

**Athens Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, January 8, 2025
2:00pm – 4:00 pm
Gameday Conference Room (second floor)**

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Bradley, Drew Dekle, Kelly Girtz, and Jason Leonard

OTHERS PRESENT: Linda Ford, David Lynn, Greg Sowell, and Rachel Swartz

1. **Approval of Minutes** – Drew Dekle motioned to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2024, meeting and Kelly Girtz seconded. Motion passed.
2. **Public Input** - none
3. **Community Reports**
 - **CVB**- none
 - **Chamber**- David Bradley reported that Dr. Alvi Coes will be joining the Athens Area Chamber as Chief Workforce Officer on February 3, 2025. The chamber is also working on scheduling an inner-city visit to Gainesville, Florida in July.
4. **Directors' Report**

Planning and Outreach

- A. **College Square Update** – Smith Planning Group (SBG) completed the public engagement process that resulted in over 600 interactions. SBG will put together a report compiling the results of the public engagement sessions and survey. Also, there was an article in the AJC regarding the redevelopment of College Square. David Lynn is also applying for a Georgia Department of Transportation grant called Transportation Alternatives. The board also discussed safety measures around the square in light of the recent incident in New Orleans.
- B. **Costa Park Update** – David Lynn said that the work on the Costa Park should start in March and should take about three months. The cost should be around \$400,000. The Costa Building is also scheduled to be finished about the time the park construction starts. The building will house ACC Economic Development, ACC Housing and Community Development, and the ACC People and Belonging Department.

Business Services

- C. 2025 Holiday Schedule** – Kelly Girtz motioned to approve the 2025 holiday schedule which mirrors the Athens-Clarke County holiday schedule of 13 paid holidays including New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Holiday, Earth Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous Peoples Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving (2 days), Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Drew Dekle seconded. Motion passed.
- D. 2025 Meeting Schedule** – Kelly Girtz motion to approve the 2025 ADDA board meeting schedule to be held on the second Wednesday of the month starting at 2:00 p.m. in the Gameday conference room at 250 W. Broad Street, 2nd floor, Athens, Georgia 30601. Drew Dekle seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- E. Levitate Consulting Contract** – At the November 2024 board meeting, the board voted to move forward with Levitate Legal & Consulting to provide strategic fund development services. The total payment to Levitate, approved by the board at the November 2024 board meeting is \$32,500. David Bradley motioned to authorize the directors to execute the contract and Drew Dekle seconded. Motion passed.
- 5. Financial Report** – Linda Ford reported that the parking income is still trending ahead of last year. She also reported that the Mayor and Commission will vote on the increase in deck fees to \$2 per hour at the February Mayor and Commission meeting.
- 6. Suggest agenda topics for following month’s meeting** – Kelly Girtz told the board that former director of the ACCGov Planning Commission, Brad Griffin was named Interim County Manager. He will be contracted through May 6, 2025.

Drew Dekle mentioned to the board that during the College Square renovations someone needs to address the infrastructure in Downtown. Kelly Girtz said that it might be the challenge of the College Square project. David Lynn pointed out that the project is only a surface-level project; the county can have the opportunity to access utilities if deemed necessary.

Kelly Girtz gave the board an update on the Federal Building and the possibility of a building swap. Girtz said that he is cautiously optimistic that the federal government might want to offload an inefficient property from their inventory.

Kelly Girtz also gave an update regarding the steering committee for the development of an arena district and parking needs for Classic Center. The Commission will see that on their agenda in February. The committee will

consist of two DDA members, two Classic Center Authority Board members, two ACCGov County Commissioners, and Kelly Girtz as chairperson.

Lastly, Kelly Girtz addressed the board about the possibility of expanding the DDA district to include some of the rail lines and the area around the CHARM property, including the North Oconee River, to look to the future to create a river district. Expanding the DDA District would need to be voted on by the Georgia General Assembly. David Lynn said that another option is to have a specific river authority. David Bradley mentioned that Greenville did the same thing 25 years ago by incorporating their river. Girtz would like to try to get the proposed boundary change submitted to the General Assembly during the current session.

- 7. Downtown Housing Project**– Attorney Greg Sowell explained that the ADDA is being requested to release a partial amount of the security deed for ACCGov to begin installing the utilities. David Bradley motioned to approve and execute this request and Drew Dekle seconded. Motion passed.
- 8. Executive Session** - none
- 9. Adjourn** – David Bradley motioned to adjourn the meeting and Drew Dekle seconded. The meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m. The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 12, 2025.