

**Athens Downtown Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, April 15, 2026
2:00 p.m.
ADDA Office, 250 W. Broad Street**

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Blake Aued, Deputy Chief Harrison Daniel, Linda Ford, Diana Jackson, David Lynn, Blake Ogden, and Rachel Swartz

1. **Approval of Minutes** – Kelly Girtz motioned to approve the minutes from the March 2026 meeting and Jeff Bishop seconded. Motion passed.
2. **Public Input**- none
3. **Directors' Report**

Planning and Outreach

A. College Square Update – Diana Jackson presented the construction updates to the board. There have been ongoing discussions with Georgia Power regarding the two power vaults that they want to upgrade. The upgrades have to do with the vault and lid and not the electrical equipment. Sheridan provided the board with two options: allow Georgia Power to do the upgrades prior to the hardscaping, which will extend the project an additional six weeks, or finish the project and Georgia Power can do the upgrades after football season. Diana Jackson said there are a lot of logistics to work through. Also, since the last board meeting, there has been work on the storm structures, new water taps, and meter management tied in the services to the new meters. There was a new fire department connection installed in front of The Grill. A new eight-inch water line was installed. The retaining wall was started. Also, the footings for the shade sails will go in. Sheridan will be working on dust control since there has not been any rain.

B. Costa Park Update – The Directors walked through the Costa Park with Keyes Williamson and the Special-Purpose Local-Options Sales Tax (SPLOST) Team. The trees planted were the wrong species, incorrect plantings and concrete was not finished. Currently, the team is looking at May 1, 2026, as a completion date.

C. **CEP Funding Requests** – Kelly Girtz motioned for the CEP funding requests to be deferred until the May meeting. Drew Dekle seconded. Motion passed.

D. **Downtown Tax Resolution** - Under authority of the act creating the Athens Downtown Development Authority, (ADDA), up to one (1) mill can be levied and assessed against real property in the Downtown Athens district, as defined by the act. The ADDA needs to recommend a millage rate levy to the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government at this time.

Drew Dekle motioned to approve the resolution to recommend a tax of one (1) mill upon the value of said real estate as fixed by the Tax Digest of Athens-Clarke County. David Bradley seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Business Services

E. **Park Mobile Parking App** - The contract with ParkMobile has been reviewed by the ADDA attorney and executed. In the final agreement, ParkMobile agreed to a lower cost per transaction and removed the annual cost per transaction increase. Both parking trucks are now equipped with a license plate reader to streamline enforcement. Rachel Swartz and Jeremy Smith are in the process of setting up zones in the system. The ParkMobile implementation team will assist with a phased rollout over the summer. The app should be fully implemented by August 1st.

F. **Downtown Holiday Lights** - The directors met with Chase Williams from Christmas Elves to begin planning holiday lights for 2026. Some items discussed were: trees wrapped with warm white lights on College Square and the 200 block of College Avenue, red uplighting on large canopy trees, centerpiece cone trees on College Square, additional photo op feature(s) on College Square, snowflake projections across ground in College Square, red downlighting on College Deck, and warm white lighting at City Hall. The color scheme will be simplified this year to red, green, and warm white. Keith Lunsford from Central Services is upgrading the electrical where needed to ensure electrical capacity. Central Services plans to wrap all lamp poles this year and will do Washington Street.

G. **Downtown Festival Zone** – Linda Ford talked about the idea of an ADDA festival zone Downtown for UGA football home games, similar to the successful Jam for Cam event. Four or five blocks could be closed off for pre-game activities, with the event ending before the game starts. The Downtown Athens Foundation would manage the funds raised from the festival zone. Next steps would include an MOU with ACCGov, talking with

the police department and the attorney's office. The revenue would help support Downtown and fund the holiday lights, grants, and landscaping.

H. Location Analytics Software – The attorneys are reviewing the contract for Placer.ai

4. **Financial Report** – Linda Ford reported that parking revenue is still ahead of last year but will not meet the revenue goal due to the number of broken meters.
5. **Executive Session** – none
6. **Suggested future agenda topics and announcements** – David Bradley announced that the next intercity visit will be to Ames, Iowa and will be focus on Downtown activation. Drew Dekle notified the board that a tenant of his was having trouble with their employees and the amount of money they were spending to park. Jeff Bishop asked if there were any updates from the commission regarding the public-right-of-way. Kelly Girtz said the public right-of-way committee is reconvening and will look at sleeping/laying on sidewalks. The Homeless Coalition is working to add lockers at First Baptist Church and Bigger Vision. Jeff Bishop and Drew Dekle expressed concern that there is not an enforceable ordinance to help get the homeless population off the street. Linda Ford stated that Savannah, Ga., has an urban camping ordinance that has been highly successful getting people off the street and the help they need. Mayor Girtz would like to host a music event in Dudley Park. Linda Ford noted that the ADDA Board Retreat will be June 3, 2026, at the Costa Building.
7. **Adjourn** -Drew Dekle motioned to adjourn the meeting and Jeff Bishop seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:21pm.

Jason Leonard, Board Chair

Linda Ford, Director of Business Services

David Lynn, Director of Planning and Outreach