

**Athens Downtown Development Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday, April 9, 2025  
2:00pm – 4:00 pm  
250 W. Broad St, Suite 108**

**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Bishop, Drew Dekle, Mike Hamby, and Jason Leonard

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

1. **Approval of Minutes** – Jeff Bishop motioned to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2025, board meeting and Drew Dekle seconded. Motion passed.
2. **Public Input** – none
3. **Community Reports**
  - **CVB** – Linda Ford gave the CVB report in Elyse Harris' absence. Visit Athens reopened applications for their Event Marketing Grant. This grant will help local event organizers expand marketing campaigns to reach audiences outside of Athens and increase overnight visitation. They will also be launching the Athens Pup Pass on April 30, 2025. Downtown merchant participants include Condor Chocolates, Alumni Cookie Dough, Rooke & Pawn, Gyro Wrap, and Clubhouse. Visit Athens is also going to sponsor the new Twilight Art Trail, an incentive to draw Twilight spectators into fifteen downtown businesses. Lastly, Visit Athens and the Historic Athens Welcome Center will provide visitors with information during Twilight at the Twilight Expo. They will have a similar presence at AthFest and Athens Pride.
  - **Chamber** – none
4. **Directors' Reports**
  - Planning and Outreach
  - A. **FY26 CEP Applications** – David Lynn shared CEP applications with the Board. Final recommendations will be given once the Mayor and Commission set the program budget.



- B. **College Square Streetscape**—Under the Board’s direction, a letter was sent to the Downtown banks to participate in the financing for College Square. As of the date of the meeting, only one bank, First American Bank and Trust, has responded. They were happy to assist us with financing and willing to be flexible in terms and payments. The deadline is June 1<sup>st</sup> for any other offers. David Lynn also reported that SPG is still working on the cost estimate but believes that we should come in under \$7 million, even with a 20% contingency.

Jeff Bishop stated that he would like to request that the Mayor and Commission be a strong partner with the ADDA on issues that have been brought to our attention by the merchants. Mike Hamby suggested that the ADDA bring it to the Mayor and Commission as a statement of partnership.

Attorney Greg Sowell noted that when the board votes on the financing piece of the College Square project that Jeff Bishop, being an employee of First American Bank and Trust, would need to recuse himself. Also, the board will need to make sure that there will be a quorum.

#### Business Services

- C. **Draft FY26** – Linda Ford presented the board with a preliminary FY26 budget for ADDA. The ADDA typically approves the budget in July or August. The property tax revenue should increase in FY26 along with the ADDA’s Parking Management fee will increase from 20% to 40%.

- D. **Public Art – Project Ginkgo, Light Pole Banners** – Project Ginkgo is a public art project that has been sponsored by the ADDA since 2018. Artist Krysia Ara has converted twenty concrete light pole bases into mosaic designs. Krysia will create and install three or four new mosaics this year. The planned designs are Ginkgo Tunes, near Hot Corner Mural; Ginkgocentric, on Hancock Ave, near the post office; and Lunar Phases on Lumpkin Street, next to the Morton Theatre. Also, the ADDA is working on the next light pole banners which will feature art from local artist Will Eskridge.

Linda Ford also noted that the ADDA has nominated the Bell Hotel at 183 W Clayton St for an award from Historic Athens in the “Best Adapted Reuse for Historic Structure” category.

- E. **Eco Station Update** – ACCGov Solid Waste has installed three Eco Stations in the Downtown area. The two at Hull Street and near the Georgia Theatre are working well. The one at Jackson Street has had some issues. The directors met with merchants and ACCGov Solid Waste and explored solutions including communication expectations, breaking down cardboard



boxes, change in design of the eco-station, and more frequent pick-ups. The ADDA is considering using a third-party junk hauler to supplement the trash pick-up if Solid Waste cannot add additional pick-ups.

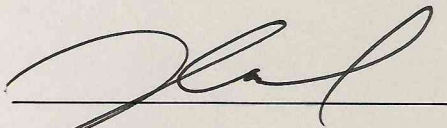
F. **Suggested Retreat Topics** - Linda Ford asked the board for retreat topics and to email her prior to the retreat. Somone from the Prosecutor's office will be coming to the retreat. The board would also like to invite Lieutenant Bassinger. Jeff Bishop would like to discuss surveying Downtown merchants about important issues. The board would also like to discuss repairs to the bollards. The retreat will be Wednesday, May 14, 2025, from 9am-12pm at the Lyndon House.

5. **Financial Report** – The hourly increase in deck fees went into effect this month and is reflected in the revenue. Revenue for March 2025 was \$375,216.

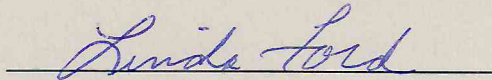
6. **Executive Session** – Drew Dekle made a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of legal, personnel, or real estate matters. Jeff Bishop seconded. Motion passed.

Jeff Bishop motioned to adjourn the executive session and Drew Dekle seconded. Motion passed.

7. **Adjourn** – Drew Dekle made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jeff Bishop second. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned.



Jason Leonard, Board Chair



Linda Ford, Director of Business Services



David Lynn, Director of Planning and Outreach