**Massachusetts Development Finance Agency**

**Special Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**(*conducted entirely by Remote Participation*)**

**Wednesday, May 1, 2020**

**12:30 p.m.**

**M I N U T E S**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Mike Kennealy, Secy. of Housing & Economic Development, Chair

 Brian Kavoogian, Vice Chair

 Mark Attia, Designee for Secretary of Administration & Finance

 James Blake

 James Chisholm

 Francesca Maltese

 Juan Carlos Morales

 Kristina Spillane

 Christopher Vincze

 Ellen Zane

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

Agency Staff: Lauren Liss, President and CEO

 Robert Ruzzo, Deputy Director and COO

 Ricks Frazier, General Counsel and Secretary

 Simon Gerlin, Chief Financial Officer

 Jeff Fuhrer, Chief Strategy Officer

 Laura Canter, EVP, Finance Programs

 Dena Kavanagh, Deputy General Counsel

 Meg Delorier, Chief of Staff

 Victoria Stratton, Recording Secretary

 Graeme Brown

 Rick Pass

 Doug Robinson

Guests: Mark Drayson, Metropolitan Area Planning Council

A Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of Massachusetts Development Finance Agency (“MassDevelopment” or the “Agency”) was held Friday, May 1, 2020, by Remote Participation (See Secretary’s Note, below).

The Chair welcomed everyone and, confirming the presence of a quorum on the teleconference call, he called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m.

[*Secretary’s Note: It was noted that this Special Board Meeting was taking place entirely remotely – via videoconference and teleconference – due to emergency procedures in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic (see Gov. Baker’s Declaration of a State of Emergency, dated March 10, 2020, and subsequent orders), pursuant to the Agency’s Remote Participation Policy. A teleconference number and access code for general public use were included in the Public Notice for this meeting.*]

**OPENING REMARKS**

Ms. Liss thanked everyone for “answering the call” to attend this meeting on short notice. She expressed her appreciation for the Board’s support of the effort to pivot certain Agency programs to address emergency needs during the COVID-19 global pandemic more directly. Ms. Liss explained that the Agency has identified an opportunity for urgent funding that justifies moving forward immediately with this request for assistance for some of the Commonwealth’s most vulnerable citizens.

**GENERAL**

**1. VOTE – Amend Service Agreement with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to Administer Urgent Program for Taxi / Livery / Hackney Industry during the COVID-19 Emergency**

Ms. Liss described this request for authorization to amend the Agency’s Agreement for Consulting Services with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Inc. (“MAPC”) to transfer an amount not to exceed $525,000 to MAPC for the administration of an Urgent COVID-19 Taxi, Livery, Hackney Partnership Grant Program to provide urgent, local COVID-19 response transportation services in Massachusetts. In short, the funds requested today will support transportation by qualified drivers of deliveries – including food distribution, prescription medicine pick-up and delivery, and non-emergency medical treatments – to vulnerable populations, including the elderly, veterans, healthcare workers, homebound people, and first responders.

Ms. Liss gave an overview of legislation enacted in 2016 that authorizes transportation network company operations in Massachusetts, and includes a fee of 20 cents assessed on every Uber, Lyft, or similar ride originating within the Commonwealth to be deposited into a Transportation Infrastructure Enhancement Fund (“TIEF”). Of the 20-cent charge, 5 cents comes to MassDevelopment for “financial assistance to small businesses operating in the taxicab, livery or hackney industries to encourage the adoption of new technologies and advanced service, safety and operational capabilities and support workforce development.” Since the Agency did not then possess expertise in those industries, MassDevelopment retained MAPC to conduct a market study and develop a program to distribute funds from the TIEF – currently just over approximately $7 million. While development of such a program is in the final stages, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic has created an immediate need for services that the TIEF funds can support.

A conversation regarding driver safety followed, and Ms. Liss confirmed that safeguards will be required to protect service providers. She advised that these funds are not intended to support transportation of passengers known or suspected to be infected with COVID-19. All grant awardees will need to demonstrate compliance with guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, as well as applicable local rules.

When Mr. Blake inquired if there is a maximum grant award amount, Ms. Liss said that, given the limited funding available, awards will be allocated according to demand for services. When Mr. Vincze suggested that consideration be given as to how effectively the funds will be administered by the applicants, Mr. Blake expressed concerns that smaller operators have equal opportunity for funding. Ms. Liss confirmed that the program will be available throughout the Commonwealth and each request will be examined on a case-by-case basis with an eye toward providing the broadest assistance possible. The Chair asked for a vote and, upon motion duly made and seconded, by a roll call of the directors on the teleconference, it was, unanimously

**VOTED:** That the Board of Directors of MassDevelopment approves and authorizes amendment of the Agency’s Agreement with MAPC for the administration of an Urgent COVID-19 Taxi, Livery, Hackney Partnership Grant Program, as outlined in the memorandum and vote dated May 1, 2020, that are attached and made a part of the minutes of this special meeting.

The Chair then advised that, by appointment by Gov. Baker, he serves as co-chair with the Lieutenant Governor of the Task Force to create a plan to reopen economic activity in the Commonwealth on or after May 18. The Task Force is examining various sets of guidelines, protocols, and more. It is an intense process, and numerous meetings and discussions have already taken place and will continue to do so on a daily basis. Mr. Vincze wanted to know if the Task Force would include representatives from all key industry sectors. The Chair responded that the members of the Task Force itself would be relatively limited, but that it would reach out as broadly as possible. He confirmed that numerous industries have been invited to offer information and guidance on how their business(es) can reopen safely. Noting that while it is nice to contemplate a return to business as usual, the Chair cautioned, “… we are not there yet.”

Ms. Zane stated that she has received many calls requesting information or guidance regarding testing for COVID-19. She said any direction from the Task Force to employers in this regard would be most helpful.

There being no further business before the Board of MassDevelopment, the Special Board Meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.