

**MINUTES OF KENNESAW DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING  
CITY OF KENNESAW  
Council Chambers  
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)  
May 8, 2026  
7:30 AM**

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

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Chair Mark Allen called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Members present: Mark Allen, Doug Edwards, Lexie Newhouse, Leslie Patton, Ian Coats, Mary Jo Groeneveld.

Members absent: Nimesh Patel

Staff present: Luke Howe, Miranda Taylor

**2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

A. Draft meeting minutes - 04.10.26

Draft meeting minutes were reviewed from the 4.10.26 meeting. Mary Jo Groeneveld made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and was seconded by Doug Edwards. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Draft Executive Session minutes - 04.10.26

Printed copies of the draft executive session minutes were not available due to a technical difficulty. Lexie Newhouse made a motion to table action on the draft executive session minutes to the June KDDA meeting. Leslie Patton seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**3. Financial Report**

A. Financial Report as of 4.30.26

Leslie Patton presented the financial report as of 4.30.26 with an ending cash balance of \$114,440.66. Ian Coats made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. Leslie Patton seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6-0.

B. Review of open invoices

The board reviewed open legal invoices received by staff. Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the invoices and was seconded by Ian Coats. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Old Business**

A. Flex Grant Application: Wreckon Skate + Vinyl

The board reviewed the grant application submitted by Wreckon Skate + Vinyl and discussed their scores for the application. Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the grant application and fund the amount requested on the application. Ian Coats seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Flex Grant Application: WellSpa Med

This application provides a very comprehensive overview of the business and equipment purchases, but does not outline a specific use for grant funds as written. Staff is working with the applicant for WellSpa Med to refine their budget and scope of work to fit within the guidelines of the Flex Grant. Staff requests that KDDA consider tabling action on this application until an updated scope and budget is received from the applicant. Leslie Patton made a motion to table action on the WellSpa Med application until an updated grant application is received. Mary Jo Groeneveld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Flex Grant Application: Lather & Leash

Lather & Leash is in the process of opening, but is not officially open for business at the present time. In addition, the application needs to be revised to show a specific use for requested grant funds. Staff requests that KDDA consider tabling action on this application until an updated scope and budget is received from the applicant after they receive their business license and certificate of occupancy. Leslie Patton made a motion to table action on the Lather & Leash application until an updated grant application is received. Mary Jo Groeneveld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## 5. New Business

A. Update KDDA Flex Grant Guidelines

The board reviewed updated guidelines for the Main Street on the Move Flex Grant, as prepared by staff. The changes to the guidelines are as follows:

- The maximum grant award increases to \$5,000.
- Eligible businesses must have been opened and generating revenue as of the end of the month prior to submitting a flex grant application.
- References to specific dates in the grant application schedule are removed; grants are accepted on a rolling basis at all times.
- Grant awards are available subject to available funding during each fiscal year.

Doug Edwards made a motion to approve the updated grant guidelines as presented. Leslie Patton seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Resolution to update HPC guidelines

The resolution was presented in response to the board's discussion at the April meeting on ways to encourage updates to the HPC guidelines to help downtown development be more successful. The resolution acknowledges that Planning & Zoning staff are

already working on updates and expresses support from KDDA for the process to update HPC documents and processes.

Mark Allen wants to be clear about the intent of this resolution: the board is not approving changes that may come out of the process to update HPC guidelines, but rather supporting the project and asking to be informed and considered as guidelines and processes change to ensure that downtown development is not hindered.

Lexie Newhouse made a motion to approve the resolution and authorize the Chair to sign. Leslie Patton seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6-0.

#### C. Proposed change to KDDA Bylaws

This item is presented as official notice to change the KDDA Bylaws to update the start time of the meetings. The board requested that the reference to the meeting time be removed all together and keep the meeting day (second Friday of each month) outlined in the Bylaws. The meetings times can be handled through public notice. There is no action required on this item today; the item will be considered at the June 12 KDDA meeting.

### **6. Main Street Program Updates**

#### A. Authorization for Chair to sign annual Main Street MOU

Downtown Kennesaw has been designated as a Classic Main Street by the Department of Community Affairs. Our program is now fully accredited. The annual MOU outlining the expectations of Classic Main Street programs must be signed by the Downtown Manager, Main Street/DDA Board Chair, and the Mayor. Ian Coats made a motion to approve the MOU and authorize the Chair to sign; Leslie Patton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **7. Public Comments**

Donovan Giardina attended the Farmers Market and shared feedback from vendors. Overall participation is good but everyone is adjusting to the new day and location.

Tracey Viars thanked the board for considering a later start time for the meetings... she's been attending KDDA meetings at 7:30 am since 2012!

### **8. Board Comments**

- Ian Coats will be going on a sabbatical starting Monday and will be out of the country for the next KDDA meeting.
- Lexie Newhouse thanked all who helped with table/chair setup and breakdown for First Friday and reminded everyone that the next concert is June 5.
- Mark Allen advised the board that KDDA has a liaison to the city's Events Committee, which he has attended in the past but is no longer able to attend due to business hours at the distillery. Mark requested another member to attend in his place. Miranda Taylor will text the group to remind them of the next meeting so whoever is available can attend. Mark also shared results from the KSU

Marketing presentations from the students who prepared capstone projects on marketing for downtown. The students presented some good information, but it was obvious that most KSU students don't know we exist. Mark would like the board to have an agenda item next month to discuss some action items related to the presentations, including the use of student ambassadors, potential funding for an intern, and other marketing ideas.

## **9. Economic Development Director Comments**

### **A. Downtown Project updates**

Dale Hughes shared an update on the Reformation Brewery project. They have a review with HPC next week and will discuss updates to the design plans.

## **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, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn. Ian Coats made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Doug Edwards. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:32 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]