



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., The Honorable Aditi Bussells, The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, and The Honorable Peter M. Brown. The Honorable William Brennan arrived at 10:21 a.m. The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tem was absent. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore Hammond, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Peter M. Brown offered the invocation.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

1. Commercial Retention and Redevelopment (CRR) Program - Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director, Office of Business Opportunities

Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities said the Commercial Retention and Redevelopment Program offers \$15,000 for exterior improvements and \$10,000 for interior improvements, with an additional incentive of \$10,000 for vacant or abandoned buildings that have been vacant for 12 consecutive months. Commercial property owners and business tenants are eligible to participate in the Forgivable Loan Program.

There was a discussion about the definition of restaurants and bars as it relates to food sales in comparison to alcohol sales; adding vape shops to the list of ineligible businesses; reviewing nuisance complaints; eligible interior and exterior improvements; and other requirements.

Ms. Ayesha Driggers, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities said since its inception in 1997, there has been a \$2.2 billion investment from different funding sources. The current funding sources of the program include the Community Development Block Grant at \$250,000 and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) at \$350,000 for fiscal years 2023/2024 and 2024/2025. Projects funded with CDBG must meet a national objective to eliminate slum/blight and federal regulations do apply. With ARPA, eligible businesses must be in a targeted area; demonstrate that they have been negatively impacted by the pandemic; and be located in a qualified census tract.



We Are Columbia

**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2023**

There was a discussion about businesses located in qualified census tracts; interested businesses; targeted areas for the program; opening up the program citywide; and providing more options with ARPA funds.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Dr. Bussells, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session for the discussion of **Item 2**.

Council recessed at 10:45 a.m. and entered into Executive Session at 12:13 p.m.

2. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)

Crawford Consulting

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk