**MEETING MINUTES**

**Location:** City Hall at St. James, 117 West Duval St., Second Floor, Conference Room 2C, Jacksonville, FL 32202

**Advisory Board Members Present:** Chair Fred Atwill, Jr.; Vice-Chair Cedrick Gibson, Valerie H. Jenkins, Tillery Durbin, George Barnes, and Philip Elson

**Advisory Board Members Absent**: N/A

**Office of Economic Development Staff Present:**  Ed Randolph, OED Executive Director; Wendy Khan, Director of Operations; Joe Whitaker, OED staff; Brian Bergen, Director Small Business Initiatives; and Casey Peyton, OED staff

**Representing the Office of General Counsel:**  John Sawyer

**Representing City Council:** No one present

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Atwill called the NWJEDF Advisory Committee meeting to order at approximately 3:32 p.m. Around the table introductions were made. A quorum was confirmed.

1. **ACTION ITEMS**

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 21, 2023 NORTHWEST JACKSONVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

***A MOTION WAS MADE BY VICE-CHAIR CEDRIC GIBSON AND SECONDED BY COMMITTEE MEMBER GEORGE BARNES APPROVING THE AUGUST 21, 2023 MEETING MINUTES OF THE NORTHWEST JACKSONVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6-0-0.***

PROJECT: TITAN FLORIDA LLC

Mr. Whitaker provided an overview of Titan Florida, LLC. Titan is a manufacturer of cement and cement-related products. They are proposing to construct a ready-mix plant at 1712 N. McDuff Ave. They have already acquired the site, but construction estimates and project costs have increased and they have requested additional assistance. Titan has requested a NWJEDF Business Infrastructure Grant (BIG) in the amount of $100,000. The project costs for them to complete the project is estimated to be $18,375,273. They are expected to create 24 new full-time jobs, with benefits, at an average wage of $54,708, which is twice what the median income for the census tract in the area is.

Advisory Committee Member Philip Elson asked related to the job creation if there was a commitment from the company ensuring that the new positions would be filled with those that live in the area. Mr. Whitaker replied that it is not a requirement, but encouraged.

Mr. Randolph added that the BIG funding exists to help the surrounding community with employment opportunities with projects such as Titan.

Advisory Committee Member Valerie Jenkins asked if the company described the type of jobs, or skillsets they will be looking for in filling the new positions. Mr. Whitaker responded CDL license to drive a truck, ground jobs and a few management positions.

Ms. Khan advised that as part of the compliance monitoring, the company is required to provide their employment information to ensure we can distinguish between their 74 current positions and the 24 new positions. The employee definition within the agreement states that they cannot be employed within 12 months and transferred within Duval County. They would not be able to transfer retained staff from another location and count them towards the 24 jobs at the new location.

Vice-Chair Cedrick Gibson suggested that new companies in particular zip codes could sponsor an educational sponsorship or something of that nature to help the individuals that live within the boundaries of the area have an opportunity to apply for jobs that they currently may not be skilled for.

Chair Atwill opened the floor for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

***A MOTION WAS MADE BY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER VALERIE JENKINS AND SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIR CEDRICK GIBSON APPROVING NORTHWEST JACKSONVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND (NWJEDF) BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT (BIG) IN THE AMOUNT OF $100,000 FOR TITAN FLORIDA, LLC TO OFFSET A PORTION OF THE SITE DEVELOPMENT COSTS AND TO MAKE THE SITE COMPETITIVE WITH OTHER TITAN PLANTS THAT ARE COMPETING FOR DEVELOPMENT FUNDING FROM THE PARENT COMPANY. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6-0-0.***

PROJECT: AA AUTO PARTS

Mr. Whitaker provided an overview of the AA Auto Parts project.

Mr. Whitaker provided background information related to the project located at 6641 W. Beaver Street noting that being small business owners, AA Auto Parts was financed through the SBA 504 Program and a local lender. He noted that there was a hurdle in the understanding of the permitting process and $2.5 million of infrastructure costs later, they received the required permitting. AA Auto Parts plans to broaden their opportunities and shred the metal from the crushed cars. They can retain the unusual ingredients that are in cars such as gold, chrome, titanium, and other metals and sell the metal internationally creating an additional income stream for the company. It appears to be a profitable investment for them if they get the machine up and operating.

Mr. Whitaker advised that the Italian crews that assemble the machines are sent all over the world and there were delays getting to Jacksonville due to the COVID pandemic. The installers plan to be on site in January noting that it has been a struggle for the business owners having to pay for repaying the machinery and equipment loan and the infrastructure loan without the income from the shred to cover the costs. It is coming out of their operating capital and limiting their ability to grow.

Mr. Whitaker advised that the construction completion date was 09/30/2023; however, due to the delays in permitting and installation of the machinery by the Italians, the request today is to extend the project completion date from 09/30/2023 to 09/29/2024 to give them a year to complete their project.

Chair Atwill opened the floor for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

***A MOTION WAS MADE BY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER GEORGE BARNES AND SECONDED BY VICE-CHAIR CEDRICK GIBSON APPROVING THE EXTENSION OF THE CONSTRUCTION DEADLINE FOR AA AUTO PARTS, INC. FROM SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2024. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6-0-0.***

1. **INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

PROJECT: FIRST COAST NO MORE HOMELESS PETS (ORD 2023-0759)

Mr. Whitaker provided an overview of the First Coast No More Homeless Pets, Inc. (FCNMHP) project noting that FCNMHPs has two locations in Duval County. The primary facility is located at 6817 Norwood Ave. and they have a satellite facility that is located at 464 Cassat Ave. FCNMHP is focused on providing affordable veterinarian care for people in low to moderate income neighborhoods. Mr. Whitaker noted that the project was approved by City Council on November 28, 2023. Rather than holding up the project because we could not get a quorum we had to move forward in advance.

Ms. Khan advised that the forgivable loan was more amenable to everyone because there is more certainty having to go through paying the closing costs, etc. and have the promissory note associated with it. Once they complete the construction phase, they will have to create the jobs by 12/31/2027 and there is a five year burn off from that point. If they create the jobs sooner than we would start the clock ticking sooner. In an ideal world it would work that way, but let’s say they create them in 2027 then by 2032 their loan would be forgiven. If they do not meet the job creation then they would have to repay the loan and we would amortize it over a ten year period. This provides more certainty when it comes to using the dollars from the fund.

PROJECT: JTA “DOOR TO STORE PROGRAM” (ORD 2023-760-E)

Ms. Khan provided an overview of ORD 2023-760-E. She noted that the legislation appropriates $150,000 from the NWJEDF to provide funding to the Jacksonville Transportation Authority for the “Door-to-Store Program.” The third amendment to the JTA Door-to-Store Program extends the term of the Door-to-Store Program for an additional three years. Each year will be funded in the amount of $50,000. The City will provide $20 per one-way trip, for a total of $40 per round trip, and the service will be provided to the rider at no cost to the rider. This will subsidize the cost of a rider by $20 per trip and continue to provide access to the grocery store for transportation disadvantaged persons in the food desert areas.

NWJEDF FINANCIALS UPDATE – PRESENTED BY WENDY KHAN, OED DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

NWJEDF Project Tracking:

* Added Titan Florida
* Added No More Homeless Pets

NWJEDF Outstanding Loans:

* LiquidProof, LLC (Four Fathers Distillery) loan maturity date has been extended through 06/01/2033.
* All companies are current with their loans and making payments.
* $1.6 million in remaining principal.

Files at Office of General Counsel: There were no changes with the files that are in the Office of General Counsel for processing: Mr. G’s Hair Depot; Cowealth, LLC; K Mack, LLC Shoppes at Norfolk; and Cedar Grove Corp.

NWJEDF Summary Statement:

* Available Balance of approximately $4 million.

Ms. Khan noted looking ahead they are considering adding additional funding for the Food Desert Programs and the Septic Tank Program.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

NWJEDF ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS/TERMS

Mr. Whitaker advised that a lot of the committee member appointments have expired. The new administration is interested in filling the expired appointments and adding additional people to the committee. He noted that they would appreciate those currently serving to continue serving until new appointments are made.

The Advisory Committee Members were provided with a copy of the NWJEDF Annual Report.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was discussed.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the public.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chair Atwill adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:28 p.m.

The next quarterly NWJEDF Advisory Committee meeting date is TBD.

The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. For verbatim comments, an audio file of the meeting is available upon request. Please contact Michelle Stephens at (904) 255-5452, or by email at [msteph@coj.net](mailto:msteph@coj.net).