

Don Ryan Center for Innovation Board of Directors Meeting

The Don Ryan Center for Innovation, 7 Venture Drive, Suite #100, Bluffton, SC

August 08, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:01

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Director Jim Biggs
Director Bernie Traywick
Director Michael Cymbor
Director Kevin Ryan
Director Walter Nester
Director Latoya Salters
Ex-Officio John O'Toole
Ex-Officio Bridgette Frazier
Ex-Officio Rod Casavant
Ex-Officio Chris Trott
Kristin Ling
Paul Arvantides

ABSENT

Chair Berl Davis
Vice Chair Matt Green
Director Larry Toomer
Ex-Officio Houssam Aboukhater
Ex-Officio Tom Henz
David Nelems

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 11, 2024 Minutes

Cymbor made the motion for approval of the April 11, 2024, meeting minutes and the vote passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were submitted.

V. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE BOARD

The board observed a moment of reflection in memory of the late Deborah Edmondson.

VI. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's report was presented, noting revenues exceeded expenditures for the fiscal year to date. The financial report was approved by the board.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Board of Directors: New Ex Officio Discussion

The news of Bridgette Frazier being approved by Town Council as an ex-officio board member was shared.

Traywick made a motion to nominate Lisa Sulka as an Ex-Officio member of the DRCI Board, which was seconded by Salters. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Buckwalter Childcare RFP

Two top proposals for the childcare facility were presented. Cymbor made a motion to recommend Town of Bluffton Town Council approve Bright Beginnings Academy as the proposed Childcare RFP selectee, which was seconded by Traywick. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Buckwalter Place Development Update

An update was given on the progress of the DRCI's second location. The building will be 14,400 sf and will feature a Landing pad for start-ups and businesses interested in locating to Bluffton as well as offering co-working spaces. A childcare center will be located on the first floor.

VIII. STAFF REPORT

Staff gave updates on their New Partnership with the Hispanic Business Association of the Lowcountry to including a new program client and planned speaking events, their partnership with the SBAC is going well. There will be upcoming events focused on promoting small business funding in the Lowcountry region. The AI for Business series has been well-received and will continue, program clients are working hard and advancing and an Economic Impact Survey to assess DRCI's impact on local businesses and Bluffton's economy is underway.

IX. DISCUSSION

The Thrive Program was introduced. It's designed for businesses showing progress and seeking ongoing support and features quarterly in-depth reviews on financial and operational metrics.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:38

XI. NEXT MEETING DATE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024