

City of Columbus
Economic Development Authority
March 8, 2017

The March 8, 2017 meeting of the City of Columbus Economic Development Authority was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Vice President Mark Daly at the City Hall. Present were EDA Commissioners, Tracie Wilson, Denny Peterson, and Bill Krebs, Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko, Attorney Bill Griffith, and Public Information Coordinator Jessica Hughes.

Also in attendance were: Dennis Postler.

A. APPROVAL – 01.11.17 EDA Minutes

Motion by Krebs to approve the 01.11.17 EDA minutes. Seconded by Peterson. Motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL – 03.08.17 EDA Agenda

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

C. NEW BUSINESS

Review Table Top Exercise ColumBiz & ColumBiz Event April 20, 2017

At this time Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko presented the Commission with detailed information regarding the 04.20.17 ColumBiz event. Mursko reported that after a City Staff meeting, there was a decision made to change the schedule of the event. Instead of doing presentations after table top discussions, City Staff is recommending doing the opposite. It is the hope that by having presentations first, many people's questions about upcoming road projects will be answered right away, and table top discussion can be focused on branding and identity questions.

At this time Commissioners expressed their concern with the format of table top discussions. The concern is that the table top discussion was unfocused, lengthy, and overall ineffective. Wilson suggested that the table top discussion be replaced with a presentation from the City about current events and developments. Other Commissioners agreed that this was a good idea, and suggested that either Mayor Povolny or City Administrator Mursko do the presentation. Mursko agreed to put together a presentation and speak at the event. The schedule for the day will be amended to reflect this change. In place of the table top discussion, there will be a short questionnaire regarding branding and identity of the City that guests will be asked to fill out before they leave.

Freeway District Signage

Mursko presented information regarding signage advertising land for sale in the Freeway District. The City requested designs and quotes from Gator Signs for three different sets of

signs; the quotes for which do not include the cost for materials, labor, or maintenance. The first set of signs is three 4'x16' signs, saying "For Sale" and would be visible from the freeway. The second set of signs is three 8'x32' signs saying "For Sale" and displaying individual parcel information. The last is a single sign, measuring 8'x32', containing commercial retail information. Mursko is presenting some possible designs to the Commission, with varying colors and images. The quote from Gator Signs for all the signage was \$11,400. The Commission had a short discussion on the main background colors of the signs, and came to the consensus that red was best. They also agreed to empower Mursko to make the final decision on the images and layout.

Motion by Peterson to give Mursko the authority to make the final decision on freeway district signage design, and to purchase signs up to the quoted \$11,400.00. Seconded by Krebs. Motion carried unanimously.

D. OPEN BUSINESS

Transportation Funding Legislation Update

City Attorney Bill Griffith reported that there was a Committee Meeting on the Senate Capital Investment Bill where the TH97 I35 bridge project was discussed. Griffith noted that the bill currently contains a \$9 million grant to Anoka County for work on Highway 23, CSAH 54, and Hornsby Street NE. Wilson asked if the money for rebuilding the bridge is included in this bill? Griffith replied that no, the bridge reconstruction itself is included in a different fund. Anoka County agreed to front \$6 million for the bridge, and will be paid back for that contribution.

Wilson asked if the bridge will be reconstructed in 2019? Mursko replied that the MnDot bonded overlay project (which includes the TH97 bridge) will be let for bid in June of 2017, and it is a 3-year project. The TH97 bridge itself will be done in 2019, because CSAH 54 is being realigned in 2018. Lastly, Wilson asked if during the 3-year period of this project, the TH97 bridge will stay up? Mursko replied that they will be keeping two lanes open the entire time, except for one weekend when they must drop the bridge completely. Beyond that, it is possible that the bridge will be down to one lane for 7-30 days during construction, however the design-build plan incentivizes the contractor to keep the number of days the bridge is closed to a minimum.

Goals List Update

Executive Director Mursko presented an updated Goals List for 2017 based on the last EDA meeting. In terms of further action that could be taken to help the branding of Columbus, she suggested that the City consider getting new vinyl for the City's billboards, as the previous ones have completed their terms. Mursko also noted that Running Aces has a message on their billboard saying "Welcome to Columbus" playing in rotation with other content.

Secondly, Mursko said that since progress is being made on the NE quadrant concept plan, the EDA should begin considering Concept Plans for signage in the other three quadrants of land that are also for sale.

Lastly, Mursko is updating the Commission on the status of wayfinding signage in the business district. Based on the February 8th City Council Meeting, a decision was made for the City to own the signs and have businesses reimburse the City for associated costs. During the February 22nd City Council meeting, the Reimbursement Agreement for the signs was passed by the Council. Mursko is working with Tim McKenzie (who initiated the petition) and he has expressed approval of the Agreement. Mursko did receive the first quote from Leroy's Signs, and will be getting a second from Gator Signs. Daly asked what the situation would be if another business comes into the area? Griffith replied that the best course would be to have 5-year terms such that any new business in the area would have to wait until the current 5-year term is up to be added to the sign.

E. COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION

Commissioners discussed the opening for a new member on the EDA board. Daly raised the idea of advertising the open seat at ColumBiz. The rest of the Commission agreed this was a good idea. Griffith suggested there be a handout at each table with information on the vacancy for guests to consider.

F. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

<u>Treasurer's Report</u>	
100 EDA General Fund Loan	\$(1,007,415.68)
240 EDA Fund	\$ 38,493.08

G. NEXT MEETING DATE

The May 10th EDA meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting is July 12th 2017, 6:00 p.m.

H. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jessica Hughes, Public Communications Coordinator