

**MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLARKSTON, GEORGIA**  
**HELD IN PERSON AND BY TELECONFERENCE, ZOOM AUDIO/VIDEO**  
**IN SAID CITY ON MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2026**

On Monday, April 13, 2026 at 1:00 PM, the Downtown Development Authority of Clarkston, Georgia met in a Regular Board Meeting in person. The following City staff were present: Richard Edwards (Planning and Economic Development Director).

NOTE: Items appearing in these minutes are in the order they were discussed, not necessarily in the order they appeared on the agenda.

**I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Chairperson Rezwan Ahmad called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

The following board members were present: Chairperson Rezwan Ahmad, Vice Chairperson Adria Marshall, Secretary/Treasurer Michele Maserjian, Director Beverly Burkes, and Director Sydney Jakes.

The following board members were absent: Director Akber Lassi and Director Ganaro Makor.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE 4/13/2026, AGENDA**

Motion made by Director Beverly B. to approve the 04/13/2026 meeting agenda. Motion seconded by Vice Chairperson Adria M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE 3/9/2026, MEETING MINUTES**

**a) 3/9/2026 Downtown Development Authority Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion made by Vice Chairperson Adria M. to approve the 03/09/2026 Regular Meeting Minutes. Motion seconded by Director Beverly B. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Any member of the public may address the Board during the time allotted for public comment. Each attendee will be allowed 3 minutes for comments at the discretion of the Presiding Officer. The public comment period will be limited to 40 minutes, and it is not a time for dialogue. If your public

comment contains a series of questions, please submit those to the Planning & Economic Development Director in writing. This will facilitate follow-up by the council or staff. The DDA desires to allow an opportunity for public comment; however, the business of the DDA must proceed in an orderly, timely manner.

No public comments were made.

## **VI. PRESENTATIONS**

None.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **a) DDA Logo Update**

Mr. Edwards stated that the revised logo had not yet been redistributed and will be resent to the Board via email. The Board agreed to provide a final vote electronically upon receipt.

Discussion included the need for the selected artist to provide a complete style sheet, including usage guidelines, fonts, and color specifications, for implementation and printing purposes. Staff noted that reimbursement to the artist is in progress.

Once a final logo is selected by the DDA, it will be presented to City Council for comments at the May Council meeting. Formal Council approval is not required.

### **b) DDA Recruitment Status Update**

Mr. Edwards reported that Director Sydney Jakes has been appointed and approved by City Council. Director Jakes was formally introduced to the Board.

Director Beverly B. announced her resignation from the DDA Board effective April 13, 2026. This meeting marked her final meeting as a Board member.

Staff noted that City Council will discuss the appointment of a replacement, either a Council representative or community member, at the April Work Session and May Council meeting.

### **c) 2025 Crime Report Status**

Mr. Edwards reported that the 2025 crime report is still pending due to challenges with aggregating data from the current reporting system. Staff is evaluating system updates and training improvements to better isolate data within the DDA boundaries.

Discussion included the importance of defining DDA geographic boundaries consistent with the official map, including the Brockett Road corridor and alignment with the

Comprehensive Plan.

The Board discussed business concerns related to safety, including lighting conditions across streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and common areas. Additional discussion included potential business education on crime prevention strategies and the City's nuisance ordinance efforts.

**d) 2025 Financial Report Status Update**

Mr. Edwards stated that a financial report will be provided to the DDA by the end of the week. He clarified that the DDA operates under a designated account rather than a separate budget line item and that remaining funds from 2025 are still available.

It was noted that real time financial reporting is not currently available. Discussion included the need for improved visibility into funding options and financial structure.

**e) 2026 Quarter 1 DDA Finance Report**

**f) ARPA Funded Security Cameras Update**

Mr. Edwards reported that security cameras funded through ARPA have been installed in accordance with funding requirements and agreements with DeKalb County. Due to public safety considerations, specific camera locations cannot be disclosed.

It was noted that the City operates a limited number of cameras, with the majority managed by DeKalb County, and that many are located near Milam Park.

Discussion included potential coordination between private business security systems and City infrastructure, gaps in public awareness, and the distinction between property owner responsibilities and City responsibilities.

The Board also discussed the absence of current zoning or property maintenance requirements related to lighting and security cameras, as well as potential future code considerations. Code Compliance operations and enforcement coordination were also discussed.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**a) Discussion of DDA Priorities for Strategic Plan**

The Board discussed priority focus areas for the upcoming Strategic Plan, including economic development, business retention, beautification, events and marketing, and community engagement.

Discussion emphasized the need for direct, one on one business outreach and support, as well as addressing structural challenges such as aging infrastructure, limited market

appeal, and underutilization of commercial spaces.

The Board discussed potential strategies to attract new businesses, diversify the local economy, and enhance Clarkston's identity, including activation through events, redevelopment opportunities, and placemaking initiatives.

Further discussion included leveraging regional opportunities, identifying catalytic projects, and aligning DDA efforts with long term economic development goals.

This discussion will continue at future meetings.

**b) Discussion of Planning and Economic Development project updates**

Mr. Edwards provided an update on current development activity, noting limited commercial permit activity and ongoing residential development, including single family homes and townhomes in various areas of the City.

Updates were provided on developments along Woodland Drive, Market Street, and Mell Avenue, with home prices averaging approximately \$400,000.

Commercial updates included vacancies at former Dollar General and restaurant locations, with discussion around the lack of direct outreach to property owners.

The Board discussed the potential role of commercial real estate brokers and opportunities for the DDA to support grant funding efforts, particularly related to placemaking initiatives.

**c) Discussion of DDA Support Strategies — Beautification & Clean Up, Public Safety, B2B Networking, Events & Cultural Festivals, Marketing & Promotion**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made at 2:40 p.m. by Chairperson Rezwan A. to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Vice Chairperson Adria M. The aye votes were: 5, with the nay votes: 0. Motion passed.