



Hiwassee Downtown Development Authority Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Time: 8:30 AM
Location: 50 River Street, Upstairs Training Room
Board Present: Shawn Farmer, Doug Schober, Amy Barrett, Tyler Osborn, Kristi Bryant, Bradley Barrett
Staff Present: Lily Ponitz, Jinelle Wagner
Guests Present: Leslie Howard, Jim Olson, Samantha Laratta, Caitlin Ayers, William Ayers

I. Call to order

Tyler called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

II. Swear in new Board Member: Bradley Barrett

III. Adopt agenda as set or amended

Motion: Amy | Second: Kristi | Approved

IV. Approval of November 18, 2025 meeting minutes

Motion: Amy | Second: Kristi | Approved

V. Financial Update

- Discussed the possibility of the City paying off the PBC loan using SPLOST funds, then the DDA pay interest to the City, or doing an in-house loan with the bank at a lower interest rate.

Motion to approve financial update: Amy | Second: Kristi | Approved

VI. Directors Update

- a. Farewell and thank you to Tyler and Amy
 - Discussed the new board members needing to get familiar with the bylaws, resolution forming the DDA, city's ordinances (municode), and GMA resources.
- b. Hikeawassee / Hiwassee Half Marathon & 5K Updates
 - Jinelle and Shawn volunteered to join the Hikeawassee / Hiwassee Half Marathon & 5K committee.
- c. DDA Director recruitment
 - Drew Backer from Edward Jones Investments expressed interest in joining the DDA.

VII. Paris Business Center Update

- Discussed reaching out to Firefly Café in Hayesville to see if they would like to be a client.
- Discussed the incubators and whether the middle wall was constructed to be non-load bearing for the purpose of opening the two incubators into one larger incubator. Doing this could violate the ARC grant terms.

VIII. Night Market 2026 Season Plan

- 2 bands have been booked, Dawn Loves Nash (July) and Whiskey Mountain (September)

Motion to approve removing May and adding November: Shawn | Second: Kristi | Approved

IX. New Business

- a. Review Masonic Lodge Façade Grant application.

Motion to approve pending their completion of the application with a start date, budget summary, and paint sample: Shawn | Second: Kristi | Approved

- b. Approve request from PBC Tenant to move from Suite B to Suite A.
Motion to approve with stipulation that tenant repaints the wall she painted on: Kristi | Second: Amy | Approved
- c. Approve 2026 DDA Regular Meeting Schedule.
Motion: Kristi | Second: Bradley | Approved
Motion to amend to correct January meeting to January 20: Amy | Second: Kristi | Approved
- d. Approve request from Executive Director to raise First Friday Night Market Coordinator pay from \$15/hr to \$17/hr.
Motion: Shawn | Second: Amy | Approved
- e. Approve switch from AccuFund to Black Mountain Software for DDA Accounting, with first year cost of \$3,305 and ongoing annual cost of \$1,970.
Motion: Kristi | Second: Shawn | Approved
- f. Approve invoice for Joseph Homans for legal services - \$2,006.25.
Motion: Shawn | Second: Kristi | Approved

X. Old Business

- a. Approve spending \$35,800 to purchase the van and cover its title, registration, and dealer fees.
 - Discussed that we need to get a mechanic check of what we purchase.
 - After discussion, decided that \$25,000 is a more comfortable purchase price for our current finances.Motion to spend no more than \$10,000 out of current DDA funds to purchase the van and cover its title, registration, and dealer fees: Kristi | Second: Bradley | Recuse: Amy, Tyler | Approved
- b. Approve the updated Hikeawassee sponsorship agreement for Trailful.
 - Add to section 2b – how the express permission will be given by Sponsor.
 - Add to section 7 – specify that either party can terminate after a minimum of two years.Motion to approve with changes: Kristi | Second: Bradley | Approved
- c. Approve the Vehicle Lease Agreement between the City of Hiawassee and the DDA for the Hikeawassee van.
 - Motion: Kristi | Second: Shawn | Recuse: Amy | Approved

XI. Executive Session

Motion to enter executive session to discuss the lease of property.
Motion: Kristi | Second: Shawn | Approved

Entered executive session at 9:55 AM.

Motion to come out of executive session.
Motion: Kristi | Second: Bradley | Approved

Came out of executive session at 10:14 AM.

XII. Adjourn by general consent at 10:15 AM.