

GEORGIA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
VIRTUAL
November 30, 2021

Present

Board Members: Abigail Strickland, April Norton, Aundi Lesley, Christian Hamilton, Christopher Pike, Ellen Hill, Emily Hopkins, Jeffrey Fowler, Kendrick Ward, Mathew Hill, Ricky Clark, and Sadie Krawczyk

Partners: Cindy Eidson, Danny Bivins, Jessica Reynolds, John VanBrunt, Leigh Burns and Steve Foster

Staff: Chris Higdon, Emily Davenport, and Sharon Collins

Call to Order

President Mathew Hill called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM.

Review and Approval of Minutes

President Hill asked if everyone had time to review the October 26th minutes. Abigail Strickland made a motion to approve the minutes and Ellen Hill made the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Review and Approval of Financial Report

President Hill called on Emily Davenport to go over the September 30th Financial Report. Christian Hamilton made a motion to approve the financial report and Aundi Lesley made the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

- Internal - President Hill discussed the vacant Board Member position for District 9 and Tonya Parker with the Vidalia is willing to serve. Jeffrey Fowler made a motion to appoint her as a Board Member and Christopher Pike made the second. The motion was approved unanimously. Next President Hill asked Emily Davenport to provide an update on the upcoming election and the protocol. Based on the bylaws, a ballot must be mailed to all current membership, however, it is not specified how the ballots are to be returned. As a result, a paper ballot will be mailed and an electronic ballot will also be provided through email (e.g. Survey Monkey or something similar). In the future, the board may want to consider updating the bylaws to allow for an electronic option. Next discussed was the Secretary / Treasurer for 2022. President Hill asked if anyone was willing to serve in this role. Ellen Hill nominated Jeffrey Fowler. There was discussion on whether or not a vote was needed for the officers and the section was read from Article V – Officers. The motion was approved unanimously. There was additional discussion on how the officers are selected by the board, terms, etc. Since it has been several years since the bylaws were reviewed it was recommended to form a committee to review the bylaws in 2022 at the retreat. Next, President Hill called on Emily Davenport to provide an update on the revisions made for the proposed 2022 budget. After making the revisions, there was \$1,600 that was not allocated under the expenses. It was recommended to move that to the commercial printing costs for brochures, swag, etc. April Norton made a motion to approve the budget as presented for 2022 and Ricky Clark made the second. The motion was approved unanimously.
- Education – Ellen Hill called on Christopher Pike to provide an update on the Mentor Program. Christopher shared that he and Emily Davenport met to go over the Mentor Program information, preparing to do an introduction to all participants and all but one mentee has been placed with a mentor. Next, Ellen shared that during the retreat, ½ of the day will be spent going over the GDDP program. Jessica Reynolds asked for a list of the mentees and mentors that are currently participating to see if she can encourage some of the more seasoned managers to participate.
- Membership / Marketing – April Norton provided an update on the website. The feedback that was provided by the board has been shared with Mark Elliott, including social media being incorporated into

**GEORGIA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
VIRTUAL
November 30, 2021**

the new layout, as well as a calendar. An additional item includes updates to the logo made by Kaitlyn Messich with CVIOG. Christian Hamilton made a motion to move forward with the partial rebranding and Aundi Lesley made the second. The motion was approved unanimously. April also provided an update on membership which included a November 10 email to all existing members. Of the 153 current members, 23 have already renewed – including board members (e.g. Christian, Ellen, Sadie, Monica, Abigail and April) and our partner with Georgia Power (Steve Foster). In addition, a separate email was sent to over 1300 potential members on November 16. Efforts continue to be made to highlight current and new members on social media. For those who are interested in seeing who are GDA members, this information is available on our website under the “Members” tab.

- Legislative – Ricky Clark had to leave for another meeting. President Hill asked if anyone had an update to share. There was some general discussion about the state historic tax credit that will sunset unless there is a change. May want to consider reaching out to the Georgia Trust to provide an update.

Staff Updates

- No update.

Partner Updates

- Georgia Cities Foundation – Cindy Eidson shared that they are getting ready to interview for Stephanie Russell’s previous position and a new position will be coming out in January 2022. Chris Higdon shared the loan program is still going great and have increased their maximum amount to \$250,000 and the rebate program is open with up to a \$50,000 rebate. Website states that applications are NOT being received, but people can just contact him.
- CVIOG – Danny Bivins shared that they are doing a lot of planning, design and visioning work across the state. Danny also thanked April, Mathew and Emily for their efforts in membership. April also thanked Danny for Kaitlyn’s assistance with the logo.
- DCA – Jessica shared that they are getting ready to hire someone to fill Carmine’s previous position with some additional services, including compliance and hope to have it posted in the next few weeks. Also getting ready to release their training calendar for 2022. Jessica also thanked the board for all their efforts and the exciting strides that have been made, as well as thanked Emily, Cindy and Chris for all they do to help GDA.
- Electric Cities of Georgia – John VanBrunt no update, but thanked everyone for their work and excited to be a part of the board.
- Georgia Power – Steve Foster shared that Trevor Quandor has taken a new job as area manager so he will move from the gas company to Georgia Power.

Other Business

- Ellen Hill asked if Sharon Collins had a room rate yet for the Retreat in January. Emily Davenport shared that she had and would resend to everyone by email. Ellen also asked if anyone would like to serve on the Conference Planning Committee to let her know. Emily Davenport will serve as staff, Emily Hopkins as host city, and Mathew Hill as Past-President. Jeffrey Fowler and Christopher Pike volunteered to help as well. Ellen shared that more detail will be shared at the retreat.
- President Hill thanked everyone and expressed his appreciation to serve as President.

Adjourn

- With no further business, President Hill adjourned the meeting at 12:28 pm.