

ATHENS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

October 13, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of the Athens Downtown Development Authority/ Athens Clarke County Downtown Development Authority was held at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13, 2015, at the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce, 246 West Hancock Avenue, Athens, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Blackmon, Nancy Denson, Patrick Garrard, Mike Hamby, Regina Quick, and Erica Cascio

STAFF PRESENT: Pamela Thompson, Elise LeQuire, Chuck Horton, and Christi Christian

OTHERS PRESENT: Melissa Link, Russell Edwards, Lisa Love, Blake Aued, Jim Thompson

1. Approval of minutes

Motion by Mayor Denson and seconded by Regina Quick to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2015, regular ADDA Board meeting. All were in favor; motion carried.

2. Public Input

Russell Edwards, a downtown business owner, asked about the status of the Clayton streetscape project. Mayor Denson explained that since the quotes received for the project so far exceeded the Unified Government's budget, the project has essentially gone back to the drawing board. Melissa Link asked if UGA students could help with the design to keep costs down, but Mayor Denson explained that the bulk of the expenses for the project were for the construction of the new sewer and water lines.

3. Community Reports

Board members were given reports from DABA and Four Athens.

4. Presentation- Lisa Love, Director of Music Marketing and Development Georgia Department of Economic Development

Lisa Love gave a ten-minute presentation to the Board highlighting the importance of music to Georgia's economy and tourism. Georgia has a rich history of musical talent from all genres, and a long history of music education, entrepreneurship, technology, and instrument manufacturing. Music tourism is a big part of Georgia's economy. There are more than 75 musical festivals in Georgia annually. 2016 will be "The Year of Music" for the Georgia Travel Guide. There is an episode of "Music Voyager" dedicated to Athens and Macon that can be seen online at Georgiamusic.org. At the end of December, a new website, ExploreGeorgia.org/music will launch that features music festivals, itineraries and venues throughout Georgia. Regina Quick asked how the downtown merchants can be involved and benefit from music tourism. Lisa Love suggested working closely with the Athens CVB and keeping in touch with her.

5. Director's Report

A. ADDA request to install single-space meters on Clayton Street Update

Pam Thompson and Chuck Horton spoke to the appropriate ACC officials about moving forward with the meter installation despite the streetscape project delay. The meters will be installed.

B. Downtown Banner Design Update

The Board saw a full-sized sample of the banner that was sent from the manufacturer. The deadline for banner art submission is November 2, 2015.

C. Downtown Food Truck Festival Event Summary

The Board was provided with a list of the total expenses incurred by ADDA for the festival as well as a summary of the event from the event organizer. Overall feedback from the event was positive.

D. College Square Beautification Project Update

The Board was shown pictures of improvements to College Square. The ADDA is working with UGA Landscape Design to add the wooden planters to the remaining flowerbeds in College Square. The Solid Waste Department installed plantings, repainted structures, and replaced trashcans. They have also been watering the new plants. The feedback has been positive on the improvements. There will be a follow-up meeting in December to assess how well the improvements stood up to football season and to decide what to improve next.

6. Unfinished Business- none

7. New Business

A. FY2015 Parking Management Fee Calculation

The ADDA received a parking management fee of \$183,706. Over the past year, the ADDA has transferred \$97,000 to cover business operating expenses, leaving \$86,706. Mayor Denson motioned and Erica Cascio seconded the motion to transfer the \$183,706 into the reserve account. Motion carried.

B. Façade Grant Program

The Façade Grant Committee met to review two applications for grant money. Based on their review of the applications, the Committee recommended funding the Wuxtry building project at the full amount requested. The Zaxby's project is also worthwhile, but the Committee needs further information before an award can be granted. They hope to present a recommendation next month. Mike Hamby motioned and Regina Quick seconded to accept the Façade Grant Committee's recommendation to award a \$10,000 façade grant to the renovation of the Wuxtry building. Motion carried. Regina Quick was hopeful that the project could be completed before the music tourism season arrives. Erica Cascio suggested an exit interview with grant participants to determine how much the grant money influenced the owner's decision to renovate. The Heritage Foundation is still interested in partnering with ADDA to provide additional funds for these projects. We are waiting to hear from them.

There was Board discussion about improving the fiber optic infrastructure downtown to improve internet connectivity. Staff will research this issue.

8. Financial Reports ADDA and DAPS

The Board was given copies of the financial reports. The ADDA continues to work with David Boyd in the Finance Department to find a solution to increasing credit card fees. The Finance Department is trying to consolidate financial transaction processing county wide, and the ADDA has been invited to be a part of that. When the details get worked out, we should see significant savings on transaction fees. For the month of September, we are \$28,312 ahead of September 2014, and for FY15-16, we are \$63,197 ahead of this time last year.

9. Suggested Agenda Topics for Next Month’s Meeting

Fiber Optics, boundary for government and housing authority parcels.

10.Executive Session- None

11.Adjournment

Mike Hamby motioned to end the meeting at 4:18 PM. Patrick Garrard seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

Chris Blackmon, ADDA Board Chair

Pamela Thompson, ADDA Executive Director