The Liberty Theatre & Cultural Arts Center
Advisory Board Minutes
January 8, 2026

Columbus Civic Center, Hospitality Suites
400 4th St, Columbus, GA 31901

Board Members Present: Arreasha ‘ Z’ Lawrence, Fernando Verdree, Ku’Wonna Ingram, Arsburn ‘ Oz’ Roberts, Evelyn ‘ Mimi’ Woodson,

Board Members Absent: Delois “Dee” Marsh, Terrance Flowers, Dr. Shikha Shah, Cletus Richardson

Present: Civic Center Staff: Kanise Wiggins, Jennifer Babin, Troy Vanerson, Josaland Hardwick

Absent: Civic Center Staff: Janine Abano, Caryn Hammond

1. **Call to Order**

   The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chair Mimi Woodson. An invocation delivered by Vice Chair Oz Roberts.

2. **Resignation**

   The Board formally acknowledged receipt of the resignation letter submitted by Delois “Dee” Carr Marsh.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

   The minutes from November 13, 2025, were presented for review and was approved.

4. **Liberty Theatre Building Update**

   Troy Vanerson provided an update on the Liberty Theatre building. Interior molding work remains ongoing. Discussion was held regarding the installation of HVAC units on the roof. It was noted that relocation of the HVAC system is not feasible due to reconstruction requirements and historic preservation constraints, which would necessitate review and approval by the Historic Board.

   Chair Woodson requested the following:

   - A visual presentation reflecting before-and-after progress of the building; and

- A scheduled walkthrough of the facility to review potential updates and improvements.

A question was raised regarding the status of mold remediation. Staff will confirm and report back to the Board.

5. **LTCAC Advisory Board Matters**

Discussion was held regarding the Advisory Board's monthly meeting schedule and a pending meeting with Deputy City Managers Pam Hodge and Lisa Goodwin.
Key discussion points included:

- The process for the revitalization and reintroduction of the Liberty Theatre to the broader community.
- Continued service and eligibility requirements for Advisory Board Members.
- Funding strategies, including potential support from foundations, private-sector partners, and increased City funding; and
- Governance considerations related to City authority

The following clarifications were provided:

- Appointees to the Board must be residents of Muscogee County
- Non-Muscogee County residents may serve on committees but may not serve as committee chairs or present to the Board or City Council.
- Columbus Consolidated Government employees may serve only in seats specifically designated for City employees.
- Board members may be reappointed for additional terms by a Council member or designated organization in accordance with ordinance.

6. **Committees and Subcommittees**

Board members were directed to review committee descriptions and indicate interest in service. Chair Woodson requested that recommendations for committee chairs be compiled for submission to City Council.

The following committee assignments were noted:

- Marketing/Public Relations: Jennifer Babin
- Sales: Kanise Wiggins
- Sponsorships & Partnerships: Arreasha "Z" Lawrence
- Programming/Production: Ku'Wonna Ingram & Josaland Hardwick
- Finance: Fernando Verdree
- Technology: Jennifer Babin
- Building & Architecture: Mimi Woodson & Troy Vanerson

Committees will provide bi-monthly reports to the Board, including brief updates and supporting documentation. Committee reports are scheduled for presentation at the next meeting on March 12, 2026.

7. **Budget and Funding Discussion**

The Board discussed currently City-provided resources, noting that they are limited in scope. Additional needs were identified, including training, marketing, branding, and long-term operational support. The Board also discussed the development of a proposed budget for submission to Deputy City Manager

Lisa Goodwin. As part of this discussion, the Board recommended requesting the allocation of $10,000 in funding to support an update to the strategic plan. The proposed update would incorporate the latest advancements in artificial intelligence and technology to better serve the community, enhance programming, and position the organization as a modern hub within the city.

8. **Programming and Community Engagement**

Potential programming and community engagement initiatives discussed included Movies on the Lawn, jazz performances, a 5K Run/Walk, talent showcases, partnerships with the local school system, and MaFest. In support of these initiatives, Kanise is currently preparing a detailed budget to justify and outline the need for an additional $10,000 in funding. The proposed budget will identify the anticipated costs associated with event planning, production, and vendor participation. Increased financial support will enable the organization to deliver impactful events, expand its reach through enhanced vendor engagement, and further promote the mission and cultural significance of the Liberty Theatre within the community.

9. **Additional Business**

   a. The Board agreed that the bylaws should be reviewed annually.
   b. Community feedback received through social media platforms should be monitored and considered appropriate.
   c. Board membership reinstatement or appointment requires City Council action. Interested individuals may apply through the City's website, submit a professional biography for consideration, and contact a City Council member to seek appointment.

10. **Adjournment**

The next meeting is scheduled for the second Thursday, March 12, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the Columbus Civic Center.

Upon motion by Oz Roberts, seconded by Fernando Verdree, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Abano

Janine Abano, Board Secretary