



**CITY OF FOREST PARK
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 5:30 PM
City Hall-Council Chambers, Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Website: www.forestparkga.gov
Phone Number: (404) 363.2454

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

MINUTES

Lois Wright, Chairwoman
Pamela Lake, Vice Chairwoman
Eliot Lawrence, Secretary
Hector Gutierrez, Member
Alvin Patton, Member
Trudy Smith, Member
Felicia Davis, Member

MEETING NOTICE:

*This meeting is accessible to the public or media via web.
For in person attendance CDC requirements of Masks and Social Distancing will be adhered.*

To join the meeting via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/96431940317?pwd=N2tiV0NacXdJZTBCEVFsdFZBMnUxZz09>
Dial in: 1-929-205-6099 **Meeting ID:** 899 8426 4018 **Passcode:** 683596

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

Chairwoman, Lois Wright called meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

Present:

Chairwoman, Lois Wright
Eliot Lawrence
Hector Gutierrez
Alvin Patton
Felicia Davis

Also Present:

Kirby Glaze, DA Attorney
Bruce Abraham, Economic Development Director
Girard Geeter, Procurement Director
Kisha Bundridge, Economic Development Coordinator

Absent:

Felicia Davis
Pamela Lake

Approval of Minutes:

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 21, 2021, Regular Meeting:

Alvin Patton made a motion to approve the minutes as is from the July 21, 2021, Regular Meeting.

Trudy Smith seconded.

Roll call for approval. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes August 17, 2021, Special Called Meeting

Eliot Lawrence made a motion to approve the minutes as is from the August 17, 2021, Special Called meeting.

Hector Gutierrez seconded. Trudy Smith abstained.

Roll call for approval. Motion approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Hector Gutierrez wanted to address with chairwoman Lois Wright, the ways in which he had heard she has interacted with staff and one of our vendors. He asked that she take accountability for doing so. Mr. Gutierrez shared that while she is in a position of leadership, she should not speak to people in a disrespectful manner. He added that he was concerned that there were things going on regarding the DA properties that were not being discussed with the whole board, but instead decided solely by Ms. Wright.

It was explained to Mr. Gutierrez that there are many things that happen day to day regarding DA property, for example, someone saying they are interested in finding property in Forest Park, or inquiring about a specific property, but those things do not require disclosure to the entire board because they are not action items. There are in fact, no actionable items that are presented to staff or the chair, that are not brought before the board.

Lois Wright asked for clarification on what Mr. Gutierrez was suggesting was inappropriate behavior on her part. When speaking to the contractor for the company working on renovations on the Main Street properties, Ms. Wright explained that she respectfully asked about certain things that the tenants of those properties had been asking about (the awnings that had been promised and the water coming into their businesses). Ms. Wright explained that she had in fact had a heated discussion with the economic development director, but they had since resolved their differences.

Economic Development Director, Bruce Abraham informed the board that the Economic Development department would begin including an Economic Development report on every agenda, starting with September's regular meeting. This report will just be a short recap of what the Economic Development Department has been working on behind the scenes since the last meeting. The information shared is informative, not requiring action on the board's part. The DA board meetings tend to just cover action items so we will add this agenda item to make sure everyone always knows what is going on.

NEW BUSINESS:

3. Introduction of Attorney Kirby Glaze:

Attorney, Kirby Glaze appreciates the confidence we have shown by retaining him as Attorney for the Development Authority. Mr. Glaze has practiced law within local governments and dealing with economic development, for over 45 years. The past 20 years, his practice has focused on working with Development Authorities, with communities and on economic development. Years ago, he represented for this board when we were first adopting a redevelopment plan- now known as the Urban Redevelopment Authority.

Mr. Glaze will use his expertise as an attorney and his experience in economic development, to help us effectively bring about the change we want to see. He will serve on a monthly retainer attending all meetings, answering all calls, texts and emails, reviewing all contracts, handling all day- to- day operations regarding contracts, negotiations, by laws, and intergovernmental agreements.

The two areas not covered by his retainer are litigation and bond or real estate transactions. Should one of those two things arise, he can be asked to perform those duties, or have someone from his office perform those duties under his supervision, for a separate fee.

Hector Gutierrez asked if Mr. Glaze would be able to assist in identifying grants that can help us fund different projects the board may want to undertake. Mr. Kirby shared that while there are not a lot of grants that exist specifically for economic development projects that we would qualify for, he is happy to share tools we can access to help facilitate economic development projects. He is honored to be here and available to help in any way he can.

4. RFP to Develop Four Properties on Main Street:

Bruce Abraham shared that there has been a long- time stagnation in Forest Park, regarding new development and revitalizing the community. Recently, we have been able to start the process of turning things around. We have attracted viable businesses and are ready to make big changes that will benefit the city as a whole.

The LCI plan, as laid out by Planning Building and Zoning Director, James Shelby, presents a big picture strategy to revitalize Forest Park, including new buildings and bridges. As part of that vision, there are three properties belonging to the Development Authority that we would need to include in an RFP Mr. Abraham and Mr. Shelby want to put out to developers to negotiate these new developments.

Procurement Director, Girard Geeter suggest an RFQ be used instead of an RFP to recruit the best developer for this project.

An RFP asks developers to make specific proposals for what they want to do with said property, while an RFQ ask developers to present their qualifications to do a project as defined by us.

Trudy Smith made a motion to table this discussion to allow for time to strategize on the best approach for developing the properties in question as part of the LCI plan.

Hector Gutierrez seconded.

Roll call for approval. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Demolition of Main Street Property:

Eliot Lawrence made a motion to demolish the house at 760 Main Street next to the old theatre already approved for demolition and include the house and parking lot in the same RFP to demolish.

Hector Gutierrez seconded.
Roll call for approval. Motion approved unanimously.

6. Discussion: Board Retreats/ Planning Sessions:

Hector Gutierrez saw a presentation about board retreats offered by the City of Thomasville and wants to explore having our board(s) participate in a board retreat. Mr. Gutierrez wants to see how to move from A to B regarding some successful board initiatives.

Lois Wright asked if the city of Thomasville is like the city of Forest Park. Kirby Glaze, attorney for the DA shared that Thomasville is a historic community with a traditional downtown and there are lessons to be learned from them, but he would not equate the two cities. The Carl Vinson Institute facilitates board retreats that the board may want to consider as well.

Trudy Smith noted that the retreat should not be just for fellowship but should serve as a learning opportunity as well. Mr. Glaze added that the purpose is to leave with a unified vision which involves educating everyone on how best to do things. Mr. Gutierrez said he was open to whichever direction everyone wants to go in, but he was inspired by what he'd heard and felt it would greatly benefit our board(s).

Lois Wright agrees with doing a retreat and feels the citizens of Forest Park deserve more and thinks a retreat would help bring everyone together. She prefers we pursue the Carl Vinson Institute retreats since they can be tailored to fit our specific needs.

No action was taken, but it was agreed that more information be gathered about the retreat options available through the Carl Vinson Institute.

7. Discussion: Sanitation bills for DA Property

There are properties belonging to the Development Authority, where the city has been paying for the sanitation services.

Alvin Patton made a motion for the Development Authority to take over payment for the sanitation bills for their properties.

Eliot Lawrence seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

8. Facade Grant Consideration.

The Facade Grant offers an 80/20 matching incentive to small businesses on Main Street to remodel their storefronts. We are currently in Phase I, which covers small businesses on Main Street between West and College Streets. The Facade Grant was approved by Council and announced to the public. Nachae Jones, owner of the art studio at 780 Main Street, has submitted an application to support her project upgrading the exterior architectural features (changing residential roof frontal to a commercial frontal and adding an awning over the front).

Chairwoman, Lois Wright said that Nachae Jones has been doing a lot of work to improve the building and feels she is deserving of the Facade Grant award to complete her renovations.

Hector Gutierrez made a motion to award Nachae Jones the Facade Grant.

Eliot Lawrence seconded.

Roll call for approval. Approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (Executive Session is required to discuss issues concerning Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate)

ADJOURNMENT:

Trudy Smith made a motion to adjourn the August 26, 2021, Regular Meeting for the Development Authority at 7:08 PM.

Alvin Patton seconded.

Roll call for approval. Motion approved unanimously.