

**GEORGIA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
VIRTUAL
NOVEMBER 15, 2022**

The GDA Board of Directors held its regular meeting on Tuesday, November 15, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. via teleconference. President Norton called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.

The following Board Members were in attendance: President April Norton, Vice President Jeffrey Fowler, Past President Mathew Hill, Ms. Velinda Hardy, Ms. Abigail Strickland, Ms. Kendrick Ward, Ms. Aundi Lesley, Mr. Ricky Clark, Ms. Emily Hopkins, Ms. Tonya Parker, Ms. Monica Rentfrow, and Mr. Qaijuan Willis. Absent were Ms. Abbey McLaren, and Mr. Taylor Smith

The following Staff Members were in attendance: Ms. Renée Coakley, Ms. Nicole Brown, and Ms. Sharon Collins

The following Partners were in attendance: Mr. John VanBrunt, Ms. Jessica Worthington, Ms. Kaitlin Messich, Ms. Ebony Simpson, Ms. Elizabeth Elliot, Ms. Cindy Eidson, Ms. Ellen Hill, Mr. Scott Purvis, Ms. Leigh Burns, Mr. Chris Higdon, and Ms. Sadie Krawczyk. Absent: Mr. Danny Bivins and Mr. Dan McRae

Review and Approval of Minutes: Upon a motion made by Mr. Fowler and seconded by Ms. Hopkins, the October 25, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

Review and Approval of Financial Report: Ms. Coakley provided the Financial Report for September 2022; under professional service, the partial payment to the CDP program CVIOG in the amount of \$8666.00.

Upon a motion by Ms. Rentfrow and seconded by Ms. Lesley, the September 2022 financials were unanimously approved.

Committee Reports

I. Internal Operations – April Norton

- a. **Board Retreat** - Ms. Coakley stated they would be meeting in Canton on Thursday to discuss the board retreat and the GDA conference. They provided a tentative agenda schedule from last year's retreat. Ms. Coakley reminded the board that the Carl Vincent Institute would facilitate the retreat for \$2300 plus travel, and it has been added to the budget for next year since the retreat is in January. Ms. Norton mentioned to the board that working with your committees to have up-to-date information ready to present could be helpful.
- b. **2023 Meeting Dates** – Ms. Coakley provided the 2023 tentative dates for board meetings. Meeting invites for have been sent to all.

- c. **Board Election Results** – Mr. Hill stated that the ballot was sent out for the board members whose terms are expiring and replacement for Christian Hamilton. 50 ballots returned, and 48 favored the vote as it was. Monica Rentfrow, Abigail Strickland, Velinda Hardy, Taylor Smith, Aundi Lesley, Kendrick Ward, and Ricky Clark were all reappointed. In the district two position, the majority of votes were in favor of Jason Ford.

The board voted on officers virtually via Survey Monkey. Partners did not vote. Mr. Hill presented the results: Secretary-Treasurer for next year is Aundi Lesley, and Vice President Emily Hopkins, with no write-in votes for either seat. Ms. Norton asked Ms. Lesley and Ms. Hopkins, with a majority vote, if they accepted the positions, and they both agreed.

II. **Education & Training** – Jeffrey Fowler

- a. **Regional Meetups** – Mr. Fowler stated there weren't many updates from the previous meeting, and they are waiting for January. The fall regional meetups all went well. Jeffrey has provided additional photos for the website from mentoring groups.

III. **Marketing & Membership** – Aundi Lesley

- a. **Membership** –GMA has done a system upgrade to make everything cloud-based, which is great, but that means there is no accurate count of members now. Invoices for membership are scheduled to go out today. Currently have 123 members that are being billed \$200 as primary members, 56 billed \$100 as secondary members, two as preferred members at \$300 memberships, and five corporate members at \$500.
- b. **Marketing** – Currently, we have 2,336 Facebook followers and 788 Instagram followers. The Facebook analysis is very good as well as the engagement piece. There is an average reach of over 10,000 people on Facebook as a community is mentioned and shared. Ms. Lesley reminded the board to like, follow, subscribe and share.

Ms. Lesley mentioned that, as Ms. Norton stated, sitting on some of the upcoming committee meetings as they push out the CDP program would be helpful as they start promoting it in the future. Ms. Worthington mentioned this would be a time to do some intentional reach-out campaign to members to say here is a list of your representatives.

- IV. **Legislative** - Ms. Krawczyk stated that Taylor Smith and Abbey McLaren had been added to the Gold Dome Update to share updates going forward. Ms. Jessica mentioned an intentional reach-out campaign to the members and provided a list of their representatives. Provide a template for reaching out to their representatives through email.

V. **Other Business**

Budget Proposal and Board Vote - Ms. Collins gave an in-depth look at the budget. She stated that on the revenue side, dues billing is scheduled to go out and correlates with the numbers in the notes section for that first line. If all invoices are paid, revenue will exceed just over \$33,000.

In the next line, this new process mentioned at the last board meeting, GMA changed the credit card fees to an actual expense as of January 2023. Instead of it being a debit to revenue, it will now be an actual expense. To help monitor our costs, we've asked that a 3% flat fee be incorporated for GDA, and in the note's column, there is a \$1,200 based on 3% of the 40,300 above.

There was much discussion on the 3% credit card fee and ways to offset that cost.

Mr. Clark recommended to at least assess some form of a fee to help defray or offset some of that cost. We charge \$2, but as per what's presented, we're paying roughly \$3 to \$5. But to offset some of that cost that we're paying, everybody uses the credit card transaction, pays a \$2 convenience fee. If it's a police service, you're paying 5% of whatever the total cost is. But it helps us defray the cost of the amount of credit card transactions that we're, we are running. There's nothing else to get the conversation started because this was on this balance sheet last year.

Ms. Norton suggested at setting aside funding to support opportunities for us to promote our program since we are \$8300 in the positive.

Ms. Collins stated if there's approval to add the convenience fee, we can leave this as the budget, but when we move into planning for the conference, then we can make adjustments at that point. The only thing that would do would be to increase your revenue. We wouldn't necessarily need to adjust this budget, but we could make fee adjustments for conference rates, and then that would just yield you more revenue.

Ms. Norton stated they will wait the recommendation that Ms. Collins provides back for us, and have this expenditure allocated in our budget to accommodate. Otherwise, it would be revenue building.

Mr. Fowler made a motion to approve this budget, including the changes discussed and made in this presented document, and Ms. Rentfrow seconded. With approval by all, the board budget and proposal were approved.

VI. Staff Updates

On Georgia Cities Foundation, Ms. Krawczyk stated they are on track with loans and opportunities. If there are any projects to reach out to because there is funding available, and Chris Higdon can assist in obtaining funding. Placemaking applications are due in December. We already have letters of interest from four new cities, three will be accepted, and we will announce those in January. Young Game

Changers applications are online, and if you know anyone under the age of 40 that would like to be a part of the program in 2023 in Columbus, you can go online at Georgiaforward.org/apply and apply there.

VII. Partner Updates -

Ms. Worthington stated it's the end of the year, so it means we're focusing on assessment season coming up. We have a third Thursday this week, which Ellen will be rolling out our training calendar for, and we'll make share to share that with Renee and everybody so that y'all have that information. Working on our switch to six and got a lot of other little things we're wrapping up.

Ms. Kaitlin stated currently, her team is in San Francisco at the Landscape Architecture Conference, and if anything is needed to let her know.

Mr. Purvis from Georgia Power stated there are no updates other than what you're hearing out there on our nuclear plants.

Ms. Burns thanked everyone for all the Fox in Box referrals. We've booked five new schools and know they are going to get some more in, including other parts of Georgia outside of Metro Atlanta. We're looking forward to also continuing the library exhibit in Jonesboro, and then it'll move to Augusta. Please visit our website too, to see who received FTI grants this year. We awarded 11 grants for a little over half a million dollars in communities all around the state. We're excited about it and thanked everyone for their help.

Ms. Norton thanked all the partners. This concludes our board meetings for the 2022 calendar year, and we will jump strong into 2023. Ms. Norton thanked everyone and stated without our partners and GMA in supporting that through our business programs. I hope that you have a great Thanksgiving and Christmas season not only with your families but within your community as well.

Ms. Norton requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Rentfrow made a motion to adjourn and seconded by Mr. Fowler, the regular meeting of the Georgia Downtown Association Board was adjourned at 12:12 pm.