



**Monthly Meeting Summary
Downtown Development Authority
Virtual Meeting**

Wednesday, February 15, 2023
East Point, GA 30344
5:00 pm

I. Call to order

The call to order was placed by Ms. Appleby at 5:15 pm.

Board Members Present:

Marc Hardy (Vice-Chairperson – arrived at 6:03 pm), Carl Semien, and Henry Adeleye

Staff/Attorney Present:

Maceo Rogers (Director of Economic Development); Rhonda Appleby (Economic Development Specialist/Staff Liaison); Susan Pease Langford (Attorney at Law – Butler Snow, LLP)

II. Approval of the agenda

Mr. Hardy motioned to approve the agenda as written. Mr. Semien seconded the motion.

Approved unanimously, the motion carried.

III. Approval of the meeting summaries: *November 16, 2022 and January 18, 2023*

Mr. Hardy motioned to table the November 16, 2022 and January 18, 2022 summaries to the March 2023 meeting. Mr. Semien seconded the motion. **Approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

IV. Review and approval of Susan Pease Langford's revised contract

Attorney Langford stated that the revised contract contained the following technical edits:

- Actual bond counsel services are not part of the DDA's monthly services.
- Butler Snow, LLP does not own any automobiles for employee usage; therefore, there was not a need for automobile liability coverage.
- Language regarding the firm's cancellation of insurance.
- The firm's insurance carrier is rated A-.

Mr. Hardy motioned to approve the revised contract with the stated edits. Mr. Semien seconded the motion. **Approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

V. Economic Development Report

Mr. Rogers provided the following updates:

- Mr. Rogers presented three (3) draft logos for the board's review and consideration.
- A film production company was looking at filming in the back alleyway. Filming starts on March 6, 2023, which will be before the next DDA meeting. Mr. Rogers

requested that the board discuss and decide on whether to approve the filming Location Agreement. He asked that Attorney Langford review the Location Agreement and render her legal opinion before the signing of the contract. He suggested that the board adopt the East Point Business and Industrial Development Authority's (BIDA) filming fee structure since they did not have one in place. Ms. Appleby added that due to the filming time constraints, the board previously agreed to have either her or Mr. Rogers as signers on the agreements. Attorney Langford stated that she would like to review the board's bylaws. She asked if the board had previously approved BIDA's fee structure. Mr. Rogers replied that the DDA has not formally approved any fee structure; however, the DDA utilized BIDA's film fee structure in a prior film situation. Mr. Adeleye felt that the city's filming fees were too low. Mr. Rogers felt that the board should establish their own film fee scale in lieu of BIDA's fee structure.

Attorney Langford asked if the back alley served as an entrance point for the businesses and if the DDA knew of any known impact in case the alleyway was unusable in a given time. Mr. Rogers replied that the backstreet area had multiple business owners and that the alleyway served as a back entrance to those businesses. Attorney Langford then asked if the DDA had an obligation to keep the alleyway free from any obstructions. Mr. Rogers replied that if the impacted business owners disagreed with the contract, the film company would modify their contract.

Mr. Hardy motioned for Attorney Langford to move forward with the negotiations and the execution of the film contract upon completion. Mr. Semien seconded the motion. **Approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

VI. Old Business

Ms. Appleby informed the board that Councilperson Joshua Butler (Ward D) appointed Jermaine Wright to the board; however, Ward C still had to make their appointment. Ms. Appleby went on to state that since Chairperson Booker's term has expired, Councilpersons governing Ward B must either reappoint Ms. Booker or appoint a new person.

Ms. Appleby advised the board that according to according to the state bylaws, the seven (7)-member board must comprise of four (4) members who must have a stake in the downtown district (owner or manager of a downtown establishment/business). They do not have to be a resident of the city. The remaining three (3) board members must reside in the city, but do not have to be an owner or manager of a downtown establishment/business. Currently, the board has fulfilled the three (3) non-downtown business owner requirement; therefore, all future appointments must be downtown business owners.

Attorney Langford mentioned that she reviewed the state's requirements for the Downtown Revolving Loan Fund (DDRLF). Established in 1999, the DDRLF was designated for cities with less than 100,000 in population. The loan ranges from \$50,000 to \$250,000. The purpose of the program was to revitalize and enhance the downtown areas. The funds could be used for gap financing and capital projects in the core downtown areas. The applicants may be cities, counties, and development authorities. The amounts afforded to the applicants cannot exceed 40% of the total project cost.

Designated Main Street Cities have a lower interest rate at 2%, whereby, other applicants have a 3% rate. There is a 15-year repayment period. The ultimate user of the funds can be private businesses or public entity even though the applicant must be either a city, county or development Authority. The applicant must first submit an Initial Project Assessment (IPA) application. Applications are accepted all year.

Ms. Appleby stated that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) oversee the DDRLF program. East Point's DCA Representatives are Tracie Sanchez and Cherrie Bennett. Ms. Appleby stated that she would like to establish a meeting with Attorney Langford and the DCA representatives to discuss the parameters of the program. Ms. Appleby mentioned that Melanie Styles, owner of Cultured South Brewery, previously approached the DDA with a possible DDRLF project. The DDA approved her IPA project application; however, the IPA application must be signed off by the city as well. The Mayor expressed concerns with certain language aspects of the application; therefore, the application did not proceed further. Ms. Appleby felt that the DDRLF program could benefit the small downtown business owners, especially those who intend to locate at the Commons.

VII. New Business

Mr. Adeleye inquired about the Commons community meeting. Mr. Rogers stated that the community meeting was a huge success. The design, project amenities, parking, and input from the citizens were highlighted at the meeting.

Mr. Hardy inquired about the city quit claiming all downtown properties to the East Point Business and Industrial Development Authority (BIDA) in the early 2000's. Ms. Appleby replied that when this event took place, the DDA was a non-functioning and deactivated board. BIDA was the premier development Authority, and the city drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) making BIDA as the project lead for the Commons development. Several years ago, due to BIDA's inability to secure a developer, the city decided to take control of the Commons project. In order to gain complete control of the Commons properties and the project, the city assessed all of the properties and purchased them from BIDA and the three (3) other independent owners – Brenda Isaac, Mr. Stacy Vereen, and Mr. Thomas Chisolm. The DDA was reactivated in 2017 when the city embarked upon developing a government center. Currently, the only existing property owned by the DDA is the strip of alleyway located in the back street area.

Attorney Langford asked if any properties were quick claimed from the DDA to BIDA that was not involved in the Commons project. Ms. Appleby answered that she did not have any knowledge of any such properties. Ms. Appleby believe that the DDA had owned no more than a total of two (2) acres at the Commons.

Ms. Appleby stated that she would send the board a map of the downtown district.

Adjournment

Having no further business, the meeting properly adjourned at 6:59 pm following a unanimous adoption of a motion made by Mr. Hardy, seconded by Mr. Semien. **Approved unanimously, the motion carried.**

Summary properly recorded by:

Rhonda Appleby
(Rhonda Appleby, Recording Secretary)