

**Georgia Downtown Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 15th, 2025**

The Georgia Downtown Association (GDA) Board of Directors held its January meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, at The Vault in Gainesville, GA. President Aundi Lesley called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

The following Board Members were in attendance: Aundi Lesley, Jason Ford, Abigail Strickland, Emily Hopkins, Velinda Hardy, Taylor Smith, Jeffrey Fowler, Abbey McLaren, Cassidi Kendrick, Jessica Payne, Bethany Strickland, Tonya Parker

The following GMA/GDA Staff Members and Partners were in attendance: Renée Coakley, Cindy Eidson, Sharon Collins, Elizabeth Elliot, Cherie Bennett, Scott Purvis, Carla Albright

Review and Approval of Minutes: The December 3, 2024, board minutes were reviewed. Jason Ford made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Taylor Smith. The motion carried.

Review and Approval of Financial Report:

Renée Coakley presented the financial report as of January 7, 2025. Highlights included:

- **Revenue:**
 - \$12,500 in membership fees
 - \$5,040 in other revenue (round two of “Showcase Your City” boxes)
- **Expenses:**
 - New board member name tags
 - D&O insurance
 - Miscellaneous expenses (board member gift, travel for Renée to CDP course in Tybee)

Financial statements for August, September, and October were reviewed:

- **August:** Conference-related revenue and expenses
- **September:** Additional conference expenses, including speakers and photographer contingency
- **October:** Board lunch in Macon, Thomasville Center for the Arts rentals, CDP revenue, and related travel

Emily Hopkins asked why conference registration revenue decreased in October compared to August. Renée suggested it might have been coded incorrectly. Jeffrey Fowler noted the increase in CDP revenue during that time could have been a factor.

Jason Ford recommended accepting the financial report for the record. Emily Hopkins motioned to approve the financial report as presented, which was seconded by Jeffrey Fowler. The motion carried.

Action Items:

None

Discussion Items:

Aundi Lesley recommended that committees select their chairs for 2025.

Committee Reports:

- **Education & Training – Jeffrey Fowler**
 - Jeffrey Fowler confirmed as 2025 Chair
 - CDP classes will undergo a monthly review process.
 - The committee will work on capstone requirements for CDP graduation.
 - Committee meetings will be held on the 4th Friday of each month at 1:00 p.m.
- **Marketing and Membership – Velinda Hardy**
 - Velinda Hardy was confirmed as the 2025 chair.
 - Committee meetings will be held on the 1st Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m.
- **Legislative – Taylor Smith**
 - Taylor Smith confirmed as the 2025 Chair
 - The committee is exploring opportunities to include lobbying services in the GMA contract.
 - Cities United begins next Friday, with GDA having a booth staffed by Abigail Strickland and Kendrick Ward (Friday), Aundi Lesley (Saturday morning), and Taylor Smith (Saturday afternoon).
 - Everyone is encouraged to attend the Legislative Breakfast and Day at the Capitol on Monday, January 27. The fee is \$105.
 - Committee meetings will be held on the 3rd Friday of each month.
- **Governance – Abbey McLaren**
 - The committee has been renamed the Governance Committee and is no longer to be referred to as the Policy & Procedures Committee.
 - Committee meetings will be held on the 4th Friday of each month at 11:00 a.m.

Business Manager Report: Nothing to report.

Other Business: Nothing to report.

Partner Updates:

- **Cindy Eidson:** Sadie K. is leaving the department but staying with GMA. The position has been posted, with six interview candidates so far.
- **Scott Purvis:** Georgia Power is entering its training season with Project Management 101, CREATE, and Retail Summits planned for the year (dates TBD).
- **Elizabeth Elliot:** Annual Assessments are due today. Upcoming events include:

- Blueprints for Success: Strategic Planning & Board Building training in Valdosta next week.
- Generational Gap training at the Fox Theatre in May.
- Launch of DowntownGA, a New Manager Handbook, and Design Guidelines throughout the year.
- **Cherie Bennett:** Introduced as the new director of the Office of Downtown Development.

Meeting adjourned at 09:26 am.

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