

**GEORGIA DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
VIRTUAL  
September 26, 2023**

The GDA Board of Directors held its regular meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, September 26, 2023. President Fowler called the meeting to order at 11:02am.

**The following Board Members were in attendance:** President Jeffrey Fowler, Secretary/Treasurer Aundi Lesley, Past President April Norton, Mr. Mathew Hill, Ms. Velinda Hardy, Mr. Taylor Smith, Ms. Tonya Parker, Ms. Abbey McLaren, Ms. Kendrick Ward, Ms. Suzanne Roberts, Mr. Jason Ford, and Mr. Qaijuan Willis.

**Absent:** Ms. Abigail Strickland, Emily Hopkins and Ms. Kira Harris-Braggs

**The following Staff Members were in attendance:** Ms. Renée Coakley and Ms. Cindy Eidson

**The following Partners were in attendance:** Mr. Scott Purvis, Ms. Jessica Worthington, and Mr. Jon McBrayer

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** The August minutes were reviewed. Mr. Hill recommended adding that the general membership was in attendance. Ms. Norton motioned to approve. Mr. Hill seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**Review and Approval of the Financial Reports:** Ms. Coakley presented the June financial report. She will be working closely with finance during the upcoming budget cycle to ensure charges are in the appropriate line items moving forward. Ms. Parker motioned to approve with a second motion from Mr. Smith. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Ms. Coakley presented the July financial report. Expenses included the step and repeat, travel, food expenses for conference, and DNO insurance. Mr. Hill motioned to approve the report with a second from Mr. Ford. All were in favor. Motion carried.

## **Committee Reports**

### **I. Executive Committee (Internal Operations)**

- a. *Edge Scholarship:* Cassidy Kendrick from Tybee Island applied for a \$1000 scholarship to attend the 2024 National Main Street Conference in Birmingham. Ms. Parker motioned to approve with a second from Mr. Smith. All were in favor. Motion carried.

### **II. Education and Training**

- a. *CDP Update:* 15 are currently registered for the classes in Americus. President Fowler is working on a sponsorship flyer for \$500, \$1000, and \$2500 options. There was discussion about what would come with the sponsorships and where the revenues would be allocated. The sponsors would be invited to attend lunch and share information about their organization. Revenue possibilities include the food costs and class discounts. The consensus was the discount should be at least \$50 to be meaningful. Giving the first ten or so people a discount would incentivize people to register early so we could ensure a class gets made. President Fowler will work on the collateral and send out for review at the next board meeting. The website is updated with registration information. Ms. Ward suggested utilizing the survey results to include quotes on the collateral. Ms. Coakley will send the survey results to the board for review.

- b. *Regional Meetups*: Ms. Coakley reported 14 attendees for Cordele, 29 registered for Braselton, and 17 registered for Bainbridge. The conversations and tours were great. Perry and Hiawassee will be next.
- c. *Mentoring Program*: Emails with pairings went out last week. There are 48 pairs of mentors and mentees. Ms. Parker thanked Jeffrey for working so hard on this program.

### III. **Marketing & Membership**

- a. *Marketing*: Ms. Coakley reported that the social platforms currently have 2781 Facebook Followers and 903 Instagram Followers. A GDA Twitter account still exists. Ms. Coakley will work on deleting.
- b. *Membership*: There are 206 paid members and 0 unpaid members. Ms. Coakley will send the invoices with the new structure on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

### IV. **Legislative**: The committee met with Jay Markwalter from GACVB and put together an Advocacy Agenda to prepare for Cities United in January. This will be put out to the membership for input on topics. The goals are to collaborate and have a seat at the table. The committee is also working on a rack card that includes downtown development statistics and a QR code that links to the agenda. These will be done before Cities United. Ms. Norton and Mr. Ford recommended having a legislative tab on the website.

### V. **Conference Committee**: Ms. Coakley presented the conference budget tracker. There may be one more transportation invoice, but otherwise this should be the final report. The total revenues were \$95,875, expenses were \$49,217, with a net profit of \$32,284.38.

President Fowler shared the conference and executive committees' agendas and notes. Ms. Worthington suggested having a closing plenary session to capture people to the end of the conference like was done in years past. The board also went over the survey results. Overall, the results were very positive. The results will be sent out to the board for full review.

### VI. **Policy & Procedures**: Mr. Hill will meet with Cindy & Emily on the procedure manual before the next meeting. Board members terms up for renewal: Jeffrey Fowler, Abbey McLaren, Emily Hopkins, April Norton, and Qaijuan Willis. Mathew Hill has fulfilled his terms, and the nomination committee will find candidates to fill his position.

### VII. **Other Business**: none

#### **Staff Updates:**

- Ms. Coakley will send out any other updates via email. Ms. Eidson asked everyone to attend the Heart & Soul workshop in Bainbridge on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Partner Updates:**

- Ms. Worthington thanked everyone for a great conference.

There being no further business, Ms. Parker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Willis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:24 pm.