

MEETING OF THE
DULUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 – 5:15 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS-CITY HALL
MINUTES

Present: Anna Bailey, Chiamaka Enemuoh, Arik Forsman, Janet Kennedy, Dan Markham, Connor Randall, Roz Randorf

Absent: None

Others Present: Amanda Mangan, Tricia Hobbs, Ariana Dahlen, Sam Smith, Tom Church, Angie Stier, Amanda Anderson, Lenna Pfankuch

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

PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

No comments.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES FROM JULY 23, 2025 MEETING

No comments.

Vote to approve July 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes: (Kennedy, Enemuoh) Vote: Passed (7-0)

APPROVAL OF CASH TRANSACTIONS

JULY 1, 2025 TO JULY 31, 2025

No comments.

Vote to approve Cash Transactions – July 1, 2025 to July 31, 2025: (Kennedy, Markham) Vote: Passed (7-0)

AUGUST 1, 2025 TO AUGUST 31, 2025

Director Hobbs noted an incorrectly coded cash transaction. This correction will appear on next month's cash transactions.

Vote to approve Cash Transactions – August 1, 2025 to August 31, 2025: (Bailey, Randorf) Vote: Passed (7-0)

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS FOR APPROVAL

RESOLUTION 25D-34: RESOLUTION ADOPTING DULUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY'S FEE SCHEDULE

Director Hobbs stated that staff will be reviewing the DEDA fee schedule on a regular basis to ensure that fees are accurate and cover the cost of staff time.

Vote to approve Resolution 25D-34: (Randorf, Kennedy) Vote: Passed (7-0)

RESOLUTION 25D-35: RESOLUTION OF THE DULUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FINDING A PARCEL IS OCCUPIED BY STRUCTURALLY SUBSTANDARD BUILDINGS AND MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A REDEVELOPMENT TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES §469.174, SUBD. 10

Director Hobbs stated that this item certifies a blight finding and is necessary for redevelopment TIF districts specifically when one of the buildings within that district that qualifies for that blight requirement is to be demolished. The Annex Building at the Armory site, which will be a future TIF request to commissioner, requires this finding.

Commissioner Randorf asked for an estimated timeline for the project and the establishment of the district. Director Hobbs stated that if the blight finding is certified, staff will work on the run for the district, and then early next year they will begin to talk about the certification of the district and negotiating the development agreement.

President Randall asked how long the reports are good for as the current report is dated 2022. Director Hobbs stated that as long as the report is still accurate, it still stands.

***Commissioner Markham abstained from discussion and voting on this item.

Vote to approve Resolution 25D-35: (Randorf, Kennedy) Vote: Passed (6-0-1)

DISCUSSION

Director Hobbs stated that at the October 14th City Council meeting, staff will be putting forward a modification to development district No. 17. This is the district that dictates where DEDA can do any work that falls outside of the housing, HRA district, which are powers that DEDA hold. This is related to land transfers for non-housing or industrial purposes. Currently the district is condensed, so staff are looking to expand those boundaries.

Angie Stier, Economic Developer, gave an overview of the program developments of the Duluth 1200 Fund. Stier specifically noted the work staff has done in establishing the Tiny Steps Child Care Grant program, the Historic Fund, and the Storefront Loan program. Commissioner Forsman asked why the number of applicants for the Historic Fund program was low. Director Hobbs stated that there may be complicated dynamics with existing building owners who may not be interested in leveraging the fund, as well as several other contributing factors. With the second round of the program launching next year, additional targeted outreach will be done.

***Commissioner Kennedy left the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

***Commissioner Markham left the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Tom Church and Lenna Pfankuch presented on the findings of the Maxfield Housing Study, stating staff are currently at work and expect at least 300 new housing units to come online over the next 6

months. Staff are working on an action plan for housing as well. This will include updating Housing Trust Fund programming.

Commissioner Forsman asked what the reaction has been from others when they heard the findings of this presentation. Church stated that there was excitement with seeing the updated data, however also stated that the quantity of housing needed is daunting. With this however, there is a better understanding of potential opportunities and how to leverage them to respond to the findings of the report. Director Hobbs stated there were questions as to how the city will accomplish these housing goals. Director Hobbs stated that staff are making progress coming up with solutions as to how to address housing needs and understand the tools that can be used to accomplish these goals. Commissioner Forsman asked if developers have attended this presentation. Director Hobbs confirmed and stated that more developers will be attending the Housing Strategies Conference in November.

Commissioner Randorf asked about the increase in the number of rental units needed versus the number of for-sale homes and if this reflects a change in lifestyle trends. Church stated that the need is mixed and as the population grows, we gain a better understanding of what that need looks like. The increased demand for rentals also reflects the need for more senior-living rentals. Commissioner Randorf asked if staff are targeting senior-specific developers for the conference. Director Hobbs confirmed that staff are engaging with developers.

Commissioner Enemuoh asked what the age group is for age-restrictive housing and what the current population is for that demographic in Duluth. Church stated that he is unsure what the population currently is, however, the age group is 55+.

Commissioner Randorf asked if there are thoughts of what developments should be put in certain areas of Duluth given its unique topography. Director Hobbs stated that staff are looking at parcels available for development in the city and how they can be best utilized by developers to leverage greater affordability.

Commissioner Forsman asked if there are any large sites staff are currently looking at that could be developed for housing. Director Hobbs stated that staff are working with Properties and Parks to determine what public and open spaces are not currently being utilized for their intended purpose and will look at their potential future uses.

Commissioner Bailey asked if conversations are being had around how to support an increase in commercial needs as the number of housing units increase. Director Hobbs confirmed that staff are focusing on neighborhood development and creating amenities that don't currently exist to meet those needs.

ADJOURN: President Randall adjourned the September 24, 2025, Meeting of DEDA at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed by:

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Tricia Hobbs - Executive Director