

**Athens Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, January 14, 2021
2:00pm – 4:00 pm
Classic Center, Athena A**

ANNUAL MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Ford, David Lynn, Jason Leonard, Whit Richardson, Mike Hamby, BJ Hardy, Kelly Girtz, and Dexter Weaver

OTHERS PRESENT: Greg Sowell, Rachel Swartz, Jay Boling, Kirby Glaze, Lynn Abdouni, and Joni Herzog

1. Election of Officers- By consent, Linda Ford called the meeting to order in the absence of a current Chair and Vice Chair. Mike Hamby nominated Jason Leonard as Chair and Dexter Weaver as Vice Chair. Whit Richardson seconded the motion. Motion carried. ADDA Business Coordinator, Rachel Swartz, will be recording secretary.
2. Adjourn-Kelly Girtz motioned to adjourn at 2:08, seconded by Mike Hamby. Motion carried.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

3. **Approval of Minutes** – Mike Hamby motioned to approve the minutes from December 3, 2020. Whit Richardson seconded. Motion approved.

4. **Public Input** – Lynn Abdouni and Joni Herzog from Athens Anti-Discrimination Movement spoke about reimagining the Pedestrian Plaza to reflect the Black Athens community.

5. **Community Reports**

CVB – Jay Boling reported that the CVB IS booking small events for the fall. They will be starting a blog called “What’s New and Upcoming” in 2021.

Chamber – Whit Richardson announced that the Chamber will be having their Athena Awards and Annual Meeting virtually in February. Check the Chamber website for the newest information regarding the second round of PPP funds. Culinary Kitchen’s Winter Market is hosted by Hendershot’s every Saturday until March 13, 2021.

DABA - none

4. **Directors’ Report**

Planning and Outreach

Clayton Street Update – Astra is making progress in the utility relocation on Clayton Street. Trees are scheduled to be removed on January 18. Streetscape work, sidewalks, and curbing could begin as early as March. Festival lighting is moving forward, and the SPLOST team has selected the lighting design. There are no resources to extend this to College Ave. Public restrooms will be placed at the loading zone on College Ave in front of the parking deck. The Portland Loo design was chosen by the Commission. Public Works IS recommending a pilot project for bollards to be installed at the intersection of College and Clayton. The Solid Waste Director is scheduled to present a permanent eco-station solution. Currently, the Central Services Department is suspending all fees associated with Sidewalk Café Permits.

Hot Corner Mural Park Update – The directors presented the board with final construction drawings for the downtown park on the corner of Washington and Lumpkin. The bid price was \$237,000. The ADDA is still able to move forward with the project, even with the current budget restraints. The next step would be to get construction bids. Whit Richardson wants to see this project align with the Costa building construction projects. Kelly Girtz assured that the Costa Building project is mostly on the interior of the building and both projects should be able to move forward independently. Mike Hamby would like to see the park project to move forward and finish as the Clayton Street project finishes.

Business Services

“Walk on by” Mural Alley – Main Street Innovation Grant – The ADDA applied for and was awarded a \$10,000 Georgia Innovation Grant to assist with murals, festival lighting, signage, and an interesting street surface in the “Walk on by” Alley. The ADDA is working with the Athens Area Arts Council and Didi Dunphy in the ACC Arts Division to continue installing murals in the alley. The concept is to utilize underrepresented local black artists to transform the alley to a permanent space that connects culture from one block to the next.

Federal COVID Small Business Relief Program – The Economic Aid to Hard-Hit Small Businesses, Nonprofits and Venues Act is part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. The ADDA directors and staff are working to distribute the information and encourage downtown businesses to apply for grant and PPP loan funding. The ADDA co-sponsored a webinar with the AACC and the Athens CVB targeted to the hospitality industry and shuttered venues.

FY22 DAPS Budget Recommendation – Downtown Athens Parking Services budget is submitted by ADDA/DAPS staff annually in January to the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government for consideration in the ACCUG budget. The FY22 budget projects revenue of \$4,450,255. The ADDA made the Finance Department aware that the decrease in parking inventory due to construction, the loss of on-street parking on Clayton Street, and the possible loss

of parking on College Square, may result in less revenue. Mike Hamby made a motion to approve the budget for FY22 and Kelly Girtz seconded. Motion passed.

5. **New Business** – Greg Sowell wanted to make it known to the board that the Landmark parking deck was not approved by the Mayor and Commission, so the ADDA will not be moving forward on this project.
6. **Financial Report** – Parking income is down \$650,000 for the year. The ADDA receives income from taxes and that income is steady.
7. **Suggested agenda topics for next month’s meeting** – Kelly Girtz said that AthFest moved to later in the year and the popularity of outdoor concerts is projected to increase. He would like the ADDA to look at developing a set of guidelines for best practices and a map for the spaces.
8. **Executive Session – Kelly Girtz motioned to adjourn the regular meeting and move into executive session for the purpose of discussion of real estate. Whit Richardson seconded. Regular meeting adjourned at 2:44pm**
9. **Adjourn – Kelly Girtz motioned to adjourn executive session and Mike Hamby seconded. Executive session adjourned at 3:45pm**

Jason Leonard, Board Chair

Linda Ford, Director of Business Services

David Lynn, Director of Planning and Outreach