

Canton, Georgia

*110 Academy Street
Canton, Georgia 30114*



Minutes - Final - Final

Monday, February 9, 2026

10:30 AM

**City Hall
110 Academy Street**

Canton Tourism Board

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

Dana Mallett (Chair)
Chicka Elloy
Keith Johnston
Sabrina Kaylor
Kirit Patel
Teresa Ramsey
Jamie Smith

City:

Darrel Rice – Council Member
Dwayne Waterman – Council Member
Nathan Ingram
Ryan Lockett
Hannah Stringer
Aundi Lesley
Anijah Jones
Lauren Johnson
Jacky Cheng
Mike Loizou

Guests/Visitors:

Stefanie Forte

2. Approval of the Agenda

Member Smith moved to approve the agenda as amended with removing 9A. WPSL Funding Request, and adding in its place Rolling Thunder Funding Request; Member Ramsey seconded the motion; Motion carried.

3. Review and Approval of Minutes**A. Canton Tourism Board Draft Minutes - January 12, 2026**

Attachments: [Minutes - Canton Tourism Board - January 12, 2026](#)

Member Johnston moved to approve minutes; Member Smith seconded the motion; Motion carried.

4. Guests and Visitors**A. Stefanie Forte - Canton Historic Haunts Tours**

Stefanie Forte provided the Board with information on Historic Haunts Ghost Tours. After a 4-year hiatus, she wants to bring back ghost tours with event more experiences and community input. She is anticipating a summer relaunch, which will be her 20-year anniversary in the paranormal field; Former tours were conducted from the gazebo with about a dozen stops, including the historic courthouse, Bizarre Coffee, cemetery, and the history center. She would like to

set a time to schedule a small group to workshop ideas for the program.

5. Public Input

None

6. Financials

A. Consideration to Approve Reimbursement Invoice from City for Monthly Expenses

Member Johnston requested some additional information on billboard and graphics expenditures. The Staff and various Board Members discussed and provided additional information to the group on recent advertisements on billboards as well as other information. Member Mallett requested that invoices be provided to substantiate all invoices from the City.

Member Johnston moved to approve reimbursing the City for January expenses; Member Elloy seconded the motion; Motion carried.

7. Old Business

A. Kiosk Update

Jacky provided the Board with information.

B. Website Update

Jacky Cheng provided the Board with an update that staff will move forward on working with the lead designers of Tempest, the current website vendor, rather than starting a new website design with SimpleView. Staff are currently waiting on the designer to provide a work plan. There is no projected timeline for completion at this moment.

C. Discussion and Possible Action on Updated Tourism Funding Application

Aundi Lesley provided the Board a draft copy of the proposed application. Scoring Rubrik based on factors including hotel room impact, attendance, marketing efforts, community efforts, and event readiness and sustainability.

D. Discussion and Possible Action on Ripe Hotel Plugin for Explore Canton Website

Jacky Cheng provided the Board information on two different plans from Ripe; Member Johnston moved to approve a contract with Ripe with a one-time \$3,000 implementation fee and up to an \$850/month service fee, contingent upon the City Attorney reviewing the contract; Member Mallett seconded the motion; Motion carried.

E. Strategic Marketing Plan Update

Member Mallett provided some updated information on discussions with Chandler Thinks. Explore Canton board and staff will host ChandlerThinks on Feb 25, 26 & 27, for stakeholder meetings: 3-4 focus groups of 10-12 each, 24-30 one on one interviews, and a fam tour of the City and tourism assets. There will be a Special Called meeting on Feb. 25 at 9 a.m. to introduce the Board to ChandlerThinks.

F. Annual Explore Canton Event Update

Member Mallett provide an update on recent discussions regarding a possible music festival in April 2027. The group is still working on details.

8. New Business**A. Election of Officers**

Member Mallett moved to defer items 8.A. & 8.B. until the March meeting; Member Elloy second the motion; Motion carried.

B. Authorization of Check Signers

Deferred until March

C. Discussion and Possible Action for Digital Ad Spend for March Events

Jacky Cheng provided a proposal for ad spend for festival marketing from Rebel Fox in the amount of \$12,000 for custom ads and ad management. Member Kaylor motioned to approve up to \$2,500 for staff to use for advertising of March events using current assets; Member Johnston seconded the motion; Motion carried.

9. Sponsorships and Applications**A. WPSL Funding Request**

Rolling Thunder – The Board discussed an application for funding from Rolling Thunder, who produces the annual Mother's Day Powwow and Indian Festival in Boling Park. Member Kaylor moved to provide a \$5,000 marketing sponsorship to Rolling Thunder Enterprises; Member Ramsey seconded the motion; Motion carried.

B. Chick-fil-A 5K Funding Request

The Board discussing a funding application for the annual Chick-fil-A 5K, in partnership with the Cherokee County Educational Foundation. Member Kaylor moved to approve the \$10,000 sponsorship toward the 5K event; Member Ramsey seconded the motion; Motion carried.

10. Adjourn

Member Mallett moved to adjourn; Member Smith seconded the motion; Motion carried.