

**GEORGIA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
CANTON, GA
JANUARY 18, 2023**

The GDA Board of Directors held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 3:00 pm following the annual board retreat held in Canton, Georgia. President Fowler called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

The following Board Members were in attendance: President Jeffrey Fowler, Vice-President Emily Hopkins, Past President April Norton, Mr. Mathew Hill, Mr. Qaijuan Willis, Ms. Velinda Hardy, Mr. Taylor Smith, Ms. Tonya Parker, Ms. Abigail Strickland, Ms. Abbey McLaren, Ms. Kenrick Ward, and Mr. Jason Ford. Secretary/Treasurer Aundi Lesley was in attendance via teleconference. Mr. Ricky Clark was absent.

The following Staff Members were in attendance: Ms. Renée Coakley, Ms. Cindy Eidson, Ms. Sadie Krawczyk.

The following Partners were in attendance: Mr. John VanBrunt, Ms. Ellen Hill, Ms. Elizabeth Elliott, Ms. Leigh Burns, and Ms. Mara Shaw.

Review and Approval of Minutes: The November 15, 2022, minutes were presented to the board. The minutes were comprehensive and there was discussion about editing down to cover the high points. Mr. Smith made a motion to table the minutes, allowing Ms. Lesley to streamline them to be presented at the February meeting. Mr. Hill seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Review and Approval of the October and November Financial Reports: There was discussion about the \$75,906.02 liability charge to the GMA General Fund on the Balance Sheet of the October 31 Financial Report. GMA staff did not have an explanation for the charge. Under Travel & Entertainment under the Revenue & Expenses statement of the November 30 Financial Report, Ms. Coakley reported the \$476.10 charge was from an expense for GDDP when Janice Eidson was the GDA Business Manager. Mr. Fowler asked about policies and procedures for approving and reviewing financial statements. Ms. Krawczyk commented that the Balance Sheet often reflected delayed expenses and the subsequent summaries are the most accurate and up to date list of expenses and revenue.

The board did not feel comfortable approving the financial statements without further explanation of some of the charges. Ms. Strickland made a motion to table the October and November financial statements for review in February. Ms. Hardy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

I. Internal Operations

- a. *Edge Scholarship:* Miranda Taylor, GDA Member from Kennesaw, applied for the Downtown Edge Scholarship. After review of the application, Ms. Parker made a motion to approve the application for up to \$1000 with a second from Mr. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. *Mission/Vision/Goals:* The board reviewed the mission, vision, goals. Mr. Ford made a motion to add "education" to the mission statement. Mr. Hill second the motion. The board further discussed and several members expressed hesitation to update the mission statement without a thorough review and discussion. All board members opposed the motion. Mr. Hill made a motion to defer discussion of the mission statement to the March meeting and to host a workshop to update the mission statement. Mr. Willis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- c. *Vacant Position:* President Fowler reported that Monica Rentfrow resigned from the board. The board discussed potential candidates to fill her position. The board agreed that her position does not have to be filled by a manager in her DCA region and determined that the candidates from the previous election should be considered. The nominating committee will review a list of candidates.

II. Education and Training

- a. *Regional Meetups:* President Fowler reported the spring regional meet-ups have been scheduled and posted on the website. Ms. Coakley will attend all the meet-ups and will create a sign-up to ensure a board member is attending each meet-up. Fall communities have been determined and Ms. Coakley is working to confirm the schedule.
- b. *CDP Update:* President Fowler noted that CDP has been discussed at length at the board retreat.

III. Marketing and Membership

- a. *Marketing:* Ms. Lesley reported that the social platforms currently have 2370 Facebook Followers (up 34 from last meeting) & 813 Instagram Followers (up 25 since last meeting).
- b. *Membership:* Currently have 97 paid members as of 1/14/2023. 113 with unpaid invoices. Ms. Coakley is working on a GMA city listing that do not have GDA members for board members to reach out to recruit new members. Spreadsheet should be ready by or before February board meeting.

IV. Legislative: Mr. Smith noted he is excited for the future of the legislative committee and completing the tasks identified during the work plan process.

V. Other Business:

- a. *Conference Forms Approval:* Ms. Coakley reported that the Conference Committee reviewed the conference forms but some changes need to be made before the board can approve them. Ms. Hopkins made a motion to table approval of the conference forms until the February meeting. Ms. McLaren seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. *GACVB Partnership:* Ms. Norton asked the board to vote on the parameters of the partnership with GACVB. The board determined that they would like to create a reciprocal relationship with GACVB that would include booth placement at conferences, free conference registrations, and leading training sessions during conferences. Ms. Strickland made a motion to give Jeffrey Fowler authority to sign an annual contract with GACVB that outlines the trade discussed by the marketing committee. Ms. Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Updates: Ms. Coakley reported GDA will have a booth at Cities United this weekend and asked board members if anyone will be available to assist.

Partner Updates:

- Georgia Main Street reported that Third Thursday is tomorrow, and they are in the thick of annual assessments.
- Georgia Municipal Association reported they are excited about the upcoming mural workshop in Thomasville and announced Abigail Strickland is participating in the Young Gamechangers program this year.
- Fox Theatre Institute reported that they are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year. They are excited to have awarded \$500,000 in grants to Georgia's historic theatres.
- ECG reported they have had a lot of staff transitions over the past year but they are now fully staffed.

There being no further business, Mr. Ford made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. McLaren second the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:48pm.