

**MAYOR & COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014 ~ 5:30 PM RIVERDALE, GEORGIA**

**ATTENDANCE:**

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>
Evelyn Wynn Dixon	Mayor, At-Large	Present
Cynthia Stamps Jones	Council Member, Ward 1 Parliamentarian	Present
An'cel Davis	Council Member, Ward 2 Mayor Pro-Tem	Present
Wanda Wallace	Council Member, Ward 3	Present
Kenneth Ruffin	Council Member, Ward 4	Present

**PURPOSE OF SPECIAL CALLED MEETING:**

Guest Speaker with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs was invited to address the Governing Body and all in attendance, on Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Law and "Understanding & Using DDA". Public Notice was properly posted according as mandated.

**THE SPECIAL CALLED MEETING WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

**GUEST SPEAKER/ FACILITATOR:**

Billy Peppers, Director  
Office of Downtown Development Authority  
Georgia Department of Community Affairs  
404-679-3101 Billy.peppers@dca.ga.gov

**OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION:**

The presentation addressed the following questions in the presentation:

1. What is a Downtown Development Authority (DDA)?
2. What powers are held by a DDA?
3. What are the requirements for an Active DDA?
4. What are some best practices for DDA's?

Downtown Development Authorities have been around in Georgia since 1960's as Constitutional bodies. Legislature created sweeping Act in 1981.

The purpose of a DDA is to revitalize & redevelop Central Business District. Promote and Develop trade, commerce, industry and employment opportunities, only finance projects that are resolved to meet this purpose.

DDA Structure consist of 7 Board Members and must be taxpayers residing in the city, owners of operators of business that are taxpayers residing in the County. One member may own/operate a business and be a taxpayer living outside the county. One member may be a city council member/mayor. Term is concurrent with elected term. 4 of the 7 Board members must be judged by City Council to have or represent a party that has an economic interest in redevelopment or revitalization of downtown. The law is silent on Ex-Officios.

### **Appointment of Board**

- Only the City Council can appoint members to the DDA  
This process varies by community: Mayor only Board appointments, Majority consent board appointments, or every member gets an appointment
- All appointments should be approved in a formal Council Meeting
- All board members must receive 8 hours of training within the first 12 months following appointment.

### **The Statutory Authority**

- Not Quasi-Public Authority
- Required to meet GORA
- Required to meet GOMA
- Required to be Audited (Discreetly reported budget unit of Local government)
- Must comply with State Ethics Laws
- Must comply with SAVE/E-Verify
- Most Meet Monthly
- Most Elect Officers
- Most Receive Some Public Benefit
  - Cash appropriation, property, leasehold assets
- May take advantage of Executive Session Privileges

### **There are 2 Views of DDA's in Georgia**

#### **Conduit for Debt**

Work with City to develop downtown

- Amenities
- Manage Parking
- Create Public Leverage for P3 Projects
- Assist in Long-term Financing

#### **Economic Development Agency**

- Develop plans
- Assist in growing downtown product
- Capitalize Private Projects
- Recruit Business
- Develop Incentives to Grow the Downtown Tax Base

### **Some of the Powers of DDA**

- Intergovernmental Agreements  
May contract with another government entity for up to 50 years
- Private Agreements  
May contract with a private entity for up to 50 years
- Revenue Bonds  
May not issue General Obligation Debt
- Own, Sale, Lease, Transfer Property & Assets
- Utilize Public Funds
- Extend Credit
- Profit from sales/leases
- Acquire interests in private projects

### **Annual Requirements to stay Active**

- Register the Local Authority with DCA
  - Includes contact information
  - List of Board Members
  - Training Status
- File a Report of Local Authority Finances with DCA
  - Outlines any debt of the organization
  - Shows revenue streams
- Be included in the Annual City Audit (generally one page in the notes)

### **If Annual Requirements are not meet**

- Ineligible for state funding
- Ineligible to issue debt
- May impact the City's ability to get a clean audit

### **Best Practices for DDA**

1. DDA should provide copy of meeting minutes and reports to City manager, City Attorney, and Mayor & Council as soon as their meeting ends. This will ensure everyone is informed and on the same page.
2. Successful DDA's has a great communication channel with Council. The city should take advantage of the opportunity to provide staffing for DDA. Perhaps the Deputy City Clerk can take meeting minutes, post public notices, etc. The Finance Director can assist with managing financial expenditures, the City Attorney can offer legal advice. This is a good use of city resources, helps maintain transparency and accountability.
3. DDA expenditures can go through the City's Finance Department. The DDA can follow the same check processes the city has in place for everyone else. Finance Department can better manage the accounts. Most DDA's are treated like a Department of the City.
4. The City should invest to ensure the city audit is done by the same company. To ensure the DDA is compliant with the same requirements as the city. The DDA Audit should be in the back of the City's audit.
5. Once a month or once a quarter, DDA report should be placed on Council Agenda to update Mayor and Council on new developments. The Executive Director or Chairperson should provide regular updates.
6. Council should invite DDA Board Members to attend the Annual Retreat, to ensure the goals and missions of the DDA are in sync with the Council's.

**UPCOMING NATIONAL MAIN STREET CONFERENCE:  
MARCH 30 - APRIL 2, 2015  
OMNI ATLANTA HOTEL  
DISCUSSING DDA, CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, AND TOURS.**

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before Mayor & Council, Council Member Wanda Wallace motioned to adjourn. Council Member An'cel Davis offered the second. The time was 7:35PM.

Minutes Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evelyn Wynn-Dixon, Mayor

Attested By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherry D. Henderson, City Clerk