

Minutes
Portland Development Corporation
Remote Zoom Meeting
Held on January 18, 2024

A remote meeting, via Zoom, of the Portland Development Corporation (PDC) Board of Directors was held at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 18, 2024. Present from the Board of Directors were President James Dowd and Directors Eamonn Dundon, Blaine Grimes, Nathan Henry, Thomas Mitchell, and Kierston Van Soest. Directors Krista Cole, Sam Dargan, Councilor April Fournier, Danielle West, and Beverly Werber could not be present. Present from the City staff were ARPA Program Manager Kaela Gonzalez, Business Programs Manager Nancy Martin, Associate Counsel Amy McNally, Principal Administrative Officer Lori Paulette, and Housing and Economic Development Director Greg Waston.

Item #1: President's Comments

No comments at this time.

Item #2: Review and vote on draft meeting Minutes for Board meeting held on December 14, 2023.

On a motion made by Ms. Grimes and seconded by Mr. Dundon, the board voted 6-0 to table this item until the next meeting.

Item #3: Review and vote on the following applications received for the ARPA Microenterprise Grant Program in the amount of \$5,000. (Note: Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. 405(6)(F) and 5 M.R.S.A. 13119—A, the Board may go into executive session to review proprietary confidential information associated with this application.)

- a) Tu Casa, 70 Washington Avenue
- b) Asia Eats, 28 Monument Square
- c) Cumberland Islamic Center, 34 Vannah Avenue
- d) The Bridge and Beyond, 184 Pearl Street, #413

Ms. Martin gave an overview of the applicants starting with Tu Casa, a Central American restaurant located at 70 Washington Avenue. This is an established business for the past 20 years. Both staff and City underwriter, David McLaughlin, recommend approval. Asia Eats, a startup Asia fusion business that opened November 2023, located at 28 Monument Square, with recommended approval by both staff and City underwriter, David McLaughlin. Cumberland Islamic Center, a nonprofit organization, located at 34 Vannah Avenue is the third applicant. Ms. Martin confirmed that the applicant is eligible to receive American Rescue Plan Act funding, as long as the funds are not used for religious activity. Staff requested a detailed budget highlighting use of funds for English learning language classes to further clarify the intended use of funds. Staff and City underwriter Matt Buonopane recommend approval. Lastly, The Bridge and Beyond, a nonprofit organization located at 184 Pearl Street, #413, which opened in November 2023, and provides social services to the immigrant community. Both staff and City underwriter, Matt Buonopane recommend approval.

On a motion made by Mr. Dundon, seconded by Ms. Grimes the Board voted 6-0 to approve all four Microenterprise Grant applications as recommended for \$5,000 each.

Item #4: Staff verbal update: (a) Brownfield Update/Marketing; (b) City of Portland new Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) Program and related marketing outreach.

Ms. Martin updated the Board on remaining funds in the ARPA Microenterprise Grant Program, which has been about three quarters spent.

Ms. Martin shared the expected technical assistance that will be available from UCONN students to work on Brownfield inventory and marketing the program. This is a free program offered by the EPA and will occur over this upcoming semester.

Ms. Martin highlighted the C-PACE Program (Commercial Assessed Clean Energy), Portland being one of the state's earlier adopters to this program that authorizes municipalities to participate in a financing program, leveraging a City's ability to lien a property to help a commercial property access capital from private lenders. This is run by Efficiency Maine and no City funds are used.

Item #5: Treasurer's Report - December, 2023.

Ms. Van Soest wanted to confirm that the money set aside for Youth Family Outreach (YFO) funds did expire. Ms. Martin informed the Board that YFO is welcome to re-apply for the funds.

Item #6: Other items to be discussed/brought up by Board Directors and/or staff.

Mr. Mitchell asked the Board to confirm that last meeting Minutes from the November 2023 meeting were also tabled, meaning that the Board would vote to approve minutes from November, December, and January at the next meeting scheduled in February.

Ms. Martin thanked Ms. Van Soest for her participation in the Maine Biz Five Forum held on January 17, 2023

There being no further business, on motion made by Mr. Dundon and seconded by Mr. Henry, the Board voted 6-0 to adjourn at 4:23 p.m.

Respectfully, Kaela Gonzalez