

**Athens Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, October 8, 2025
2:00pm
ADDA Office, 250 W. Broad Street**

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

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

1. **Approval of Minutes** – Kelly Girtz motioned to approve the minutes from the September 2025 meeting, and Mike Hamby seconded. Motion passed.

2. **Public Input** -none

3. **Directors' Report**

Planning and Outreach

- A. **Holiday Lights** – David Lynn updated the board on the status of the Downtown Holiday Light Project. The Directors met with Central Services, including county electrician- Keith Lunsford. They outlined power concerns, so lighting had to be reduced in some areas. The Directors are meeting with James Alexander, Interim Director of Central Services, to discuss any other concerns.
- B. **College Square** – Smith Planning Group is interviewing three construction companies. After the contractor interviews, the final bids will be due on October 16, 2025. The Mayor and Commission will be finalizing the details of the design and the Parking Management Agreement on the November agenda setting meeting. Attorney Greg Sowell said that the parking management agreement will need to be changed so that the management fee distribution will be monthly instead at the end of the fiscal year, in order to make the payment on the construction loan with First American Bank. David Lynn also noted that Georgia Department of Transportation wanted smaller trees at the Broad Street end of College Square, and Athens Transit Department inquired about adding a bus stop.
- C. **CORE Development** – David Lynn and Greg Sowell updated the board on the CORE Development project at Dougherty and Jackson streets. Interim Assistant Manager, Andrew Saunders, asked the ADDA to file a rezoning application. Also, the directors, Andrew Saunders, and CORE

have been working on the parking deck design. Leisure Services have asked for 50 parking spaces to use for their building and Thomas N Lay Park. Also, Greg Sowell explained that the financing details are being discussed, pointing out that CORE is willing to build 200 parking spaces in the parking deck for the exchange for the butterfly lot property, and will finance the additional 225 parking spaces. The development agreement for this project is expected to go before the Mayor and Commission in the October-November meeting cycle.

Business Services

- D. **FY25 Parking Management Agreement Calculation** – Linda Ford reviewed the FY25 parking management fee calculation. ACCGov and the ADDA split the net revenue 60%/40%. ADDA received \$731,449.
 - E. **Costa Park Update** – The construction on the park beside the Costa Building was paused due to the planning department requiring changes in the lighting and stormwater plan. Daniel Garren, from ACCGov SPLOST office, emailed that the revised plans have been submitted and as soon as they are approved, construction will resume.
 - F. **Downtown Grants** – Linda Ford updated the board on the grants that the ADDA has awarded in the past three months. Community and Athens Educates were each awarded a \$5,000 Marketing Grant. Two Community Event Funding Grants of \$2,000 each were awarded to Athens Songwriters Forum and Chess & Community, Chess-A-Thon. Peterson Properties, 260 College Ave was awarded a Façade Grant for \$10,000.
 - G. **Georgia Downtown Association 2027 Conference** – The ADDA, Athens Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB), and the Watkinsville Downtown Development Authority applied to host the 2027 Georgia Downtown Association Conference in Athens. The last time Athens hosted was for the 2016 conference. The announcement will not be made until the 2026 conference in Rome, Georgia.
- 4. **Financials** – Revenue is reflecting the increase in the hourly rates in both the deck and meters.
 - 5. **Executive Session** -none
 - 6. **Suggest agenda topics for following month's meeting** – Jeff Bishop would like to do a Downtown tree audit to determine where there are missing or unhealthy trees and plan for replacement.

Drew Dekle would like to create a way for businesses and the public to be aware of street closures and events, stating that there can never be too much communication with our Downtown businesses.

Kelly Girtz gave an update on the Right of Way Committee. They plan to bring a recommendation for the Mayor and Commission in the December voting meeting that will clarify the regulations around sitting and laying upon a public right of way and suggest an update to the code pertaining to storage of any kind in a public right of way.

Mike Hamby suggested the ADDA engage with ACCGov and state officials about updating the code to allow police officers to arrest a person if they are on probation or banned from an area and they violate the terms of their arrest.

7. **Adjourn** – Jeff Bishop motioned to adjourn the meeting and Kelly Girtz seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:49 PM.

Jason Leonard, Board Chair

Linda Ford, Director of Business Services

David Lynn, Director of Planning and Outreach