

MINUTES

Of the Board of Directors Of the City of Baltimore Development Corporation

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors (Board) of the City of Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) was held on Thursday, January 17, 2019 beginning at 7:35 a.m. at the Corporation's offices at 36 South Charles Street, Baltimore, MD. **Board Members present at the meeting were: Chair, Augie Chiasera, Chair Emeritus, Arnold Williams, Elda Devarie, Miriam Fuchs, Charisse Hughes, Henry Raymond, Jim Smith, Paul Taylor, Colin Tarbert, Michael Walton (via phone), Angela Wells-Sims, and Christy Wyskiel.**

Staff present were: Kim Clark, Executive Vice President; Nancy Jordan-Howard, Chief Operating Officer; Jeff Pillas, Chief Financial Officer, Will Beckford, Vice President BDC Staff; Susan Yum; Larysa Salamacha, Deb Tillet; Dan Taylor; Bernard Smith, Patrick Terranova, and Renee West (as Recording Secretary).

Also in attendance: Al Hutchinson, Visit Baltimore, Melody Simmons, *Baltimore Business Journal*

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Augie Chiasera at 7:35 a.m.

- I. Minutes of the BDC Board meetings were deferred.
- II. President's Report
 - i. Cole reported that the Baltimore Convention Center Expansion project is in phase two and the study won't be completed until late spring or early summer (2019).
 - ii. Cole noted that he will continue to discuss the Pimlico project with legislators and that the Mayor has a meeting scheduled with the Stronach Group soon.
 - iii. Cole noted that both the Mayor and Ben Seigel have presented information on Opportunity Zones recently at a couple conferences held within the region. He further noted the City's first known opportunity fund investment has been made into the Yard 56 (old Pemco site) by Prudential Financial. Cole further reported that Seigel continues to meet with interested parties while connecting investors and developers.
 - iv. Cole reported that BDC continues to coordinate the City's CEDS plan along with Baltimore's and Maryland's housing departments. He also noted that the plan is estimated to be completed by spring of 2020. Once the process gains momentum this spring, BDC board members will be relied upon to actively participate as the process will include stakeholder feedback that will be incorporated into the plan.
 - v. In response to a question regarding funds to be requested of the State of Maryland for the Pimlico site, Cole noted that there are several options being explored with a focus on both public and private funding sources for the project. Cole further noted that the proposed project is designed to connect the race track to the surrounding community. This premise will be used during continued discussion with legislators during this session.

Presentations

Visit Baltimore

- i. Cole noted for the group that the hospitality and tourism is one of Baltimore's largest industries and as the City embarks on the CEDS plan, he asked Al Hutchinson, President and CEO of Visit Baltimore to present. Cole also congratulated Hutchinson on booking the CIAA Basketball tournament to the city. This tournament will not only generate tax revenue but will create jobs.
- ii. Hutchinson reviewed steps taken to create a strategic plan for the organization. Using a "bottom up" focus on the operations and strategies of the organization they made several key findings. It was noted that Visit Baltimore needed to promote the entire city, be more engaged with the community and partner with area schools to help build the workforce necessary for the industry.
- iii. Within the organization, several policies were changed including: a new teleworking policy; a relaxed dress code and flexible work hours.
- iv. Hutchinson shared that Visit Baltimore has been working on the CIAA (Intercollegiate Athletic Association) bid for the last year; this event is the largest African-American basketball tournament in the country. He further noted that 13 HBCU's (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) have been involved with the tournament for 13 years in Charlotte, NC. The multi-year deal will be coming to Baltimore in 2021.
- v. Hutchinson then discussed how cities like Philadelphia, PA out pace Baltimore's sales and marketing budget. He further noted plans to create a Tourism Improvement District. This funding mechanism would generate up to \$7 million incremental revenue. He further noted how these funds would be leveraged to drive business to the city through sales and marketing efforts.
- vi. Hutchinson also reported that Visit Baltimore has established a non-profit to give back to the community through scholarship funds, by partnering with the Baltimore City School System to provide area students transportation to attractions and other outreach endeavors.
- vii. Hutchinson responded to several questions related to how sales staff are deployed, expansion of the convention center, and how small businesses' role in the upcoming CIAA tournament. Also, in response to a question related to addressing the city's perception of safety, Hutchinson noted that this issue must be addressed from a comprehensive approach leveraging resources of both the public and private sectors.
- viii. Meeting was adjourned at 8:22 a.m.