



LAWRENCEVILLE

GEORGIA

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY SPECIAL CALL MINUTES

Tuesday, November 07, 2023
5:00 PM

Council Assembly Room
70 S. Clayton St, GA 30046

Call to Order

Chairman Merritt called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm after recognizing a quorum.

PRESENT

Board Member Victoria Jones
Board Member Joanie Perry Ward
Board Member Jeremy Higginbotham
Board Member Lee Merritt
Board Member Bruce Johnson

ABSENT

Board Member Katrina Fellows
Board Member Chris Adams

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Board Member Jones, Seconded by Board Member Perry Ward.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for October 9, 2023

Motion to table the approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes for October 9, 2023 made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson

2. Approval of Executive Session Minutes for October 9, 2023

Motion to table the approval of the Executive Session Minutes for October 9, 2023 made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson

Downtown Development Business

3. November 2023 Treasurer's Report

Chairman Merritt reviewed the November 2023 Treasurer's Report with the Board. She noted that under the Money Market Account that the Gwinnett County Tax that was paid was for the Northdale Road property.

Motion approve the November 2023 Treasurer's Report made by Board Member Perry Ward, Seconded by Board Member Higginbotham.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson

4. Downtown Development Authority 2024 Budget Proposal

Chairman Merritt said the Budget Committee met and they have a budget proposal prepared for the 2024 Downtown Development Authority budget which will be presented in December.

5. Summary of Downtown Development Authority \$1 Million Account

Chairman Merritt said she would give the accounting for the \$1M account in December.

6. Officer Elections

Paula Foil, Executive Assistant handed out the ballots for the Downtown Development Authority Officer Elections and counted the ballots.

Unanimously the following were elected to serve in 2024.

Chairman – Board Member Lee Merritt
Vice Chairman – Board Member Victoria Jones
Treasurer – Board Member Joanie Perry Ward
Executive Director/Secretary - Barry Mock

7. Proposed Calendar for 2024

Chairman Merritt presented the proposed calendar for the Downtown Development Authority for 2024.

Motion to approve the proposed calendar for the Downtown Development Authority for 2024 made by Board Member Higginbotham, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Bruce Johnson

8. Update on Peer Development Tour to Chattanooga, Tennessee

Board Member Johnson and Board Member Perry Ward gave their updates to the Board regarding their trip to Chattanooga, Tennessee with the Partnership Gwinnett Peer Development Tour on October 19 and 20.

Board Member Johnson said there were five attendees from the City of Lawrenceville and 35 attendees all total on the trip.

The purpose of the trip was to show and go into details on the various redevelopment projects in Chattanooga.

They started their first day at a business incubator (co-working) location in Chattanooga. Then they went to see "The Bend" a 45-acre area that has brought lots of clean up along the river. This is the glamorous development they saw during the trip. Day 2 They heard from Ken DeFore regarding a redevelopment of the area near the mall outside of Chattanooga. The developer for this project had money and strong local ties (roots) in the area. This particular project came with lots of risk, but some developers took that risk. This area is called Mill Town and they were passionate for the redevelopment of

this area. This area had several hurdles the developer had to manage, including absentee landlords and blighted areas and he had to fight against the City some to get the development off the ground. They also visited another business incubator called "Inc". Board Member Johnson said this was an eye opening experience and that he learned a lot on the trip.

Board Member Perry Ward said she was energized by the trip. They had a well balanced itinerary which helped them see lots of various projects and learn lots of details on each of them. The hotel they stayed in used to be a 10 story office space. The developer had very patient investors that assisted him with bringing a Westin to the building. Regretfully, the city did not help the developer and the investors much.

Private money follows public investment in the area. This is a key to redeveloping areas.

The Mill Town Development was driven by purpose and Board Member Perry Ward said she was very touched by it.

The incubators they visited were great.

They had a dog park that had dog day care, which was a nice touch.

Mainstreet Business

Jasmine Billings, Director of Community and Economic Development gave the Mainstreet Business Update.

The Lawrenceville Legacy Leaders are currently in another room in City Hall going through Shark Tank prompts to assist them with learning how to manage various situations.

On October 26th we held Boo Fest and on November 4th we held the Harvest Festival, both events were very successful.

On November 7th we are sponsoring the Southern Circuit Film Festival at the Lawrenceville Arts Center.

On November 11th Beyond the Ribbon race will take place downtown. We will have rolling road closures as the race is run. The road closures should be between 7am - 9:30 am.

November 25th is small business Saturday - we are encouraging everyone to do their Christmas shopping at our local businesses.

The City was awarded the Atlanta Regional Commission's Excellence Award for the work the City did on the Southlawn.

Christmas Canteen and the Festival of Trees will open on Thanksgiving at the Lawrenceville Arts Center.

On December 2nd we will host our Holiday Hometown Parade at 3 pm. On this day will also have our Holiday Market from noon - 6 pm. Our Christmas Crawl will be going on all day with our Downtown businesses.

The events team is working on the 2024 event calendar.

On November 11th we are planning on having the 1st Annual City of Lawrenceville softball game at Georgia Gwinnett College at 10 am.

Other Business

No Other Business

Citizen Comments

No Citizen Comments

Executive Session - Real Estate

Motion to enter into Executive Session made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Johnson.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson.

Motion to exit Executive Session made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Jones.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson.

10 Real Estate Items Discussed: 1 Vote Taken

Final Adjournment

Motion to accept proposal from Croft & Associates for concepts for 168 South Clayton Street in the amount of \$12,300 made by Board Member Higginbotham, Seconded by Board Member Johnson.

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson.

Motion to adjourn made by Board Member Merritt, Seconded by Board Member Perry Ward

Voting Yea: Board Member Jones, Board Member Perry Ward, Board Member Higginbotham, Board Member Merritt, Board Member Johnson.

Minutes Signature

Lee Merritt, Chairman

Barry Mock, Secretary