



City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk
90 West Broad Street
Columbus OH 43215-9015
columbuscitycouncil.org

Legislation Text

File #: 1788-2015, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND: The Department of Development is proposing to enter into a Columbus Downtown Office Incentive with Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox.

BarkBox is a New York-based provider of pet-themed products known for its monthly treat-delivering subscription service. Founded in 2011 by Matt Meeker, Henrik Werdelin, and Carly Strife, Bark & Co., Inc. initially focused on subscription-based e-commerce via BarkBox, which sends out a monthly box of dog treats and toys, based on a dog's size. BarkBox has approximately 200,000 monthly subscribers. BarkBox is a \$100M e-commerce company based upon valuation during a recent \$15M raise from various venture capital firms in a Series B Round in July of 2014. In addition to BarkBox, Bark & Co., Inc. added a vet care service in 2014 known as BarkCare, which provides on-demand vet appointments for more routine matters, including puppy shots, rabies vaccines and other minor ailments. The company has since expanded to the San Francisco Bay Area.

BarkBox is proposing to expand and open its first Ohio location in downtown Columbus by investing approximately \$200,000 in leasehold improvements and computers. The company will enter into a lease agreement at 445 North High Street in downtown Columbus and create 120 new full-time permanent positions with an annual payroll of approximately \$3.6 million.

Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox is requesting a fifty-percent (50%) /5-year Downtown Office Incentive from the City of Columbus to assist in the opening of its Midwest operation center.

FISCAL IMPACT: No funding is required for this legislation.

To authorize the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a Columbus Downtown Office Incentive Agreement with Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox, as provided in Columbus City Council Resolution 0088X-2007, adopted June 4, 2007.

WHEREAS, the City desires to increase employment opportunities and encourage establishment of new jobs in the City in order to improve the overall economic climate of the City and its citizens; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 0088X-2007, adopted June 4, 2007, authorized the Department of Development to establish the Columbus Downtown Office Incentive program as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Development has received a completed application for the Columbus Downtown Office Incentive program from Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox; and

WHEREAS, Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox, is proposing to invest approximately \$200,000 in leasehold improvements, which includes stand-alone computers to open its Midwest operation center; and

WHEREAS, Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox, is proposing to open a new Midwest operation center in downtown Columbus by entering into a lease agreement on a vacant office space consisting of 6,400 square feet at 445 North High Street, and create 120 new full-time permanent positions with an annual payroll of approximately \$3.6 million, generating

approximately \$90,000 annually in new City of Columbus income tax revenue; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. Columbus City Council authorizes the Director of the Department of Development to enter into a Columbus Downtown Office Incentive Agreement pursuant to Columbus City Council Resolution Number 0088X-2007, for an annual cash payment equal to fifty percent (50%) of the amount of City withholding tax withheld on new employees for a term up to five (5) years on the estimated job creation of 120 new full-time permanent positions located at 445 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

SECTION 2. Each year of the term of the agreement with Bark & Co., Inc. dba BarkBox, that a payment is due, the City's obligation to pay the incentive is expressly contingent upon the passing of an ordinance appropriating and authorizing the expenditure of monies sufficient to make such payment and the certification of the City Auditor pursuant to Section 159 of the Columbus City Charter.

SECTION 3. That the City of Columbus Downtown Office Incentive Agreement is signed by BarkBox Inc., dba BarkBox, within 90 days of passage of this ordinance, or this ordinance and the credit herein shall be null and void.

SECTION 4. The City Council hereby extends authority to the Director of the Department of Development to amend the Bark and Co., Inc., dba BarkBox and City of Columbus Downtown Office Incentive Agreement for non-substantive modifications to the agreement requested in writing by the company and or the City and deemed appropriate by the Director of the Department of Development with these non-substantive modifications being specifically limited to reductions in length of term, methods of calculating the incentive, or adding or deleting business entities associated with the employment commitments related to this incentive. All other requested amendments must be approved by City Council.

SECTION 5. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.