



**BOARD MEETING OF THE PORTSMOUTH PARTNERSHIP**  
**February 12, 2024, 12:00 PM**  
**Bloom Coworking**  
**MINUTES**

**DIRECTORS:** Julie Bartley, Jim Bento, Carley Brierre, Don Comer, Caille Cherry, Mike Fitzwater, Johnny Garcia, Max Greenhood, Herb Haneman, Bobbie Hansel-Union, Brad Hunter, Ryan Kenrick, Stephen Korving, Cannon Moss, Peggy Murphy, Fred Pasquine, John Paul, Melissa Ramsey, Kendra Robinson, Robin Schmalbach, Chris, Shelton, Will Taylor, Matt Tuttle, Rob Wilber

**EX-OFFICIOS:** Brian Donahue, Frankie Edmondson, Mayor Shannon Glover, Nancy Perry, Alisa Winston

**STAFF:** Michelle Wren

**GUESTS:** Kodi Fleming, TCC, Graig Hill, Portsmouth Public Schools, Nahla Saleh, Portsmouth@Work

**CALL TO ORDER**

President, Dr. Johnny Garcia welcomes everyone and calls the meeting to order.

**WELCOME & INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKERS:** Jim Bento and Fred Pasquine presented Fairlead Intergraded

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The board approved the January 8, 2024, board meeting minutes as presented.

**REPORTS**

**City of Portsmouth**

**Mayor Shannon Glover**

Mayor Shannon Glover is running for reelection in November. He wants to continue the progress made over the past few years and needs the support of the business community to continue the momentum and transformation of Portsmouth. The State of the City will be held on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at Rivers Casino. Please attend and see where the City of Portsmouth is going under his leadership.

**Economic Development**

**Brian Donahue**

Many ribbon cuttings have taken place across the city. Crofton Industries expansion is completed. Project updates in the city include the industrial site off Elmhurst Lane, Southern Freight line expansion, which is about a 12-million-dollar project and is tripling its footprint. UNIS transloading facility adjacent to the Virginia International Gateway has constructed a 7,000sq foot distribution warehouse filling a great need for the Port and region. The Portsmouth Waterfront is currently being studied for development opportunities. The draft is completed and includes additional multi-family housing developments, a new hotel, and office space. Economic Development has received a lot of interest in the waterfront. They will be ready to receive proposals in 2024. Meaningful updates for the innovation district have been submitted to council for approval. Once adopted zoning will eliminate some constraints to attract businesses into the innovation district. EDA has been acquiring property throughout the district, cleaning up the blighted sites getting them ready for development.

**Commission of Revenue Office**

**Frankie Edmondson**

The Commission of Revenue Office has mailed about 6,400 – 7,000 business license renewals. The license renewals are due March 1<sup>st</sup>. Personal Property Bills will be mailed next. Several emerging industries will be producing between 18-20 million dollars in new revenue for the City of Portsmouth. These industries are medical marijuana, casino, and offshore wind. This will help the city's bottom line immensely. The Commissioner's office is training staff in these new industries.

**PDF - Bloom**

**Matt Tuttle**

Bloom has 165 members, with no office vacancies and continues to have a waitlist for office space. The focus now is to sell open and desk memberships. 188 hours were booked in conference room space for the month of January.

The Bloom Sign is finally installed. It looks great. Taylor construction will redirect some of the ducts and adjust the HVAC system to help with sound problems in the training room. They are also going to seal the brick wall to help with the mortar falling out.

Bloom Market has launched the application portal. We had a great response in the first week with lots of inquiries. We have 22 applicants as of today. The bloom market initiative was featured last week in Inside Business online publication and WTKR featured the bloom market. We are extending the market applications for another two weeks to make sure we capture all interested businesses. Please share the social media posts. The selection committee meets this week to review current applications. Total Business Solutions has started to install the furnishings for the Market.

**Education**

No report

**Dr. Bracy/ Hope Sinclair**

**Lefcoe Leadership Development**

A Lefcoe Alumni Social will be held on February 21<sup>st</sup> at Post Secondary Brewing. Each year the Lefcoe class is responsible for a service project. This year's class has picked the Portsmouth Senior Station as their project. This center serves over 100 seniors by providing activities, crafts, and socialization. The Class is sprucing up the center and organizing the center's supplies by creating a storage area with a shipping container for the center. The class is having a fundraising Bingo event at Cure on February 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00.

**Don Comer**

**Maritime Committee**

Fred just attended the annual shipbuilder's council of America conference. A quarter of the conference was dedicated to the offshore wind industry. 57 additional vessels are coming to the region to support the offshore wind project. One of the panelists stated the offshore wind industry did not collapse but is repricing and resetting. Offshore wind is happening in Hampton Roads. Hampton Roads owns the best two facilities sites to support offshore wind on the East Coast. Portsmouth Marine Terminal and Fairwinds Landing. 1/3 of the power on the East Coast will be generated with offshore wind. This will create a lot of opportunities for our region.

**Fred Pasquine**

**Military Affairs**

No Report

**Pete Kopacz**

**Nominating Committee**

Michelle and Ryan met to discuss leadership roles and board positions. The Nominating committee will be on February 21<sup>st</sup> to review.

**Ryan Kenrick**

**OTBA**

No Report

**Charles Brogan**

**Portsmouth Museums**

The Portsmouth Museums Foundation will hold the annual Bunny Hop on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. This fundraiser is a 5K and fun run through historic OldeTowne. Please go to the bunnyhope5kVA to sign up for the race and for sponsorship opportunities.

**Nancy Perry**

**PRHA**

PRHA is currently accepting applications for their housing properties. The organization is recruiting for their youth build program which serves youth from 18-24. This program teaches construction trade for employment opportunities. In this program the participants fully build a single-family home from start to finish. Twin pines will be converted into 82 senior housing units. Swanson homes will be redeveloped and is currently accepting bids through the RFP process. The families have been relocated.

**Alisa Winston**

**Transportation**

No report

**Cannon Moss**

**OLD BUSINESS**

No Old Business

## NEW BUSINESS

Nahla Salem, Portsmouth @Work and Craig Hill, CTE coordinator from Portsmouth Public Schools presented the Young Entrepreneurship pilot program. The city has a 3-year grant for 45 students, three from each high school, who will be placed and pay the student for a summer intern program. Businesses are needed to provide the internship host sites. This program will begin in middle school and continue into their high school years. The student will take classes to support their learning. The students are eager to participate. The summer internship program will run June-August and pay the student \$5000 for the summer. The students will work about 30 hours per week.

Portsmouth@work just hosted a dual career fair with the city of Norfolk and TCC. Over 600 people attended this career fair. If you are a business that needs help recruiting, please reach out to Nahla and her team. They will help you recruit employees.

The Executive Committee discussed during the last meeting the need for an Education Coordinator for bloom coworking. The programs are becoming more of a focus, now the capital campaign has been wrapped up. We are looking for grant funding to support the educational programs and this position. This person would also be trained to possibly take the role of Executive Director when Michelle retires in a few years. The Executive Director role has grown and changed tremendously over the past few years with the launch of bloom. The ED position is no longer a part-time position. Succession planning needs to begin now, so the right person can be selected.

**MOTION:** The Bloom Coworking Committee moves to increase the salary budget line item to hire an Education Coordinator. This position would have a starting salary of at least \$50,000 - \$60,000 per year. This amount may change depending on the candidate. The motion does not need a second, as it came out of committee.

There was some discussion on the motion. The Motion carried.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Churchland High School will host the annual robotics competition. Volunteers and sponsors are needed. Please reach out to Johnny Garcia if you are interested.

Smart Growth Educational Forum presented by the National Association for Realtors will be held on March 20<sup>th</sup> 11-1:00 in bloom. Invitations will be sent; this is an initiative the mayor brought to bloom.

State of the City Series begins March 13<sup>th</sup> with Virginia Beach, March 27<sup>th</sup> Chesapeake, April 12<sup>th</sup> Norfolk, May 3<sup>rd</sup> Portsmouth, and May 22<sup>nd</sup> Suffolk.

PSL First Citizen Celebration will be held on April 25<sup>th</sup> honoring Mark Hugel. The Partnership has a table, please let Michelle know if you would like to attend.

Congratulations to Don Comer for receiving the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities 2024 Humanitarian Award. A reception will be held on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Westin Virginia Beach Town Center.

Volunteer Hampton Roads Community Champion Awards program will be held on April 18<sup>th</sup> 5:30 at the Norva. Tickets on sale beginning March 18<sup>th</sup>. Honorees are: Delceno Miles, Allie Wittkamp and Sentara.

Two Tickets are available for the Reaching for the Stars Gala for StarBase Victory. The Event will be held on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Please let Michelle know if you would like to attend.

The Partnership's next executive committee meeting will be held on February 28<sup>th</sup> @ 8:00am via Zoom.

The next Partnership Board Meeting will be the annual meeting held on March 11<sup>th</sup> @ 12:00pm at Bloom. Ex-Effio's have the month off.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Wren