

MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY

**OPEN MEETING MINUTES**

**April 25, 2024**

**The regular meeting of the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority convened at 1:00 p.m. via teleconference only at 470-869-2200/meeting ID 428-245-6027.**

The following were in attendance at this meeting:

<b>Authority Members</b>	<b>MMG Staff</b>
<b>Les Hall</b>	<b>Randy Croxton</b>
<b>Gina Ramsey</b>	<b>Anthony Williams</b>
<b>Sharon Pinder</b>	<b>Mark Harrison</b>
<b>Kenny Oreagba</b>	<b>Michael Howard</b>
<b>Ben Siegel</b>	<b>Tim Smoot</b>
<b>Chuck Martin</b>	<b>Robin Harris</b>

**Attorney General's Office**  
Barbara Kountz, Deputy Counsel

Roop Vijayan, Assistant Attorney General

**MINUTES**

March 14, 2024

**REPORTS**

JJ Smoothies, LLC  
Hungry Harvest, LLC  
Orcana Biotech, LLC

**EXTENSION**

Le Ravishe, LLC

**MODIFICATIONS**

Agent of Change, LLC  
Edwards & Hill Communications, LLC

The closed session of the March 14, 2024, meeting was summarized. The Authority Board meeting was attended by Les Hall, Mara Sierocinski, Chuck Martin, Ben Siegel, Gina Ramsey, and Kenny Oreagba. The meeting was closed to comply with requirements of the Maryland Public Information Act so that there would not be disclosure of confidential, commercial, and financial information associated with the applicants. The meeting was closed to discuss the modification request of Agent of Change, LLC. The request was approved.

Agent of Change, LLC – Authorize MSBDFA to pay up to \$20,000 in delinquent taxes and related fees to redeem the commercial condominium units (301, 302, 303, and 304) located at 605 Post Office Road, Waldorf, Maryland to preserve the value it has as a first mortgage holder.

**MINUTES**  
**March 14, 2024**

**Action Taken:** Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Authority unanimously approved the minutes as presented.

**REPORT**

**Presenter:** Tim Smoot

**Comments:** MMG has started a new contract period managing the MSBDFA program.

**Discussion:** There was limited discussion.

**Action Taken:** COMMERCE will send out an official notification.

**REPORT**

**Presenter:** Barbara Koontz

**Comments:** There has been a transition from Barbara Koontz, Deputy Counsel, to Roop Vijayan, Assistant Attorney General, to provide legal counsel for the MSBDFA program effective this meeting.

**Discussion:** There was limited discussion.

**Action Taken:** No action was required.

The Open Meeting then closed at 1:20 p.m. upon motion made and seconded, and approved by all voting members, the meeting was closed pursuant to General Provisions Article, Section 3-305(b) (13), “to comply with a specific... statutory... requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter”, that is, the Maryland Public Information Act prohibits disclosure of trade secrets, confidential commercial and confidential financial information. Chairman Les Hall signed the Presiding Officer's Written Statement for Closing a Meeting under the Open Meetings Act, which is attached to these minutes as an exhibit.

**APPROVED:**

Celester A. Hall  
Celester A. Hall (Jun 17, 2024 16:16 EDT)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Celester A. Hall  
Chairman

**DATE:** 17/06/24

**MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY**

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING  
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT  
(General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

**1. Recorded vote to close the meeting:**

Date: April 25, 2024

Time: 1:20 pm – 2:00 pm

Location: Meridian Management Group, Inc., 826 East Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21202/Held by conference call at 267.930.4000/684 358 366

Motion to close meeting made by Sharon Pinder; Seconded by Gina Ramsey

Vote to Close Session:

	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Celester Hall, Chair, Designee Secretary of Commerce	[ x ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Ben Seigel, designee of Comptroller	[ x ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Charles Martin	[ x ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Kehinde Oreagba	[ x ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Sharon Pinder	[ x ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Gina Ramsey	[ x ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Mara Sierocinski	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ x ]

**2. Citation of statutory authority to close session (check all that apply): This meeting is being closed under General Provisions Article § 3-305(b), only:**

\_\_\_\_ (1) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals;

\_\_\_ (2) To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business;

\_\_\_ (3) To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto;

\_\_\_ (4) To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State;

\_\_\_ (5) To consider the investment of public funds;

\_\_\_ (6) To consider the marketing of public securities;

**X** (7) To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter;

\_\_\_ (8) To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation;

\_\_\_ (9) To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations;

\_\_\_ (10) To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans;

\_\_\_ (11) To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination;

\_\_\_ (12) To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct;

**X** (13) To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter;

\_\_\_ (14) Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, *if* public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process.

**3. Disclosure of the topics to be discussed, for each citation checked above:**

§3-305(b)(13) topics: Discussion and evaluation of the applications received from potential borrowers for financial assistance under programs of the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority, which applications include the disclosure of financial information of private individuals and confidential commercial and financial information.

§3-305(b)(7) topics: Legal advice from counsel to the Authority with respect to the applications.

4. For each topic listed in #2, disclosure of the reason for discussing it in closed session rather than in open session:

§3-305(b)(13): Financial information of private individuals is protected from disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act (§4-336) and confidential commercial and financial information is protected from disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act (§4-335).

§3-305(b)(7): Protection of the attorney-client privilege.

This statement is made by Celester Hall, Chair of the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority, Presiding Officer.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Hall", is written over a horizontal line.

Celester Hall  
Chair