

Canton, Georgia

*110 Academy Street
Canton, Georgia 30114*



Minutes - Final - Final

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

9:00 AM

**City Hall
110 Academy Street**

Downtown Development Authority

1. Call to Order***Board Members Present:***

Jennifer Hughes (Chair)
Brooke Schmidt
Lee Oliver
Cory Wilson

City Staff & Council:

Bill Grant, Mayor
Shawn Tolan, City Council
Billy Peppers, City Manager
Nathan Ingram, Asst. City Manager
Velinda Hardy, Downtown Development Manager
Lauren Johnson, Communications Manager
Bethany Watson, City Engineer
Aundi Lesley, Economic Development Manager

2. Approval of the Agenda

Member Schmidt moved to approve the agenda as amended; Member Oliver seconded the motion; Motion carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes**A. Downtown Development Authority Draft Minutes - August 13, 2025**

Attachments: [Minutes - Downtown Development Authority - August 13, 2025](#)

Member Oliver moved to approve the minutes; Member Wilson seconded the motion; Motion carried.

4. Public Input

There was no public input.

5. Financials**A. Discussion and Possible Approval of Reimbursement to the City for Expenses**

Nathan overviewed the financials with a balance of \$847,221.97 with anticipated rents over the next month, estimated to increase balance to \$909,380.03. Additionally, the City presented an expense invoice related to prior expenses of \$191,620.60 for expenses borne by the City on behalf of the DDA. Schmidt suggested they wait until next month for the City invoices to review the document. Nathan will add September expenses.

6. New Business

None

7. Old Business

A. Update on the Downtown Fire Station

Nathan noted there is a meeting this afternoon with Croft Engineering. At this time the estimate is around \$5.9M and the City is hearing about the financial resolution required for the project. Demolition is significantly done inside the station. There will be additional material mitigation over the next couple of weeks. Oliver would like to have a hard-hat tour. The designs were supposed to be completed by September 1. Wilson asked about the fire move out. Peppers said the truck was moving to Station 9 and the ambulance would move to the old courthouse.

B. Update on the North Street Gateway Redevelopment Project - Meetings with Cherokee North Residents

Nathan noted that the team met with 8 tenants on Monday and have spoken with some of the others. Some concerns include market rates, moving expenses (with estimates of 3-5k), application fees, utility set ups. Patton provided to those tenants information on the Canton Housing Authority product for those that might be eligible. Would the board consider an up to a certain amount per unit? Wilson asked about the current rents. Nathan noted they range from \$800-1200/mo. There was some misinformation on deposits. Nathan noted that the residents were informed that deposits would be paid back. There was discussion about forgiveness of existing rent—but that might be an issue with gratuity law as well as date of moving. Peppers noted that there could be staff to work to try to negotiate with local moving units. There was also a discussion of reducing rent to \$1 with new leases. Hughes asked if the Authority would consider 4X rent. Suggestion was to allow the staff to execute the program. Wilson noted that 4 months would be about \$84K and three would be about \$63K. Schmidt moved to create a bucket of up to 4 months of individual rent based upon eligible expenses. Wilson seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

C. Discussion and Update on the Hickory Flat Highway Gateway Project

Watson noted that she is working on grant applications as well. She noted that she is procuring engineering based upon potential grants. Demo bids are due October 7 and utilities will be disconnected that month. Canton Creek kickoff meeting is next week. October 1 testing of facilities.

8. What's Going On in Canton!

Velinda noted that Farmers Market season is over but there are two night markets later this fall. On the Border presented First Friday last week and the next one is October 3 with Chris Cagle. Last night was a Main Street Mixer and the next will be December 2 at the Canton Theatre. New businesses include Canton Guitar Shoppe and La Macaron. Ribbon Cutting for Cherokee Homeless Coalition today at 3 p.m. and Revive is celebrating 7 years today. Practically Perfect celebrates 15

years today. Tomorrow morning is Patriot Day Ceremony. October 1 is the DCA site visit for GEMS determination. Denim Fest is October 11 and October 16 is Taste of Canton. Think Pink Breast Cancer walk is October 25. Cherokee High Homecoming Parade is today at 4:30 p.m. Lauren noted the retro movie series is September 26. Canton City Limits final showdown is September 30 with the top 9 finalist competing. October 2-5 is the Peaberry Film Festival. October 11 is the Multicultural Festival at Harmon Park for its 5th year.

9. Board Introduced Items

Lee Oliver asked about the hotel feasibility study. Nathan noted the study is completed and we are awaiting the final presentation. Horwath asked for additional funds to do the RFP. Ingram noted that he pushed back and they overviewed some of the costs. Staff will handle the administrative approval.

Lee Oliver asked about the North Street Project and breakdown on costs.

10. Adjourn

Mr. Wilson left and the quorum was broken.