



LAWRENCEVILLE

GEORGIA

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 11, 2021
6:30 PM

Council Assembly Room
70 S. Clayton St, GA 30046

Call to Order

Chairman Merritt called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm after recognizing a quorum.

PRESENT

Board Member Victoria Jones
Board Member Bruce Johnson
Board Member Katrina Fellows
Board Member Jeremy Higginbotham
Board Member Lee Merritt
Board Member Nash (arrived at 6:40 pm)

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Board Member Fellows, Seconded by Board Member Higginbotham.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt.

Downtown Development Business

1. Approval of January 2021 Treasurer's Report

Board Member (Treasurer) Nash presented the January 2021 Treasurer's Report. She noted that the Gwinnett School of Music rent that was received on 12/28/2020 was their December rent. She also noted that the Wrecking Corp of America LLC was for the demolition of 816 North Clayton Street.

Barry Mock reviewed the Hotel Escrow Account with the Board.

Motion to approve the January 2021 Treasurer's Report made by Board Member Higginbotham, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Nash, Board Member Merritt.

2. Downtown Development Authority Officer Elections

Chairman Merritt noted that the DDA Board neglected to hold officer elections by the end of 2020 so we are holding those elections at tonight's meeting. Chairman Merritt reminded everyone that this is not a secret ballot. On the ballot the Board Members select Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Paula Foil, Administrative Assistant for the Downtown Development Authority read the ballot results. All the positions were unanimous: Chairman - Lee Merritt, Vice Chairman - Victoria Jones, Treasurer - Linda Nash, and Secretary - Barry Mock.

3. \$1M IGA Account Summary

Chairman Merritt said the account was originally for the 9 block area of the immediate downtown area near the square, but it was enlarged previously and in 2020 it was enlarged to include the entire DDA boundary area. This money is loaned to the DDA by the City of Lawrenceville to purchase dilapidated and blighted properties and to secure better uses for them. The summary was emailed to everyone on the Board before the meeting.

Board Member Nash drew everyone's attention to the second page of the document that includes a summary of the transactions.

4. Discussion Regarding Partnership Gwinnett Economic Outlook Event

Chairman Merritt mentioned that the information for the Partnership Gwinnett Economic Outlook event is in the meeting packet. The event will be held on Tuesday, February 2nd. The cost is \$50 per person and Chairman Merritt asked if the Board wished to attend as a group. We have the funds to attend in our training budget. There are virtual and in person options. Mr. Alfie Meek will be the presenter.

Motion to attend this as a group made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Johnson.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt.

Please respond to Paula if you are able to attend.

5. Budget for 2020 and looking at 2021

Chairman Merritt went over the budget for 2020 and looking at 2021. She noted that Board Member Nash did a wonderful job preparing the budget for the Board. The liquor tax for 2019 budget was \$56,000 which is actually the DDA regular checking account. This account the DDA may use on a variety of items. The \$1M IGA Account is only for properties. Out of the DDA regular checking account we receive some interest and rent. In this account we pay for some utilities, sponsorship of programs, trainings, master plans, attorney fees, post office fees, etc. Chairman Merritt proposed that the Board have a subcommittee that will work on a proposed budget for 2021 and for them to bring it to the Board in February. She asked that anyone that is interested to please let her know.

6. Lose Design-Depot Area Masterplan Proposal

Chairman Merritt updated the DDA Board on the Lose Design Masterplan Proposal for the Depot Area. She reminded the Board that Lose Design assisted with the College Corridor Masterplan Proposal at a cost of \$7,500. It was mostly a marketing tool and it was an effective marketing tool. The proposal in your packet is for \$7,500 to do a similar plan for the entire Depot Area. We do not need to make a decision tonight.

Board Member Jones confirmed that the proposal was only for the Depot Area, but she asked if this would include connectivity. Chairman Merritt said Lose Design would look at the roads to remove, roads to add, etc.

Chairman Merritt reminded the Board of the various types of properties in the Depot Area.

Motion to move forward with the Lose Design masterplan proposal made by Board Member Johnson, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Nash, Board Member Merritt.

7. Approval of Downtown Development Authority 2021 Calendar

Chairman Merritt mentioned the DDA Board meeting nights for 2021. The meetings will be on the same night they are currently scheduled, the 2nd Tuesday of the month, but our meetings will now follow the Architectural Review Board that meets at 5:30 pm.

Board Member Nash and Board Member Fellows serve on the Architectural Review Board representing the DDA Board. The DDA Board has two positions on the Architectural Review Board. Board Member Nash has served for several years on that Board and she would like to give someone else the opportunity to serve on that Board. Chairman Merritt believes there may be fewer Architectural Review Board meetings due to the updated zoning codes.

Board Member Fellows mentioned it is a great Board to serve on. It ties into the DDA Board.

Chairman Merritt mentioned there are several positions on the Architectural Review Board that are required to be professions in the community. For example: architects, engineers, etc.

Board Member Higginbotham said he would be interested in serving on the Architectural Review Board.

Motion to adopt the new calendar for 2021 made by Board Member Jones, Seconded by Board Member Fellows.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt

Mainstreet Business

Jasmine Billings gave a Mainstreet update. She said they are in the process of being reaccredited for Mainstreet. The 2021 Event Calendar for the City has been released for the next six months and there are COVID plans in place for all of the events. Please be sure to send your DDA trainings to Paula so she can incorporate that into the list for Mainstreet. This technically was our year to do the presentation to Mainstreet, but they have cancelled the presentations due to changes that had to be made to events during 2020 due to COVID.

The next City Event is on the weekend of Valentine's Day. We will be hosting a Sweetheart Supper Club. We are partnering with Atlanta Creative Events and they will be bringing in igloos at the Lawn. This will include a four course meal. We will also host a Valentine's Drive-in movie in the Depot District.

Other Business

Chairman Merritt recommends the Board accept Board Member Higginbotham's offer to serve on the Architectural Review Board and confirmed that Board Member Fellows is still open to serving on that Board as well.

Motion to nominate Board Member Jeremy Higginbotham to the Architectural Review Board made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Nash, Board Member Merritt

Citizen Comments

No Citizen Comments

Executive Session - Real Estate

Motion to enter Executive Session made by Board Member Jones, Seconded by Board Member Fellows.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Nash, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson.

Motion to adjourn Executive Session made by Board Member Jones, Seconded by Board Member Johnson.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Nash, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson.

Report of items discussed in Executive Session: 5 real estate items discussed; 4 votes taken.

Final Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Board Member Higginbotham, Seconded by Board Member Fellows.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Johnson, Board Member Fellows, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Nash, Board Member Merritt.

Minutes Signature

Lee Merritt, Chairman

Barry Mock, Secretary