



# VisitColumbusGA

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
Wednesday, September 18, 2024

**Commissioners Present:** Lauren Becker, Chair; Jamie Waters, Vice Chair; Miles Greathouse, Secretary/Treasurer; Sherricka Day(virtual), Dan Gilbert, Peter Jones, and Mayor Skip Henderson

**Commissioners Absent:** Amy Bryan, Michelle Spivey and Pace Halter

**Staff Present:** Peter Bowden, Shelby Guest, Kim Gonzalez, and Ashley Woitena

**Call to Order ..... Lauren Becker**

- The September 2024 meeting was called to order at 4:01pm.

**Secretary Treasurer Report ..... Miles Greathouse**

- Miles Greathouse presented the consent agenda -- minutes for the August 2024 meeting, as well as financials for August 2024. He asked if there were any questions or discussion. There being none, a motion was made by Jamie Waters to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Dan Gilbert. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

**Chair Report..... Lauren Becker**

- Ms. Becker gave a search committee update discussing the first meeting with the Chason Group hired by the Board of Directors to aide in the executive search for VisitColumbusGA, upon the retirement of Mr. Bowden effective December 31, 2024. She also reviewed the timeline. It was recommended that an offer be extended to Mr. Bowden to act as a consultant after his retirement for a period of 3 months to assist in the transition to the new President-CEO. A motion was made by Miles Greathouse to approve the consulting agreement and seconded by Peter Jones. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.
- An Executive Session Affidavit from the August meeting was discussed. A motion to approve the affidavit was made by Jaime Waters and seconded by Miles Greathouse. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved. The affidavit will be forwarded to Clerk of Council.
- Ms. Becker then discussed the importance of Board attendance and the requirements. Part of the discussion included attendance for in-person and Zoom meetings, make up of a quorum, voting privileges, etc.
- Ms. Becker recognized that Sherricka Day and Peter Jones have been reappointed to the Board of Directors for another term. She explained that Jamie Waters would roll off the Board at the

end of the year and that Mayor Henderson had appointed Alex Naik with the Holiday Inn Express, Ft. Moore to fill the vacant seat.

- There was also discussion on the 2025 Executive Committee seats and potential slate of officers. Board members were encouraged to let staff know at their convenience if they wished to be included in the election process.

**President’s Report.....Peter Bowden**

- Mr. Bowden explained to the Board that the FY 2024 audit was underway. And that he anticipated that the final audit would be presented at the November Board Meeting.
- Mr. Bowden reviewed the 2025 Legislative Agenda, highlighting several key points VisitColumbusGA is recommending to support. These include protecting Georgia’s lodging taxes for its intended use by destination marketing organizations, increasing Georgia’s investment in tourism marketing, opposing discrimination in all its manifestations, and revisiting the use of the \$5 transportation fee upon its sunset. After a brief discussion, a motion to approve the Legislative Agenda was made by Miles Greathouse and seconded by Peter Jones. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.
- Mr. Bowden continued by announcing that Ashley Woitena had been assigned to the Georgia Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus’(GACVB) Advocacy Committee during this year’s Governor’s Conference on Tourism.
- Mr. Bowden concluded his remarks by inviting the Board to attend the annual Collaborate Summit, October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Other Business and Recap.....Lauren Becker**

- Merri Sherman, Executive Director for the Columbus Sports Council informed the Board that during this year’s Governor’s Conference on Tourism, Governor Kemp had recognized Peter Bowden for his service and pending retirement

**Adjournment.....Lauren Becker**

- With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:42pm.