MINUTES OF KENNESAW DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
Council Chambers
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
February 9, 2024
7:30 AM

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

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 am by Chair, Mark Allen.
Staff present: Luke Howe, Miranda Taylor, Fred Bentley, Jr.

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Draft meeting minutes - 01.12.24 meeting

The board reviewed draft minutes from the January 12 meeting. David Lyons made a motion to approve. Motion was seconded by Lexie Newhouse. Motion passed unanimoulsy.

B. Draft Executive Session minutes 01.12.24

The board reviewed draft executive session minutes from the January 12 meeting. David Lyons made a motion to approve. Motion seconded by Ian Coats. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Financial Report

A. Financial report as of 01.31.24

Leslie Patton presented the financial report as of January 31, 2024, with an ending cash balance of $74,403.49. David Lyons made a motion to approve the financial report as presented; motion seconded by Lexie Newhouse. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Old Business

A. Beer Festival/Drinks at the Depot Update

Mark Allen lead a discussion on the beer festival event, updating the board that the preferred date of 9/28 was accepted by the Events Committee. We are hopeful that we will be able to hold the event at the amphitheater, but it will depend on material delays and construction timing. Mark has secured 2 food trucks for the event. Mark mentioned to the board that we needed to come up with a creative name than Drinks at the Depot that would lend itself to effective marketing. The board requested that we move away from the train/locomotive imagery in any logo development and try to lean more heavily on the city's branding colors. The board discussed using the downtown logo as inspiration for a logo for this event. The board settled on the name "Party in the Park", which would allow us to bring in all elements (food, beer/wine/cocktails, music) of the event and market a fun atmosphere. Luke & Miranda will work on a draft logo for consideration. No action required on this item today.

B. 2024 Main Street Projects Followup

As a follow-up to last month's discussion on Main Street projects and additional ways that KDDA can support downtown development, the board discussed the idea of funding a historic properties assessment project. Lexie Newhouse shared a list of properties that have the potential to be developed/redeveloped. The board would consider this an extension of the flex grant program that was started last year. The board agreed that they would like to pursue a program where they would provide funding for a feasibility study for the reuse of historic properties, and they would like to invite the consultant that the city has worked with in the past to the next meeting to discuss the assessment process. KDDA asked staff to draft program guidelines and an application that can be considered for adoption at the next meeting, and for staff to run the guidelines/ application though legal for review. The board would also like to pursue creating a marketing sheet for the properties that apply to the program. Staff will create a template for adoption with the program guidelines. No action required at this meeting.

5. New Business

A. 2024 Kennesaw Farmers Market Season

The board discussed the 2024 Farmers Market season. Mary Jo stated that she was willing to help out as the onsite coordinator again, but she will need assistance from other board members on a few weeks when she will be traveling. Mary Jo voiced concerns about the plaza location used last year; many patrons had issues with parking and crossing the busy intersection at Revival caused safety concerns. The board discussed using the city parking lot at the corner of Moon Station and Main Street, and decided this would be a good compromise for this season (until we are able to move back to Depot Park). Mark and Miranda will work with Public Works to determine if there is power available in that lot (or whether it is possible to get access to power in the lot).

The board discussed season dates. Last year (as with previous years) we saw customer attendance drop off sharply in August after school started. In addition, Miranda reported that there has been very little produce available in April, which has lead to complaints in the past. With these facts in mind, the board discussed setting the 2024 season dates as the first Monday in May through the last week of August (skipping the Memorial Day holiday).

Last season, vendor fees were set at $10 weekly for farmers/growers (with a full season rate of $170) and $20 weekly for makers (with a full season rate of $340). Mid-season, we changed the farmer rate and allowed them to come for free (and refunded the remaining fees for any pre-paid farmer who attended on the free weeks. The board

was willing to invite farmers to attend for free in 2024 and felt the rate for makers should stay at $20 weekly. For the vendors who are willing to commit for the full season, the board proposed offering a pre-pay rate that would offer 2 weeks free.
David Lyons made a motion as follows: approve the 2024 season dates (1st Monday of May through last Monday of August, closed on Memorial Day - 16 weeks total), set the weekly fees for makers at $20, with a full-season prepaid fee equal to the number of weeks in the full season with 2 free weeks (14 weeks), and to invite farmers to attend the market at no charge. Nimesh Patel seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

B. 2024 Kennesaw Holiday Market

Miranda Taylor discussed the 2024 Holiday Market. Event dates and venue have been secured; November 8 (VIP night) and Nov 9 (open market) at the Ben Robertson Community Center. This year we will utilize both the banquet hall and the large meeting room to allow us room to expand our vendor footprint. Miranda asked the board to consider offering an early-bird vendor rate for vendors who commit and pay before May 1; this would allow us to build our vendor list early and start promoting the market over the summer. Last year the vendor fee was $50 for the weekend, and the board did not feel that the general vendor fee should change. Nimesh Patel inquired about how we could incentivize the vendors to commit early (besides offering a discounted fee) and suggested we allow them to choose their spot if they commit early. The board liked this idea and wanted to offer a $10 discount to the vendor fee for early bird applications. David Lyons made a motion to set the early bird vendor fee at $40, and allow early bird vendors to choose their booth space (first come first served) when paid by May 1. Nimesh Patel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Public Comment

No public comment

7. Board & Staff Comment

1. (This item was taken out of order, following the Call to Order, in consideration of the time of our guests and legal representation.)
Fred Bentley, Jr. presented information about the development project at the former Tug site, being developed by Highpoint (TPA). Highpoint is working on a plan to sell the commercial outparcel and as part of that sale the board will need to consider approval of a consent resolution and an assignment agreement. The proposed project will develop in excess of the required 10,000 SF of commercial space on the 1.7 acre outparcel fronting Main Street. Robert Trim (RTG) and his client Raj Sagoo gave a brief overview of the plans. Fred indicated to the board that there is a legal requirement for the KDDA to review financial and proposed uses of the developers/project when considering the assignment agreement; these items will be forwarded to the board in advance of the March meeting. There is no action required today, but the consent resolution and assignment agreement will be brought forward at the March KDDA meeting.

Subsequent discussion items were heard during Board & Staff Comments in the order shown on the agenda.

2. Mark Allen reminded the board that there is a special election coming up in the city on May 21, with qualifying dates of March 4-6. If board members are aware of anyone interested in serving on City Council, please share the special election information with them.

3. David Lyons discussed the benches on Main Street by Memorial Park and noted that they are in bad shape. He would like to request that these benches be moved up in the replacement schedule to keep Main Street looking presentable. If the city is not able to replace them soon, he would like to see them cleaned (if possible) or removed (if they are in disrepair and not able to be cleaned/repaired). The board would also like to have information on the cost of the new benches to see if they would be able to help fund the replacement of benches.

4. Luke Howe shared an update on the following projects: By-Gone Treasures block, Kennesaw Square, and the Core Phase 2 commercial site.

A. Main Street Standards Update

Miranda Taylor reviewed Standard 2: Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Capacity from the Main Street self assessment with the board. Nimesh Patel requested that in the cases where two options were chosen ("Room for Improvement" and "Meeting") that one or the other be chosen. The board indicated that they understand there is always room for growth but would rather see the assessment reflect whether we are meeting a standard or not. No action required on this item.

Mark Allen asked the board if there were ideas for any other Main Street projects that KDDA could support in 2024 (outside the flex grant extension). The board discussed a potential beautification project by placing planters downtown. We would need to come up with a plan to maintain/water them, but this would be a good way to involve more volunteers. The board discussed identifying sponsors (Home Depot, Lowes, etc) and volunteer groups (boy scouts, etc). Nimesh Patel indicated he has a contact at Home Depot, and he would reach out to see if he could secure sponsorship for the planters. Lexie Newhouse volunteered to coordinate with Smith-Gilbert Gardens on expertise for planting and maintaining the planters.

8. 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).

9. Adjourn

With no further business, David Lyons made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Ian Coats. Meeting adjourned at 8:53 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.