Survey

It has been a goal of the City Council and EDA to improve internet access to underserved and not served areas of Columbus. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of having good internet in the home. The City recently used CARES Act dollars to expand internet service to 43 households in Columbus.

Because the City is expected to receive additional federal funding related to the pandemic, City Staff are recommending preparing ahead of time to ensure projects are ready to begin once funding is distributed. To best prepare, the Council has authorized a by-mail survey to be sent to all residents in Columbus to understand what areas of the City are underserved or not served. The survey will also request contact information from residents for the City to follow up with them and to create a map of internet service in Columbus.

8. COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

Logren encouraged EDA members to use the Destination Development Association Membership to view videos and seminars on municipal branding.

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Development Update

Mursko reported that there have been a few individual development applications submitted to the City recently. At this time it is typical for developers to inquire about potential projects, and a higher volume of applications are typically submitted later in the year.

Treasurer’s Report

100 EDA General Fund Loan	\$ (705,316.68) as of 06.30.2020
240 EDA Fund	\$ 60,073.22 as of 11.30.2020

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular EDA meeting is on 04.14.21 at 6:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Daly to adjourn. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote; Berens – aye; Daly – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; President Preiner – aye; Wagamon – aye; Logren – aye. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jessica Hughes, Public Communications Coordinator

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ANNUAL MEETING 2021 (Final)

Board of Members

Mayor Jesse Preiner
Council Member Janet Hegland
Council Member Shelly Logren
Council Member Sue Wagamon
Council Member Robert Busch
At-Large Member Mark Daly
At-Large Member - Robert Berens
Executive Director - Elizabeth Mursko
Assistant Secretary - Jessica Hughes

Election of Officers

President	Mayor Jesse Preiner
Vice President	Bob Berens
Treasurer	Shelly Logren
Assistant Treasurer	Elizabeth Mursko
Secretary	Elizabeth Mursko
Assistant Secretary	Jessica Hughes

EDA Meeting 01.13.2021