

MEETING OF THE
DULUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
[WEDNESDAY, November 20, 2024 – 5:15 P.M.](#)
COUNCIL CHAMBERS-CITY HALL
MINUTES

Present: Arik Forsman, Dan Markham, Ellie Just, Janet Kennedy, Connor Randall, Roz Randorf

Absent: ChaQuana McEntyre

Others Present: Amanda Mangan, Tricia Hobbs, Ariana Dahlen, Sam Smith, Nick Anderson, Tom Church, Lori Davey, Nancy Cashman

CALL TO ORDER: This meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m.

PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

No public comment was made to the commission.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

[RESOLUTION 24D-47](#): RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PURCHASE AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH WELCH PLACE LLLP FOR THE WELCH PLACE PROJECT

No comment.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

[MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 23, 2024, MEETING](#)

No comments.

Vote to approve October 23, 2024, Meeting Minutes: (Randorf, Just) Vote: Passed (5-0)

APPROVAL OF CASH TRANSACTIONS

[October 1, 2024, to October 31, 2024](#)

No comments.

Vote to approve cash transactions-October 1, 2024, to October 31, 2024: (Markham, Just) Vote: Passed (5-0)

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS FOR APPROVAL

[RESOLUTION 24D-47: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PURCHASE AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH WELCH PLACE LLLP FOR THE WELCH PLACE PROJECT](#)

Tricia Hobbs gave an overview of this project. Hobbs stated that this is for reconveyance of property to Center City Housing in the Ramsey neighborhood for the development of a 30-unit multifamily residential housing unit. The units will be leased to individuals earning 60% or less of AMI for a duration of 20 years.

Nancy Cashman, the Director of Center City Housing, spoke on the item and thanked the commission and the City for their partnership.

Vote to approve Resolution 24D-47: (Randorf, Markham) Vote: Passed (5-0)

[RESOLUTION 26D-48: RESOLUTION APPROVING FUNDING FOR THE DULUTH PRODUCTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO INCENTIVIZE VISUAL MEDIA PRODUCTION IN DULUTH AND AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH UPPER MIWEST FILM OFFICE FOR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES](#)

Commissioner Arik Forsman arrived at 5:19 P.M.

Hobbs stated that this is the 4th year of this program. There are no modifications to the program requirements however insurance requirements have been updated to follow City standards.

Vote to approve Resolution 24D-48: (Just, Forsman) Vote: Passed (6-0)

[RESOLUTION 24D-49: RESOLUTION APPROVING THE DEDA 2025 BUDGETS](#)

Hobbs gave a brief overview of the DEDA budget for 2025 and pointed out changes that were made since the budget was presented back in October. Hobbs noted that the \$14.5 million in ARPA funds have been committed to projects such as Plover Place, Damiano (Stepping On Up), Brae View, Wadena West, New Garrick, Residence, Welch Place, and the 1200 Fund Store Front Loan Program. There are no more funds to be allocated.

Hobbs noted that the staff training budget has been increased to \$20,000. Hobbs also noted that the operational fund has increased due to the DECC Seawall dredging project which is part of the 'Professional Services' line item on the budget. Hobbs noted that the Lester Park working group had started back up in October and have until April 1, 2025, to discuss and evaluate opportunities for recreation of all kinds for all seasons.

Vote to approve Resolution 24D-49: (Kennedy, Randorf) Vote: Passed (6-0)

[RESOLUTION 24D-50: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT WITH WREN WORKS FOR DREDGING OF THE DECC SEAWALL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \\$860,612.75](#)

Hobbs stated that this item would authorize a construction contract with Wren Works for the dredging of the DECC Seawall. This is a key final step to allow easier access for the cruising industry.

President Randall asked how far along the project is. Hobbs stated that the project will be complete by the next cruising season, so by June of 2025.

Vote to approve Resolution 24D-50: (Markham, Just) Vote: Passed (6-0)

[RESOLUTION 24D-51](#): RESOLUTION APPROVING A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH DAMIANO OF DULUTH, INC FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN EMERGENCY CENTER FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Hobbs stated that \$500,000 from the DEDA 2025 budget has been earmarked for the Stepping On Up program. The funds would be used by Damiano of Duluth for the construction of an emergency shelter facility to serve people experiencing homelessness. This project is to help the community prepare for a major expansion of the CHUM shelter facility. Hobbs stated that when CHUM begins their work in early 2025, current CHUM residents will move into the Damiano shelter facility for the duration of construction at CHUM. A 120-bed shelter facility will be constructed on the third floor of the Damiano Center. This is expected to be completed by April of 2025.

Senior Housing Developer, Tom Church, stated that to facilitate the expansion, there needs to be a place for CHUM residents to stay.

Commissioner Randorf thanked Commissioner Forsman for his work in moving this resolution forward with other City Councilors. Commissioner Randorf stated that this work is important for DEDA as it helps to create stability in our workforce, encouraging economic growth through employment.

Commissioner Forsman stated that he appreciates the work Commissioner Randorf did in pushing this resolution to the finish line and understands that while the process of funding this project has not been typical, it was needed to support the homeless community.

Commissioner Kennedy stated that she is supportive of this resolution. She stated that policies need to be changed in order to see sustainable changes in the community. She is greatly appreciative of the work community partners and City Council have done in moving this item forward.

Vote to approve Resolution 24D-51: (Randorf, Just) Vote: Passed (6-0)

DISCUSSION

Hobbs announced that Ben VanTassel has been hired as the new Director of Planning and Economic Development. Hobbs also gave an update on the New Garrick's/Shopper's ramp, stating that the bid for demo is to go out on November 21st. Hobbs gave an update on the Urbane project stating that representatives from Merge will be attending the December DEDA meeting to provide information on the project.

Commissioner Forsman asked where the status of the Merge development agreement currently sits. Hobbs stated that Merge is still in breach of the agreement and conversations are being had about how to move forward.

9. ADJOURN: President Randall adjourned the November 20, 2024, meeting of DEDA at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed by:

Tricia Hobbs

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Tricia Hobbs- Interim Executive Director