

ATHENS DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MEETING MINUTES

December 08, 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, December 08, 2015, at the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce, 246 West Hancock Avenue, Athens, Georgia.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Blackmon, Nancy Denson, Patrick Garrard, Lori Paluck, and Erica Cascio

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Warnes, Pamela Thompson, Elise LeQuire, and Christi Christian

OTHERS PRESENT: Melissa Link, Russell Edwards, Blake Aued, Jim Thompson, Smith Wilson, Savanna Osburn, Pam House, Walter Culbreath, Woody Breland

1. Approval of minutes

Motion by Mayor Denson and seconded by Patrick Garrard to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2015, regular ADDA Board meeting. All were in favor; motion carried. There was no November meeting.

2. Presentations

Savanna Osburn was introduced as the ADDA part-time seasonal gift certificate sales person. Walter Culbreath and Pam House were honored for their 15 years of service to ADDA and DAPS and were each presented with a framed certificate and a gift.

3. Public Input- none

4. Community Reports

Board members were given reports from DABA, The Chamber, and Four Athens. DABA has sold \$5855.00 in gift certificated since Thanksgiving. A slow start, but there are still 2½ weeks until Christmas.

5. Director's Report

A. Downtown Fiber Project Update

The Director has met with representatives from Parker and AT&T about fiber optic upgrades, but not a representative from Charter. Parker will provide a list of all buildings they currently provide service to and will prioritize those buildings based on occupancy, and let us know the cost to provide fiber optic services to those buildings. The more people within the building that are ready to hook up to the fiber network, the less it will cost. Paul Chambers from AT&T said the question as not fiber availability, but how fast the speed of the internet we desire, and if we are willing to pay for it. He is willing to meet with the Board for discussion.

B. Downtown Boundary Project Update

The Mayor has placed this project on the Legislative Agenda. Rick Parker from the Housing Authority is conferring with his Board about adding Housing Authority owned property to the downtown boundary this year. The Mayor and Commission are moving forward with adding the Government owned property to the boundary. This will move forward to the 2016 General Assembly. Mr. Warnes will be handling the advertising and notifications.

C. Downtown Wayfinding Project Update

The next step for the wayfinding project is to contact the property owners of the suggested sites for downtown gateway murals. The billboard on Dougherty Street is permanently leased by St. Mary's, but the billboard owner is looking for alternative sites for us.

D. December Newsletter

The Board was given copies of the latest Downtown Newsletter

E. 2016 Georgia Downtown Conference Registration

The conference is being held in Athens this year, March 8-11, 2016. There are one day and multi-day registrations available. There will be many educational and networking opportunities at the conference as well as DDA training opportunities for new Board members. There are also Historical Preservation training sessions and Complete Streets training offered by GDOT. There are budgeted ADDA funds available for Board members to attend these trainings if interested. The agenda and schedule are available online.

6. Unfinished Business- none

7. New Business

1A. Request for current non-metered spaces to be metered

Smith Wilson has requested forty-four currently unmetered spaces near Thomas Street be metered due to the current use of those spots as unauthorized long-term parking by residents of the new housing complexes. The lack of turnover in those spaces is creating hardships for the local businesses. Chuck Horton met with Mr. Wilson and agrees that the spaces should be metered. Forty-four meters will cost \$20,460.00 and will need to be approved by the Mayor and Commission. Assuming an average daily collection of \$7.00 per meter, the meters will have paid for themselves in four months. The ADDA recommends a request the Mayor and Commission for the purchase of the new meters. The ADDA will work with the ACC staff to see if that would be a capital cost, or if the funds would need to come from the budget. The ADDA will do a survey of all unmetered spaces within the Boundary to see if any other spaces need meters. Erica Cascio motioned to approve the ADDA recommendation to the Mayor and Commission to add the forty-four new meters near Thomas Street. The Mayor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A. Downtown Banner Art Selection

Heidi Hensley was the winner of the Banner art contest. The Board was shown the winning designs for approval. Since the winning banners are not seasonal, the ADDA can either order fewer banners or display additional banners around town. Mayor Denson motioned to approve the banner design and award Heidi Hensley the \$2500.00 prize. Patrick Garrard seconded the motion. Motion carried. The designs will now be given to Safeguard for printing.

B. Façade Grant Committee Funding Recommendation

The Committee previously needed further information on Mr. Moorman's Zaxby's project before an award could be granted. Since the last Board meeting, that additional information was obtained, and the Façade Grant Committee agreed by an email vote to recommend an award to Mr. Moorman of \$3000 in grant funds for the replacement and restoration of the windows in the building pending Board approval. Mayor Denson motioned to approve the Committee's recommendation of a \$3000 grant award to Mr. Moorman. Erica Cascio seconded the motion. Motion carried.

C. ADDA Website Redesign Vendor Selection

Elise received 30 responses to the RFP for website redesign. Smallbox is a locally owned small business owned in part by a woman. They are very knowledgeable and responsive to questions. The new website will be user friendly and allow downtown merchants to log on and advertise store specials and events. Elise will have editorial powers on the content. Developmental business tools will be easily accessible. Patrick Garrard motioned to accept staff recommendation of website redesign vendor. Lori Paluck seconded the motion. Motion carried.

D. ADDA 2016 Meeting Dates

Proposed meeting dates for 2016 are the second Tuesday of each month at 3:00 pm with the exception of March, which will be the third Tuesday due to Clarke County Schools Spring Break and the Georgia Cities Conference. Mayor Denson motioned to approve the 2016 meeting schedule. Lori Paluck seconded the motion. Motion carried.

E. ADDA 2016 Holiday Schedule

The ADDA recommends the same holiday schedule for 2016 as in previous years. Erica Cascio motioned to approve the holiday schedule, and Patrick Garrard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

F. ADDA Rooftop Garden Policies- Revision Request

The revision streamlines the rental process cutting out Elise as the contact person and allowing the renter to contact the service providers directly. The revision also provides a cleaning service for the charged cleaning fee. Mayor Denson motioned to accept the policy revisions, and Patrick Garrard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

G. Parking Consultant Contract Approval

The question of long-term parking contracts in the decks raised other questions for ADDA and ACCUG about parking issues such as parking capacities and possible future parking structures. John Edwards has written books about parking in small communities and has done many projects in Athens and other Georgia communities. The Board was given his proposal with was broken down into phases. Phase one addresses the capacity of the current parking decks. Future phases analyze on-street spaces and surface lots, and finally an overall evaluation of the entire parking system. The total cost of the contract is \$24,000.00, which the Director and Parking Director believe is a reasonable amount for the depth of the project. The cost of the first phase is \$4000.00, which was not budgeted for this fiscal year. The Unified Government agreed that this was a worthwhile expense that would most likely be reimbursable at the end of the year if the budget is exceeded. Mayor Denson motioned to approve hiring the parking consultant, John Edwards, for the first phase of the project, and Patrick Garrard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

H. Request for ADDA to co-host the 2016 GDA Welcome Reception

Athens is hosting the GDA Conference for the first time in over a dozen years. As part of the host committee, the Director requests that the ADDA co-host the welcome reception to be held at The Graduate. The ADDA cost to co-host would be \$1500.00 which was not in the budget and would be pulled from the Reserve Account. Erica Casio motioned to co-host the GDA Welcome Reception using Reserve Account funds. Mayor Denson seconded the motion. Motion carried. The Director also requested items for the Downtown Athens' auction basket.

8. Financial Reports ADDA and DAPS

We are still paying the credit card transaction fees with the knowledge of the Unified Government. We will soon be joining the Unified Government credit card contract at a lower rate. For the month of November, we collected \$262,504.00 which is almost \$17,000.00 more than last November. So far this fiscal year, we have collected \$95,000.00 more than we had collected at this time last fiscal year.

9. Suggested Agenda Topics for Next Month's Meeting

FY17 Parking Budget, Work Plan update, Microloans, RFP for Hotel Indigo

10. Executive Session- real estate acquisition

Erica Cascio motioned to move to Executive Session to discuss real estate acquisition. Mayor Denson seconded the motion. Motion carried, and the Board moved to closed session at 4:05 pm.

Erica Cascio motioned to move back into Open Session. Mayor Denson seconded the motion. Motion carried, and the Board moved into open session at 4:38 pm.

- 10.A** Lori Paluk motioned to purchase Suite 108 of 205 West Broad Street (located inside Game Day Condos) for \$138,900. Erica Cascio seconded the motion. Motion carried, with Patrick Garrard abstaining.

10. Adjournment

Mayor Denson motioned to adjourn. Lori Paluk seconded the motion. Motion carried, and the Board adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Chris Blackmon, ADDA Board Chair

Pamela Thompson, ADDA Executive Director