



Business and Industrial Development Authority
Meeting Summary
Thursday, June 6, 2024
6:30 pm

I. Call to Order

The June 6, 2024 BIDA Board Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairperson Stacy Dunson

II. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Falatta James made a motion to approve the current agenda. Mr. Rory Moon seconded the motion. **The motion was approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

III. Approval of the May 2, 2024, Meeting Summaries

Ms. Beth McMillan made a motion to approve the March 7, 2024, summary, and Ms. Gloria Speed seconded the motion. **The motion was approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

IV. Chairperson Report

Chairperson Mr. Stacey Dunson stated he did have a report to give to the board.

V. Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Ms. Carter stated she spoke to Ms. Jennifer Nelson of Carl Vinson Institute, and she provided two possible available Saturday dates: August 3, 2024 or August 10, 2024 at a cost of \$3,650 for a class of 15 persons and an additional cost of \$245 for each person over the first 15. The class will take place in the East Point Council Chambers from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm. Breakfast and Lunch will be provided here as well. Please note to receive a certificate of completion you must be in attendance the full day. Those that cannot attend the training on the chosen date will have to attend another certified class somewhere else in the metro area within a year following your appointment.

The board was also informed of the financial deposits from Ardens Garden for their annual bond fee for \$5,008 and a Film Production Company to use BIDA owned property for a movie film for \$600.

Ms. Falatta James asked if the Secretary/Treasurer or Legal would provide the board a monthly update of the outstanding bond amounts owed to BIDA? Attorney Kirby Glaze replied that updates would have to be in accordance to the bond amortization schedules of the bond owners which usually is annual. Ms. Carter Also replied that an annual report is provided to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in February of each year listing the amount due of each BIDA Bond and the training date and appointment date of each board member in the same report. Nonetheless, Ms. Carter will prepare the report no later than the end of August to give it to DCA and the board.

VI. Legal Report

A. RISE Academy

- In 2022 BIDA provided East Point Charter school: Rise Academy a tax-exempt bond.
- The purpose of the bond was to finance the expansion and construction of their facility while promoting education to improve the area job market.
- Georgia Charter Schools apply to either the local County Board of Education or to the State Charter Schools Commission for charter status approval.
- RISE Academy received their original charter status from Fulton County; however, in 2023 the county did not renew their charter status. Therefore, RISE Academy applied for charter status from the State of Georgia and was granted such status.
- In May of 2024 the State Charter Schools Commission placed RISE Academy on probationary status because of overestimating their enrollment numbers. Charter Schools in the state of Georgia funding payments to the state are based upon the school's enrollment numbers. In RISE Academy's case they did not meet their estimated enrollment amount of the funding they received. On June 7, 2024, the state will make a decision whether or not to extend their probation or to deny renewal of their charter.
- If their charter is not renewed their funding goes away and that will decrease their ability to make their bond payments. Please note this authority has no liability or responsibility for those payments; however, our authority would like to see that our bond recipients maintain their bond success.
- The main item that this board can do, if you wish to do, is put them on notice that we are requesting that they bring in the necessary consultants and expertise to try to meet the state charter commissions requirements. Mr. Glaze stated he would be more than happy to send a letter to the trustee and ask for a report from the trustee on the outstanding bond amount and the present status of the of the bonds.
This is his final report information.

VII. Old Business

A. Discussion on lowering the BOND LIMITS

- Mr. Dunson stated he and Kirby have had the discussions before of lowering our bond limits basically because we really don't have the land or the facilities in our city to bring in a development of \$3,000,000 or higher.
- Will Callier stated even with the training aren't we faced with the same problem of the small business that are not able to meet the current threshold requirement?
- Kirby responded by saying yes and we will have to determine if we want to change your economic incentives policies, and do we want to change our target? Currently, your economic incentives policies are primarily targeted toward bigger businesses that you're trying to get to come in your front door and they are not targeted at your existing businesses. So that is going to entail us restructuring our economic development incentives policies.
- The next question is what latitude do we have to do that?
- Kirby responded we have a hundred percent latitude for us to do that. We have Maceo Rogers who has been giving the latitude from Mayor and Council to do just that, meaning we can write whatever Economic Development policies you want; however, that doesn't mean Maceo can implement

those policies for the board if the Mayor and Council who pays his salary says that is not the policies they want. So, it is kind of a two-step process. The board must determine how you all want to change those policies and then there has to be enough politics at least clear the path so that can get the ok to do it.

VIII. New Business

A. BIDA Website Design

- Chairperson Stacey Dunson introduced the information he and Secretary/Treasurer Ms. Regina Carter received from website design company Turnkey Solutions Inc. They presented the two board members the possible services Turnkey Solutions could provide such as: The ability to host our website, emails, branding information, more.
- Turnkey Solutions has a strong relationship with several other government entities in the Atlanta metro area, therefore they are familiar with our needs.
- It is the Chairperson's wish that with our own website we can provide a better image of the City of East Point through using technology, visual branding, specific data, quick facts and available financial incentives.
- We would also like to use our website to create opportunities exposure to attract new development, new public partners, site selection interest teams to assist the Economic Development Department.
- Mr. Glaze offered an idea of reaching out to the local television station that did a program called Atlanta Scene which showed East Point restaurants, the Velodrome, and other city interest areas through the East Point Convention and Visitors Bureau. Kirby stated it was a very well-done program that could guide us to various ideas to be included in our website content.
- Attorney Glaze also suggested we invite Turnkey Solutions to the Carl Vinson training Class which they would be able to obtain a wealth of knowledge as to who we are and who powers and abilities we have as a Constitutional Authority.
- Kirby also stated we need to keep in mind if we give each board member their own email address then such email information will be subject to the open records act.
- It was asked if we should have Turnkey give the board a separate presentation or should we work on certain informational items and questions prepared prior to meeting with them as a board.

For example: Who is our target audience?

 Who is our competitors & what are they providing people about themselves?

 What is it we would people to know about the East Point Authority?

 We need to review areas Authorities like Clayton County, Fulton County, Dekalb County, Gwinnett County and Rockdale County to see what they are offering their viewers?

- Mr. Dunson stated we should question ourselves how we can be more supportive to small Businesses? How can we draw businesses to East Point? Specifically, what would those owners like to see on our website of their interest?
- A board member suggested we need to look at other stand-alone websites that we know of to model their style.

- Overall, it will best we come back to this decision.

IX. Economic Development Report

A. Economic Development Small Business Fair

- Maceo informed the board:
Next week June 11, 2024 from 10 am until 1 pm the Economic Development Department will be having a *Small Business Fair* in the City Council Chambers. What we are doing is specifically targeting home-based businesses. Those that are working from their garages, their basements or their kitchens etc. and they may be doing very well in that capacity.
- *The Small Business Fair* will consist of Mr. Maceo Rogers giving a broad-brush overview of economic development and the program services that the department offers. The Planning Director will give a presentation on the planning process, like how to get your business permitted. Whereas the Procurement Director is going to be primarily focused on how they can do business with the city.
- Our Economic Development Specialist Rhonda Appleby, who heads up the Small Business Incentive Program will then take them through each of our incentives that we offer and many of them could potentially qualify to receive.

B. Upcoming Economic Development Strategic Plan

- In the pass we did a ten-year Strategic Plan for FY2012 to FY2022 and now that we are in 2024 and about to be in 2025 it is time to do something different since COVID has changed the way in which businesses operate.
- In other words, there has been a paradigm shift in the business world. Currently, we have a lot of office space that is not being utilized in the way that it used to be used, for example, a lot of spaces are being converted to residential space to allow work from home offices.
- Although industrial is still thriving please note in a different manner. You know there are more e-commerce businesses with delivery and door dash components than were during pre-COVID. So many of these have branched out and started their own amazon type components.
- Times are different so the Strategic Plan needs to be changed also. The City Council approved that on Monday and that it is to be a two-part approval process. The first part was to approve the vendor and the second part was to approve the contract. Therefore, we currently have a one-year contract with the KB Advisory Group which used to be called the Bleakly Advisory Group. This scheduled to be a 8 to 10 month study because of what I provided for them of the existing Economic Development Strategy Plan, the Willingham LLC study and the Agricultural Plan that was done in partnership so they have all of this information to get started with.
- We have on deck our first kickoff meeting on June the 20th in which the KB Advisory Group consultants will meet with the Economic Development Department staff to talk through the terms of the process.
- Mr. Rogers is suggesting to the board that they participate in the community engagement meetings in which there will multiple meetings, but it would be great for you to be a part of the first meetings because the very things that we've been talking about will give you a chance to chime in and provide your input in the beginning as to what you will see that is coming.

C. Economic Development Department Report.

- I am not going to talk through everything, but we have a monthly business meeting at Kupcakerie every first Wednesday of each month at 8:30 am.
- At this meeting we inform the businesses as to all the things that are going on in the city and those especially that are happening as a part of Main Street.
- There we do a round robin of course, to introduce each business and city employee that is there and what they do for the city.
- We have a vast variety of discussion items that takes a large portion of time this evening so you may see it in your package

X. Adjournment

Ms. Falatta James made the motion to adjourn the BIDA Meeting at 8:21 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gloria Speed. **The motion was approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

Board Members Present on June 6, 2024:

Gloria Speed, Helen Simmons, Falatta James, William Bryant, Rory Moon, Stacey Dunson, Beth McMillan, Rory Moon, Helen Simmons, Gloria Speed, and Jermaine Wright

This summary was approved during a Special Call Meeting on **August 15, 2024** with the following board members in attendance: Will Callier, Stacey Dunson, Beth McMillan, Rory Moon, Helen Simmons, Gloria Speed, and Jermaine Wright.

Regina T. Scott-Carter
Secretary/Treasurer