

**MINUTES OF KENNESAW DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
March 20, 2026
7:30 AM**

Present Chair Mark Allen
 Vice Chair Ian Coats
 Treasurer Leslie Patton
 Secretary Mary Jo Groeneveld
 Lexie Newhouse
 Nimesh Patel
 Doug Edwards

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 am by Chair, Mark Allen.
KDDA members present: Mark Allen, Lexie Newhouse, Doug Edwards, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Leslie Patton, Ian Coats, Nimesh Patel
Staff members present: Luke Howe, Miranda Taylor, Fred Bentley, Jr.

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Draft meeting minutes — 2.13.26

The board reviewed draft minutes from the 2.13.26 meeting. Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ian Coats seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

3. Financial Report

A. KDDA Financial Report as of 2.28.26

Leslie Patton presented the financial report as of 2.28.26 with an ending cash balance of \$122,544.04. Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the financials as presented; the motion was seconded by Nimesh Patel. The motion passed with a vote of 7-0.

B. Review open invoices

No action required at today's meeting.

4. Old Business

5. New Business

A. Approval of Water and Sewer Easements for The Lacy

Fred Bentley, Jr. presented the item regarding water and sewer easements required for Phase II of The Lacy project. The easement documents are included in the agenda packet. The easements are already part of the CBD project that has been approved for this site, but the action today is necessary to authorize the chair to sign and execute the

easement documents so that the easements can be recorded. Nimesh Patel made a motion to approve the easements and authorize the Chair to sign the easement documents. Leslie Patton seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 7-0.

B. Review and approval of Bond Resolution and Bond Documents for Lacy Phase II Project

Fred Bentley Jr. presented a summary of the previous actions taken by the board on this project, including the Inducement Resolution that outlined the terms for the bond documents being considered at today's meeting. Fred explained that specific approvals are required today in order to move forward with bond validation and to finalize the required documents for the bonds outlined in the previously approved Inducement Resolution. Fred updated the board on the timeline and next steps, including a bond validation hearing, court appearances, and answers that will be due to the court prior to the finalization of the bond. Ian Coats made a motion to approve moving forward with the bond validation and authorizing the Chair and Secretary to sign the bond documents as required. Nimesh Patel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

C. Acceptance of Conflict of Interest Letter - Mark Allen

Let the record reflect that Mark Allen turned over control of the meeting to Vice-Chair Ian Coats at 7:37am and left the meeting room.

Fred Bentley Jr. advised the board that Mark Allen had submitted a Conflict of Interest Letter to the board, and that the conflict letter had been posted with the agenda and advertised as required by law. The conflict letter is required in order to disclose the financial interest held by Mr. Allen in the Lazy Guy Distillery project, as he is the business owner. The board should review the letter and take action to accept the letter as part of the official minutes.

Mary Jo Groeneveld made a motion to accept the Conflict of Interest letter submitted by Mark Allen. Nimesh Patel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0, with Mark Allen absent for the vote.

D. Approval of Inducement Resolution — Lazy Guy Distillery Project

Let the record reflect that Mark Allen was not present for this agenda item, as outlined in the previous item.

Luke Howe presented the Inducement Resolution for the Lazy Guy Distillery project. Luke reminded the board that Lazy Guy has already completed the CBD project approval process for their business expansion and is now in the process of finalizing their financing. The incentives outlined in the Inducement Resolution will abate new property taxes for 20 years. Lazy Guy will then work with lenders to collateralize financing using the tax savings. This is a cashless transaction for the KDDA and is very similar to the bond deals we have completed for other development projects. Luke stated that State Law requires Downtown Development Authorities to have board members with significant investment in the downtown (business owners, property owners, etc), and provides a vehicle for dealing with the conflict of interest. In that

regard, it is not unusual for the board to consider incentives in this case. Lexie Newhouse noted that the recipient of the incentives pays the legal fees involved and making a significant investment not only in the business expansion but also in the incentive proposal. There were no further questions or comments from the board. Vice-Chair Ian Coats called for a motion. Doug Edwards made a motion to approve the Inducement Resolution and authorize the Vice-Chair to sign as required. Nimesh Patel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 6-0 (Mark Allen was absent for the vote). Ian Coats asked the KDDA attorney to admit Mark Allen back to the meeting room.

Following the vote, Mark Allen rejoined the meeting and resumed his role as Chair at 7:43 a.m.

6. Main Street Program Updates

Miranda Taylor shared that based on the annual assessment documents submitted for 2025, Kennesaw has been invited to make a presentation for Classic-level accreditation, which is full accreditation as a Main Street Community. The presentation is scheduled as a Teams meeting with DCA staff on 3/31. Miranda will send a calendar invitation to the board; all are welcome to join the presentation if they are available.

The KSU students working a downtown advertising plan for their capstone class project will be presenting their projects as part of their class final exam the last week of April. Miranda will share the dates/times with the board when they are scheduled. If any board members are available to attend the in-person presentations, please let Miranda know; this will be a great opportunity for the students to gain real-world experience doing client presentations.

7. Public Comments

Tracey Viars reminded the board that KDMA will begin hosting First Friday concerts again in April. They can use help with setup on Friday mornings and breakdown on Saturday mornings for each First Friday. The board asked staff to remind them of the dates and times that assistance is needed so that they can volunteer. Tracey also encouraged the board to attend the quarterly Merchant Mixers that are organized by Miranda Taylor for the Main Street program. Tracey stated that it is a great way to meet downtown business owners and get to know them.

With no further comments, the floor for Public Comment was closed.

8. Board Comments

Mary Jo Groeneveld asked if there were any updates on Dale Hughes's projects. She noted that he had previously mentioned he would attend and provide regular updates, but the board has not heard from him in a while. Luke Howe shared that Dale is working on design documents for the Reformation project, and offered to reach out to Dale and ask him to attend the meeting next month to provide a project update.

Leslie Patton asked about project update reports, noting that the last written project

update report the board received was very helpful in knowing the status of ongoing projects. Luke agreed to send a summary of our quarterly report when it is completed. For today's meeting, Luke gave the board an update on the following projects: Smash Hit Burgers (scheduled to open soon in the old "Nest" parcel), and the Collier Building (2881 N. Main; KDA approved an LOI with a user and is going through contract due diligence).

Lexie Newhouse offered congratulations to Miranda Taylor on a successful Mardi Gras event! It was well attended and Lexie noted that she is glad to see us focusing on community activation events like these.

9. Economic Development Director Comments

Luke Howe provided project updates during Board Comments and had no further comments at this time.

10. Executive Session

Leslie Patton 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 Land & Legal. Seconded by Ian Coats. Those voting in favor: Mark Allen, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Lexie Newhouse, Doug Edwards, Ian Coats, Nimesh Patel, and Leslie Patton. Those opposed: none. The motion passed unanimously. The KDDA entered closed session at 7:52 am.

Leslie Patton 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 Nimesh Patel. Those voting in favor: Mark Allen, Mary Jo Groeneveld, Lexie Newhouse, Doug Edwards, Ian Coats, Nimesh Patel, and Leslie Patton. Those opposed: none. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. The KDDA exited closed session at 8:09 am.

In open session, Ian Coats made a motion to ratify the Letter of Intent for Parcel A. Nimesh Patel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with a vote of 7-0.

- 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, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn. Doug Edwards made the motion; seconded by Ian Coats. The motion passed 7-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 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]