

**Georgia Downtown
Association Board of
Directors
Meeting April 27, 2021
MINUTES**

Attending:

Mathew Hill, Ellen Hill, Sadie Krawczyk, Kendrick Ward, Ricky Clark, Lynn Brinson, Christian Hamilton, Monica Mitchell, Ladson Haddow, Jessica Reynolds, Aundi Lesley, Tara Bradshaw, Michael Cahill, John VanBrunt, Mara Shaw, Emily Davenport Cindy Eidson, Imani Beckles and Janice Eidson.

Call to Order

President Hill called the meeting to order at 11:36 and thanked everyone for attending

Review and Approval of the March Minutes

President Hill asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes. Christian Hamilton made motion to accept the minutes with her addition.

Aundi Lesley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Review and Approval of January Financial Statement

President Hill asked Imani Beckles if she would be reporting on the financial statement. Ms. Beckles noted that the association has collected approx. \$7,000 in membership dues. Ms. Beckles noted that dues payment are now being taken online and a past due notice was sent out electronically bringing in more revenue. There will also be a webpage designed for the Adam Edge Scholarship fund.

Christian Hamilton made a motion to accept the financial statement with the amendment and April Norton seconded. The motion carried.

Committee Reports

Education:

Ellen Hill reminded the board that the GDDP exam will be administered this year. Ms. Hill also noted that after our last board meeting she reached out to Mara Shaw in regards to Stephanie Russell's suggestion to team up with the CVIOG to assess and improve the current GDDP program and exam. She then turned it over to Mara to give the board more detail. Mara Shaw gave the board history of her connection to downtowns and GDA as its first founding President and how important this association is to her both professionally and personally. Ms. Shaw charged the group to think of the mission of the association and how that can lead to the development of the GDDP program. She reminded the board to make sure the purpose of the program aligns with the mission and core of the association as well as identify the goals and the outcomes we want for participants. Ms. Shaw explained that there will be two phases. The first being a SWOT analysis to come up with goals for the program and how it supports prof development. Phase two would be a design team. It is an organic process they use to revamp programs. She noted that these two phases are essential before discussing the "how". Ms. Shaw is willing to commit her time to help the association for a reasonable price. Stephanie Russell thanked Mara for jumping on this and noted that everyone is excited to move forward because the Board had been and a standstill with this. Mara wanted to note that this is not "burndown" the house but take the time to evaluate a grow. Ellen Hill added that she believes this is important to do. An impartial objective party will help in this process to better the program. Ricky Clark commented that Ms. Shaw has charged the board as an organization to figure out the

mission and what the members to take away and how the certification will give an added benefit. Ms. Hill made a motion to move forward with working with the CVIOG with the SWOT analysis and design team to work with Mara to creating a plan to do that. Sadie Krawczyk seconded the motion. Mr. Clark asked if we knew what the cost would be. President Hill noted that Mara would give the board a proposal. Ms. Shaw said she would be okay with waiting for approval when the board receives an invoice. Steve Forster said that Georgia Power would be willing to help with the funding. Ellen made an amendment to her motion to continue to move forward with Mara to work with CVIOG to do a SWOT analysis and design team to revise the GDDP program pending the approval of the budget. Mr. Clark followed up with being in favor of a special call meeting. Ms. Shaw noted that the target time would be this summer. Sadie Krawczyk seconded the revised motion. There was no more discussion.

The motion carried.

Legislative: Ms. Russell reported that a bill passed that took out the perpetuity clause for the statute for the downtown development authority statue. At this time no one can nail down what this will mean. There are serious concerns because it will affect bonds held by development authorities. Ms. Russell hopes to have some resolution in the future. Steve Foster asked if this would go to the Attorney General. Ms. Russell believes it will.

Membership and Marketing:

April Norton shared that an email went out about the call for presenters and award applications and RFPs for 2022. Ms. Beckles informed the group that we need to put a committee together session proposals have been few. Jessica Reynolds asked if the deadline would be extended DCA will send out a notice in their newsletter. Ms. Norton wanted the board to be aware of the spam issues related to the website. Ms. Norton reported that emails are no longer visible on the website in attempt to cut down on spam emails requesting money and urged the board to be cautious. Ms. Norton mentioned that Emily Davenport has been working on Facebook updates and the committee is still trying to work on merging the Instagram accounts. She also requested information on community highlights to be shared on the association's social media.

Internal: President Hill informed the board that the COVID positivity rate is hovering at 5% and we will continue to monitor it. It looks like that we will be having an in-person meeting with the final decision to be made on June. Mr. Hill said we should extend the deadline for session proposals and asked for volunteers to join the Conference Committee. Aundi Lesley assured the board that she will serve as well as submit a proposal. Ellen Hill and April Norton as well as Imani Beckles and Janice will serve on this committee. Ms. Eidson asked if DCA had anyone they'd like to be on the committee and Tara Bradshaw volunteered. Jessica Reynolds asked when the new deadline would be to include in their newsletter blast. Mr. Hill suggested the 21st. Ms. Eidson reminded we need to move on it in order to have it on the registration information. Ms. Russell asked about sponsorship information and Mr. Foster asked if the payments can be made online. Ms. Beckles assured them that it will be possible, and the information will be available soon. The June board meeting will be held in person at the new GMA building. There will be a virtual option.

Partner Updates

Ladson Haddow, with Haddow & Company, introduced his firm. Their firm is a real estate consulting based in midtown Atlanta. Working with a variety of downtowns on city centers and downtown revitalization. They help cities reinvent themselves and they love working along side cities and downtowns and are here to help.

Tara Bradshaw gave a report from DCA, they will host an economic session in May with The event, "Historic Preservation: Education, Economics and Innovation," will feature instructors like Donovan Rypkema and Eric Kronberg, who are both authorities in their fields and will offer insight into strong-well-guided preservation strategies.

As a partner of DCA, the one-day webinar will showcase Georgia Main Street's mission of community development. Also, attendees will learn more on historic preservation, real-world policy, and construction challenges faced as local economic developers. Ms. Bradshaw also shared there will be a 3-day Downtown Design bootcamp in July with Randy Wilson. This will be virtual. Jessica Reynolds added that DCA would be announcing 3 new classic main street communities along with new GEMs designated communities soon.

Steve Foster gave a report from Georgia Power. They have had organizational changes. Brian Green is now working in their Sales organization. He thanked everyone for input on what their towns need as they are working on a rural town development strategy. They are still working on housing along side GICH. They will be opening their office on May 13.

Cindy Eidson gave a report from GCF, with input from Stephanie Russel. Ms. Eidson noted that GMA has two murals that they are excited to reveal and cannot wait to show the new building. They are offering the 2021 Renaissance awards applications are due June 3 as well as the Star award application. She asked for any applications to be submitted and to contact either she or Stephanie. GCF submitted their CDFI federal grant proposal for 3.5 million dollars to provide funds for loans to give to the communities that apply. Stephanie mentioned that the next development session will feature Jim Lovett and you will not want to miss it. In June, there will be a transportation project development session. Ms. Russell reminded the board about their consultation services.

Emily Davenport reported on behalf of GMA. There will be a session Thursday April 29 surrounding downtowns.

President Hill asked if there was further business, and hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.