



**City of Columbus**  
**Regular Economic Development Authority (EDA) Meeting**  
**Alternative Meeting Format**  
**MN Statute, Section 13D.021**  
**08.09.2023**

The 08.09.23 meeting of the City of Columbus Economic Development Authority was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by President Jesse Preiner at City Hall. Present were Commissioners Karen Fleming, Ron Hanegraaf, Janet Hegland and Sue Wagamon; Assistant Secretary Connor Keith, City Attorney Bill Griffith, City Engineer Kevin Bittner, Executive Director Elizabeth Mursko (via teleconference) and Public Works Director Jim Windingstad.

Not in attendance: Commissioner Judy Huntosh

1. Call to Order Regular Meeting – 5:01 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Agenda

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

4. Approval of the 04-12-2023 EDA Meeting Minutes

**Motion by Hegland to approve the April 12, 2023, EDA Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Fleming. Roll call vote: Fleming – aye; Busch – abstain; Hegland – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

5. New Business
  - i) 2024 HRA EDA Budget

Mursko explained that the EDA has two proposed intentions for its HRA EDA levy. Established statutorily and requiring a resolution for passage, the proposed budget has allocated \$120,000 to either a fiscal disparities study, transportation projects or some combination of the two.

**Motion by Hegland to approve Resolution 23-01 authorizing the final levy of the Special Benefit Levy pursuant to Minnesota Statute 469.033 subdivision 6, and approval of the budget for fiscal year 2024. Seconded by Wagamon. Roll call vote: Fleming – aye; Busch – aye; Hegland – aye; Wagamon – aye; Hanegraaf – aye; Preiner – aye. Motion carries.**

- ii) 2024 Goals

Mursko explained that the EDA's 2024 goals will refine the body's 2024 operations budget, which it will recommend to City Council for final approval. These goals will drive the budget discussion on October 11, 2023.

The EDA agreed to continue moving forward with a study researching how Columbus could change its status as a “net-loser” under the current Fiscal Disparities formula as a 2024 goal.

Turning to the EDA’s marketing initiatives, Hegland asked Keith for an update of billboard ideas. For covers used on static billboards to display in between paid contracts, Keith suggested the City promote either its own brand, promoting lots in the City for sale or City events. Mursko shared that Matthew Weiland of Clear Channel is currently scheduled to attend September’s EDA workshop, but the EDA asked to reschedule him to October. Hegland suggested utilizing information collected in the recent branding study to refine billboard messaging, as well as the potential purchase of streetlight banners.

Hanegraaf asked Windingstad if the City has decided to move the lights farther from the roadway on N. Hornsby Street. The EDA reached a consensus to cap the base of the knocked-over pole, but not relocate it at this time.

Turning to concept plans, Hegland asked Mursko if Gregory Frahm-Gilles, Anoka County’s Economic Development Director, had provided guidance on if the City should pursue them in the northeastern and northwestern quads. Mursko said the county had just held its annual economic development meeting and that Frahm-Gilles has agreed to attend two meetings in Columbus per year to discuss retail and business trends. Mursko said only 15 acres remain to be developed in the northeastern quad, with Hy-Vee owning a 3-acre parcel. The EDA requested Frahm-Gilles attend the September 12 EDA workshop to further discuss concept plans.

**6. Open Business**

**i) 2023 EDA Goals**

Not discussed.

**ii) Business Visits Program**

Preiner asked Fleming about response from Columbus businesses when she reached out about sponsoring Fall Fest. Fleming said responses had been overwhelmingly positive over email, which Hegland said fellow Fall Fest board member Lynn Carver-Quinn echoed during her face-to-face conversations. Hegland hoped the face-to-face contact with these businesses would be a good starting point to initiate business visits and extend invites to ColumBiz but felt the EDA should have a better plan for when the visits would take place and what questions would be asked. The EDA reached a consensus to better formulate plans for business visits after the October ColumBiz event.

The EDA expressed that it wanted to continue with a business newsletter.

**iii) Save the date for October 16, 2023, Social Hour Event**

Not discussed.

**7. Commission Open Discussion**

No participation.

8. Executive Director's Report
  - i) September Workshop Meeting Agenda

Not discussed.

- ii) Treasurer's Report

Not discussed.

9. Next Meeting Date: October 11, 2023, at 5 p.m.  
Next Workshop Date: September 12, 2023, 5:30 p.m.
10. Adjournment

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Respectively submitted:

*Connor Keith*

Connor Keith, Assistant Secretary