

**MINUTES OF KENNESAW DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
January 9, 2026
7:30 AM**

Present Chair Mark Allen
 Vice Chair Ian Coats
 Secretary Mary Jo Groeneveld
 Lexie Newhouse
 Doug Edwards

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 am by Mark Allen, KDDA chair.

KDDA members present: Mark Allen, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Lexie Newhouse, Doug Edwards, Ian Coats

KDDA members absent: Nimesh Patel, Leslie Patton

Staff members present: Luke Howe, Miranda Taylor

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Draft meeting minutes - 11.14.25

The board reviewed minutes from the November 14, 2025 meeting. Ian Coats made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Doug Edwards seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Financial Report

A. KDDA Financial Report as of 12.31.25

Lexie Newhouse presented the financial report with an ending cash balance of \$120,299.79. Ian Coats made a motion to approve the financial report as presented; seconded by Doug Edwards. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Review of open invoices

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

4. Old Business

5. New Business

A. KDDA 2026 Officer Election

Members currently serving as KDDA officers include:

Mark Allen, Chair

Ian Coats, Vice-Chair

Leslie Patton, Treasurer

Mary Jo Groeneveld, Secretary

Miranda Taylor (staff) serves as Assistant Secretary.

Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the currently serving slate of officers, as presented, to continue in the same roles for 2026. Mary Jo Groeneveld seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0.

6. Main Street Program Updates

A. New Business Road Map

Mark Allen stated that he would like to help support new businesses in the downtown district with resources on how to open a business. Tanyel Aviles, Business Recruitment and Retention Manager, presented our current checklist and the ways we support all new businesses. She serves in a concierge role and walks people through the process as they apply for a Certificate of Occupancy and/or a new Business License.

Mark Allen shared a detailed outline/flowchart that he created as an overview of the process, based on his recent experience with building a new building and expanding his business downtown. The board agreed that they would like to see something like this be available to prospective business owners. Staff suggested adding a tab/page to the downtown website to direct people to available CO/Business License checklists, grant information, and other incentives or business resources.

No action required as this item was for discussion only. Staff will report back on the status of including the resources on the downtown website.

B. 2025/2026 Annual Assessment update

Miranda Taylor shared an update on the 2025/2026 Annual Assessment for Main Street. She is working on the self-assessment that is required for the National Main Street assessment. All documents for the state assessment have been uploaded to Dropbox, as required. Miranda reminded the board that the reporting period has reset, and each board member will need to complete 2 training hours for 2026, which is a requirement for our successful assessment.

No action required as this was an informational discussion item only.

7. Public Comments

Tracey Viars commented and shared that the Brown Dog Book Shop opened yesterday. The Wreck On skate shop is opening soon as well. There is lots of activity happening downtown and we are doing things to be proud of!

8. Board Comments

Mark Allen shared the following comments:

- Is there an update on the Placer.AI presentation from the last meeting? Staff advised there is no update on the procurement of this service.
- Is there a Farmers Market update? Miranda Taylor had a site visit with CCFB this week to go through all logistics and they will begin recruiting vendors in February. Mark reminded staff that the board would like CCFB to come to a meeting to give an update prior to the start of the season.
- The GDA meet-up in Acworth in October was a great chance to see how other

downtowns work and what resources they use. He encouraged other board members to attend one of these sessions in 2026 if possible. Miranda Taylor will send the schedule to the board when it is published.

- Reformation Brewery posted a development update to their social media; Mark noted it was good to see movement on this project.

Lexie Newhouse shared information about a business resource called "Right to Start", and asked if we should consider sharing estimated timelines for our development process to set the expectation with prospective business owners.

Ian Coats shared Happy New Year wishes with the board, and inquired as to the goals that KDDA should set for the new year. The board discussed the possibility of holding a goal setting retreat, and agreed to discuss this at the February meeting.

9. Economic Development Director Comments

Luke Howe provided updates on the following projects:

- Reformation: moving forward with design
- Lazy Guy Distillery expansion: staff will bring an Inducement Resolution for potential incentives to the next meeting after consulting with Mayor & Council
- Kennesaw Square: reviewing preliminary incentive documents; developers anticipate starting this project in Q3 of 2026
- Lacy II: financing is in place and they are working through some environmental issues; they plan to start later in Q1 of 2026

10. Executive Session

- 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, Ian Coats made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Lexie Newhouse. Motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 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]