



**City of Columbus**  
**Regular Economic Development Authority (EDA) Meeting**  
**Alternative Meeting Format**  
**MN Statute, Section 13D.021**  
**01.11.2023**

The 01.11.23 meeting of the City of Columbus Economic Development Authority was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by President Jesse Preiner at City Hall. Present were Commissioners Robert Busch, Karen Fleming, Ron Hanegraaf, Janet Hegland and Sue Wagamon; Assistant Secretary Connor Keith, City Attorney Megan Rogers, City Engineer Kevin Bittner, Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

Also in attendance: Cindy Angel, Myron Angel, Planning Commissioner Barb Bobick and Brenda Miller

1. Call to Order Regular Meeting – 5:02 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Agenda

**Motion by Hegland to approve the agenda. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Fleming – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

4. Approval of the 10-12-2022 EDA Meeting Minutes

**Motion by Preiner to table approval of the 10-12-2022 EDA Minutes until the next EDA meeting. Seconded by Busch. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf: abstain; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Fleming – abstain; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

5. New Business
  - i) Introduction of New Member – Karen Fleming

Preiner introduced Fleming, sharing she has lived in Columbus approximately two years and is currently MVP of Special Projects for SPIRE Credit Union. Preiner said he feels Fleming will be a valuable asset to the City.

- ii) Annual Election of Officers

Mursko detailed the 2023 EDA Board and Officers, detailing elected officials and City Staff roles and pointing out that the Vice President and Treasurer roles are vacant and require nominations.

Preiner asked the EDA for nominations for EDA vice president. Wagamon asked what the role of the Vice President would be. Mursko said that the primary responsibility is to serve as EDA President in the case the President is unable to fulfill their duties.

**Preiner nominated Wagamon for Vice President. Seconded by Hegland. Roll call vote: Hanegraaf – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hegland – aye; Busch – aye; Fleming – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

Mursko shared that the treasurer is responsible for overseeing EDA expenses and working with the Executive Director regarding the budget. For 2022, the EDA's budget was \$76,305, with expenses of \$66,046.37 and revenue of \$42,658.26 as of November 2022.

**Motion by Wagamon to nominate Busch as treasurer. Seconded by Hanegraaf. Fleming – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

Mursko said the EDA Annual Report will be shared at the next EDA meeting on April 12, 2023. Updated EDA handbooks will be distributed at the EDA Workshop Meeting on February 14, 2023, during which the Executive Director of the Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and the Anoka County Director of Economic Development will be in attendance with presentations. Mursko also said she would make contact with Taro Ito, owner of Running Aces, to determine what stage he is in of his market research with Marquette Advisors.

6. Open Business
  - i) New EDA Mission Statement

Mursko pointed the EDA to the new mission statement drafted at its most recent workshop meeting.

**Motion by Hegland to adopt the drafted mission statement as the EDA's new mission statement. Seconded by Busch.**

Preiner read the proposed mission statement: The mission of the EDA is to facilitate responsible economic growth and redevelopment that contributes significantly to Columbus' taxbase with a goal of maintaining an affordable rural lifestyle for our residents.

**Roll call vote: Fleming – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

- ii) Business Visits Program & Business List

Mursko pointed the EDA to the list of businesses within Columbus, sharing that the list almost exclusively lists operations in business districts and does not include residential zoned businesses throughout the Rural Residential District.

Mursko continued, pointing the EDA to the proposed talking points for EDA members to discuss with Columbus businessowners during site visits.

Hegland proposed a communication, such as a letter, being sent to businesses before EDA members would make contact with them to prepare them for these visits, verify contact information and ask some simple questions. Mursko asked if one of the questions within this letter would be to ask if businesses wanted to be visited by the EDA.

Hanegraaf asked if the City had intentions of resuming Columbiz. Hegland said that was the case, but that the event was not constructed for the City to ask these types of questions and more to create a networking event for businesses within Columbus. Hanegraaf thought it would be a good ice-breaker to

start to get that information after the event. Preiner asked how many businesses attended Columbiz. Mursko said approximately 30-40 percent of businesses participated in what was typically a breakfast. Hanegraaf asked if the frequency of Columbiz could be increased to quarterly. Hegland said original thoughts were to host Columbiz biannually, but that different businesses have different operating hours and that different event times could improve overall turnout.

Busch asked how businesses have been invited to Columbiz in the past. Mursko said that invitations were usually designed to be handed out personally by EDA member.

Preiner proposed biannual events, one in February and another in October or November. Fleming felt a good way to increase turnout would be to provide different education opportunities at each meeting. Hegland said she would like to ask how businesses would prefer the City contact them with City news or updates, but didn't know if it was best to do this type of data-collection before or after an event. Hanegraaf asked if the EDA should do site visits after a Columbiz event. Wagamon agreed with Hanegraaf's suggestion.

Preiner asked if the EDA wanted to plan for a Columbiz. Mursko said March would probably be the best time if the EDA wanted to schedule an event in the near future. A consensus agreed to host a Columbiz breakfast event in early March at Running Aces.

**Motion by Preiner to direct City Staff to plan a Columbiz morning breakfast event at Running Aces in early March. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Fleming – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

Wagamon asked the EDA if it wanted Lakes Area TV to record its meetings. The EDA asked if it would cost the City. Wagamon said she would ask.

- iii) 2023 EDA Goals
- 7. Commission Open Discussion
- 8. Executive Director's Report
  - i) February Workshop Meeting Agenda
  - ii) Treasurer's Report
- 9. Next Meeting Date: April 12, 2023 at 5 p.m.  
Next Workshop Date: February 14, 2023, 5 p.m.
- 10. Adjournment

**Motion by Busch to adjourn. Seconded by Preiner. Roll call vote: Felling – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Respectively submitted:

*Connor Keith*

Connor Keith, Assistant Secretary

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