

**MINUTES OF KENNESAW DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
September 12, 2025
7:30 AM**

Present Chair Mark Allen
 Treasurer Leslie Patton
 Secretary Mary Jo Groeneveld
 Lexie Newhouse
 Doug Edwards

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Mark Allen, at 7:32 am.

KDDA members present: Mark Allen, Lexie Newhouse, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Doug Edwards, Leslie Patton

KDDA members absent: Nimesh Patel, Ian Coats

Staff members present: Luke Howe, Miranda Taylor, Fred Bentley, Jr.

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Draft meeting minutes 7.11.25

The board reviewed draft minutes from the July 11, 2025 meeting. Mary Jo Groeneveld made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Lexie Newhouse. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

3. Financial Report

A. KDDA Financial Report as of 8.31.25

Leslie Patton reviewed the financial report with an ending cash balance of \$111,680.45. Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the financials as presented; the motion was seconded by Leslie Patton. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Review of open invoices

No action required; no open invoices were received prior to the meeting.

4. Old Business

5. New Business

A. Presentation/Discussion Only: Cobb County Farmers Bureau Farmers Market Proposal

This item was taken out of order, following the Call to Order, out of respect for the time of the presenters. Jeanne Young and Stan Kirk, representing the Cobb County Farm Bureau, presented a proposal to manage the farmers market for the 2026 season. The full proposal is attached to the agenda packet. CCFB would handle vendor management, communication, on-site market management, and consumer education

for the market. CCFB would collect all vendor fees and use those fees for market promotion and management. Their goal is to partner with downtown merchants on food/beverage promotions and bring in local entertainment to boost market attendance and the amount of time market patrons stay downtown. CCFB recommends the market season stay the same (May–August) to allow them to get a better grasp on the Kennesaw market and build on what has already been started. In the future, they may look at extending the season based on the farmers they can get to commit to the market with goods available during the spring and fall. DDA's role in the market would be to provide a location for the market and a staff liaison to the City to ensure a smooth transition and to handle any logistical concerns during the market season. CCFB would like to use the parking lot and grass areas around the circular trails at Depot Park for the market, and they propose moving the market to Thursday.

Mark Allen mentioned that his only concern with the location is the lack of shade at the Depot Lot, however the board and CCFB representatives discussed this and determined that the vendors will have tents and that the location would offer better access for shoppers.

Lexie Newhouse cautioned the CCFB members about moving the market to a Thursday, as several of our long-standing vendors also participate in the Alpharetta market on Thursday, which would mean we'd lose some popular vendors. She would not want them to prematurely prohibit vendors of the same type, as our market has seen success in allowing 2 bakeries, 2 juice/lemonade vendors, etc. Lexie also mentioned that she and her fiancé have been placing all of the temporary directional signs out prior to the market and removing them after the market each week; she would want to discuss with CCFB how that would be handled under their management. Fred Bentley, Jr. reminded the board that legal will need to review any formal agreements and that we will need to be sure CCFB has appropriate insurance coverage for the event.

This item was only a presentation today; no action is required. Staff will take the proposal to the city's Events Committee meeting on Oct 2 to get approval for the use of the Depot space, and then the item will be on the Oct 11 KDDA agenda for action by the board.

B. Authorizing Resolution and First Amendment to Rental Agreement between KDDA and Kennesaw Development Owner, LLC (aka The Lacy)

This item was taken out of order, following the presentation of Item 5A.

Tyler Gaines, representing Kennesaw Development Owner, LLC (aka The Lacy), presented an overview of the Authorizing Resolution and First Amendment to Rental Agreement. These documents update the PILOT payments to the Cobb County School Board and the KDDA. Now that The Lacy is open, and they have experience with audits and reporting requirements to calculate the PILOT payments, this updated methodology will ensure that they are meeting report requirements without violating any confidentiality standards. This updated methodology will also standardize the methodology used in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of The Lacy. Lexie Newhouse made a

motion to approve the documents as presented, and authorize the Chair and Secretary to sign the documents. Mary Jo Groeneveld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0. The chair asked to note that board members Patel and Coats were not present.

6. Main Street Program Updates

A. Announcement of Georgia Downtown Association Award: Outstanding Placemaking Project

Miranda Taylor announced that Kennesaw was recently awarded the Outstanding Placemaking Award at the Georgia Downtown Conference for our partnership with Smith-Gilbert Gardens on the Art Blooms expansion downtown. Congratulations Downtown Kennesaw & SGG!

B. Upcoming event announcements

Miranda Taylor advised the board of the following upcoming events:

- Registration for Scarecrows on Main and the Holiday Extravaganza (trees in Depot Park) is now open! Now through the deadline for Scarecrows you can sign up for both events and receive a discount on registration.
- The final First Friday of the season will be on October 3 with G Clef and the Playlist. Join us for a high-energy event and dance the night away at the Main Street Plaza!
- The downtown Candy Crawl will be on Saturday, Oct 25 from Noon - 5pm on Main Street, with games and other activities in the Main Street Plaza.
- Vendor applications are open for the 2025 Kennesaw Holiday Market on November 14-15. Interested vendors may apply online at <https://forms.gle/mqJP1edpdiBqbpCA>.

7. Public Comments

Donovan Giardina shared comments about the Farmers Market. He is concerned about the CCFB prohibition on duplicate vendors, as we've had success at the market with allowing multiple vendors with the same or similar products. He would also strongly encourage keeping the market on Monday as we are currently the only Monday market in the area and this generates good market attendance for both vendors and shoppers.

8. Board Comments

Doug Edwards was introduced as our newest KDDA member. Doug recently retired from FedEx and wanted to get more involved in the community. Doug and his wife own ETO Martial Arts studio in downtown.

Mark Allen offered thanks to the team (Mary Jo, Lexie, and Donovan) for their work on the farmers market. Mark also shared an update on the status of the Lazy Guy expansion project: they have entered the bid phase for contractors and are hoping to break ground in November.

Mary Jo Groeneveld mentioned that the current relationships with vendors at the farmers market is key and we want to keep those relationships strong.

Lexie Newhouse suggested the board consider placement of more permanent picnic tables/chairs with umbrellas (with downtown branding?) at Depot Park if we are going to begin using the space for the market and other events like the market. She also shared with the board that she attended the Grand Opening for Stitch Revivals, a new vintage clothing shop at The Lacy.

9. Economic Development Director Comments

Luke Howe provided status updates on the following items:

- Collier Building
- Hughes downtown projects

10. Executive Session

This item was taken out of order, following Item 5B.

Lexie Newhouse made the following motion: That this Authority now enter into closed session as allowed by O.C.G.A. §50-14-3 and pursuant to advice by the City Attorney, for the purpose of discussing Legal. Seconded by Mary Jo Groeneveld. Those voting in favor: Mark Allen, Doug Edwards, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Lexie Newhouse, and Leslie Patton. Those opposed none. The motion passed unanimously. The KDDA entered closed session at 7:56 am.

Lexie Newhouse made the following motion: That this body, in open session, adopt a resolution authorizing and directing the presiding officer to execute an affidavit in compliance with O.C.G.A. §50-14-4, and that this body ratifies the actions of the KDDA taken in closed session and confirm that the subject matter(s) of the closed session were within the exceptions permitted by the open meetings law. Seconded by Leslie Patton. Those voting in favor: Mark Allen, Doug Edwards, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Lexie Newhouse, and Leslie Patton. Those opposed none. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0. The KDDA exited closed session at 8:08 am.

- A. Pursuant to the provisions of O.C.G.A. 50-14-3, the KDDA could, at any time during the meeting, vote to close the public meeting and move to executive session to discuss matters relating to litigation, legal actions and/or communications from the City Attorney as provided under O.C.G.A. 50-14-2(1); and/or personnel matters as provided under O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (4) and/or real estate matters as provided under O.C.G.A 50-14-3(6).

11. Adjourn

With no further business, Lexie Newhouse made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Leslie Patton. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 am.

- A. NOTICE: Any person who desires to appeal any decision from this meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and for the purpose may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based. The Agenda is designed to make more efficient use of the KDDA's time. It is not designed to curtail

discussion or input. If you need special accommodations to attend or participate in our meetings, please contact City Hall at least 24 hours in advance of the specific meeting you are planning to attend.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]