

**EVERMORE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
March and June Combined Meeting  
Held at  
2795 Main Street, West, Building 28, Suites A&B, Snellville, GA 30077  
On  
April 24, 2024**

**Board Members in Attendance**

Chris Garner, Barbara Bender, Warren Auld, Dwight Harrison, Fred Dawkins, Ron Harrison, Brad Williams

**Not In Attendance**

Diann Baker

**Additional Officer**

Bill Gower

**Staff**

Jim Brooks, Executive Director  
Tammie Martin, Executive Assistant  
Lois Love, Financial Manager  
Harrison Hartley, Jr., Intern

**Board Counsel**

Lynn Rainey, Rainey & Vaughan, LLC

**Call to Order**

Chairman Garner called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 2:36 pm.

**Ceremonial Matters**

**Election of Board Officers**

Mr. Warren Auld nominated Chris Garner to serve as Chairman to the Board, Ron Harrison to serve as Vice-Chairman of the Board, and Bill Gower to serve as Secretary/Treasurer of the Board. The motion to re-elect the foregoing slate of officers was unanimously approved.

**Public Comments**

Major Brookins was unable to attend but asked Mr. Brooks to convey the information he emailed to Mr. Brooks. Mr. Brooks shared that Mr. Brookins pointed out a couple of crime issues in the CID. 78 at East Park Place and some issues at some of the hotels there. They have devised a strategy to work with that area and have additional folks in the area to try to eradicate that issue. The entering autos that we have all suffered from metro wide is on the decrease but is still there. Please lock your cars, keep your guns hidden, and take good care of them.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion for approval of the Minutes of the February 28, 2024, board meeting was made by Mr. Ron Harrison, seconded by Mr. Williams, and unanimously approved.

**Presentations**

Mr. David McCoy from McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks & Co., LLC presented the audit of the financial statements for fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, that was performed in accordance with Auditing Standards Generally Accepted in the USA (GAAS). Mr. McCoy issued an unmodified (clean) opinion and stated our financial statements were presented fairly in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the USA. He noted that there were no findings, and no audit adjustments were proposed or recorded as part of this year's audit. It is the opinion of the firm that the organization is doing well and in a good financial position. He also issued the required communication letter to the Board. A bound copy of the audit and audit presentation were made available to the Board. A motion to accept the audit report of the financial statements for fiscal year 2023 was initiated by Mr. Dwight Harrison, seconded by Mr. Ron Harrison, and unanimously approved.

**Action Items**

Mr. Brooks requested a resolution by the board to the County for 2024. The board will need to decide what millage rate it would like to present to the County. In 2009 the board decreased the millage rate to 4 mills and since then it has been 5 mills. Mr. Dwight Harrison made the motion to set the millage rate at 5 mills as it has been for many years. Mr. Ron Harrison seconded the motion.

Mr. Auld spoke of the astronomical increases in property values that owners have been seeing, which is increases taxes. Mr. Auld suggested that even though the motion is on the floor, he would encourage the board consider something to help business people. Mr. Auld is suggesting the board consider even a nominal decrease such as 3 to 5% (4.85 to 4.75) would signal to our business people that we are here to help them, giving them not only services but some help. Mr. Auld has not done a significant look at the numbers but a 3% decrease on 1.4 million in revenue is not a significant loss. In addition to that we are going to see an increase in revenues because Amazon's percentage is going to increase some this year. Mr. Auld is submitting for consideration the possibility that we make some reduction that lets the businesses know that we recognize that they have a cost in this. Mr. Auld is not making a motion and is not against the motion on the floor. Mr. Auld is asking that the board consider that this is a time in the economic history of this board that we may want to make a small reduction in our millage rate.

Mayor Bender inquired about the plans for building up the fund balance. Mr. Brooks shared that the CID has about 16 million dollars worth of projects that are being implemented now. That is the Paxton Lane extension and the Killian Hill to McDaniel Bridge. The CID has been fortunate enough to get some money from SPLOST on those projects, but it is still going to leave a shortfall. The overall capital program that is projected out about 5 years is around 34.5 million dollars. One of the projects we'll be facing very shortly is a

new development on the south side of 78 around East Park Place. We have the engineering plans done on a parallel road there and if this new development comes in, we would begin the south parallel road. When you total all of those together it comes out to be 34.5 million dollars. Mr. Brooks will provide Mayor Bender with a complete list of projects.

Mr. Williams inquired of Mr. Rainey as to the millage rate of the other CIDs. Mr. Rainey shared that the CID millage rates across the 20 that he is familiar with across the metro area range from 3 to 5 mills. No CID is over 5 mills and no one is under 3 mills. There are a couple that are at 4 and one that is 3.5. To reflect on what Mr. Auld said you can set it at a fraction. As far as the history of millage rates, most have kept the millage rate at where they originally set it. There have been some that reduced it one year and increased it back the next and some that have carefully raised it from what it originally was.

Mr. Dwight Harrison asked Mr. Rainey what percentage of the CID's were at 5 mills. Mr. Rainey expressed that it is about 80%.

Mr. Brooks stated that one of the things that he likes to be able to do is that if someone asks the CID to put in a million dollars that the CID has that opportunity. Mr. Brooks also shared that the Hewatt Parkwood to Britt project in 2007 was 7.8 million dollars and as we stand today the 1.38 miles from Hewatt Parkwood to Britt is at 17.5 million dollars. Mr. Brooks set out to help the CID position itself so that when there is an opportunity like the infrastructure act that we have right now that when it comes to a 10% match that we have that money well in hand to act upon it.

Mr. Dwight Harrison stated that he appreciated what Mr. Auld said and certainly we can consider lowering or changing the millage rate. Mr. Dwight Harrison suggested that if the board is thinking they want to change the millage rate that it be discussed at all the board meetings leading up to April. Then, as a board we would have evaluated it, and discussed it, and know what we were doing. Mr. Auld reiterated that he was not speaking against this motion. He just wants to make sure we are talking about this and is serious about the economic situation and its seriousness and how we can help businesses not just with infrastructure but by not taking money out of their pocket.

Chairman Garner called for a vote on the motion made by Mr. Dwight Harrison and seconded by Mr. Ron Harrison. The motion carried unanimously to set the millage rate at 5 mills for 2024.

#### **Board Reports**

- a) Mr. Gower presented the Cash and Investment Reports for January, February, and March. Both the fact sheets and collateralization reports were included in the board book. Expanded documentation was in the electronic packages emailed earlier.
- b) Mr. Brooks reviewed his Executive Director Report which was included in the electronic package. The street lights on the south side are almost completely in. Mr. Brooks had an opportunity to go with the Chamber of Commerce on the D.C. Fly-In. This trip provides an opportunity to network with many of our elected county

officials and discuss the issues back home. We had the opportunity to speak with all of the current representatives and all of the representatives who are incoming after the redistricting that occurred. These meetings were held every day they were there. Mr. Brooks stated that he thinks everyone left with a new-found respect for the effort congress goes through right now. There are some issues and controversy. Representative Lucy McBath has seen a lot of money be brought to the county. Although she will be moving out of the county going forward, she has been an advocate for all of us. We've talked about Hewatt Parkwood Britt for a long time and there is a picture in the report so you can see the sanitary sewer being laid. This picture is from Westside Court. That's the first thing they had to do because there is a private sewer system there. The new system must be connected and operational before they can make the tie-in to the new system. That is huge for the folks that didn't want the road to come through. Every parcel that is connected to this roadway will include a lateral on the outside for them to connect whenever they need to.

Mr. Brooks also introduced Harrison Hartley as the intern working on the business directory. We are fortunate to have him here. He has the perfect attitude to go out and do the work that we try to do annually to get all the businesses along with a contact to provide to Gwinnett and Snellville Police departments to assist in their efforts. We purge the list and then put it online so that people can see what kind of businesses are on the corridor.

The CID continues to work with the Gwinnett Police Foundation in their restructuring of the foundation, taking it out from under the Police Department and putting it under an Executive Director. It will mirror some of the ideas that other municipalities and county governments have on their foundation. They think there is an opportunity for conflict with police asking for support from the county that is not consistent with the best practices of the Gwinnett foundation.

We continue to work with FUSUS. Mr. Brooks was pleased to share that Explore Gwinnett is going to provide the cores previously discussed to all the hotels that participate in Explore Gwinnett. That will allow the CID to cover more businesses that are within the corridor.

Street sweeping is a critical piece to make the corridor look good, but it is moreover a critical piece for stormwater. We can clean up dirt and other debris and improve stormwater. The street sweeping RFP is currently out and the board will have an opportunity to see the responses RFP before we move forward.

The CID always sponsors the Valor Awards. The Peer tour, which we also provide sponsorship for, is currently being planned. This year there is a new focus to get the elected officials to attend as well as the boards of the CIDs, the planning commissioners and those types of folks. It's called A Tale of Two Cities and will be traveling to Birmingham and Huntsville, Alabama. It will be an overnight trip. Mr. Brooks also pointed out the renewed commitment that we're seeing from

Gwinnett County Economic Development amid all its restructuring. In order to be more accessible to us we had one of the deputies come out with Alex and spend about 3 hours here. Since that time, we have received another request from upper echelon management who would like to come out as well. We will have a tour planned for them and talk about where we are and what we are doing and see how it fits with what the county is planning to do in their 2045 plan.

We continue to look at our businesses and focus on helping them the best we can. We recognize that the CID is funded by property owners and where we can help the businesses, we certainly try to focus on them.

The county let Mr. Brooks know that they were in the process of letting the contract for the Ross to Hewatt Road engineering work. That's about an 18-month to 2-year process before we actually have the engineering. That will be the next phase of the parallel road that we see. There have been a number of other people from economic development professionals inside the county and from outside the county who have come out. There is a lot of interest in parallel roads. Very few other CIDs are actually building roads. Some of the ones in Buckhead are being improved. They always want to go through Amazon. There will be a county function to tour Amazon. Some of the people from the CID will be invited. We have two significant projects that are in the early stages of discussion. Some of the condos will be valued from 600- to 700-thousand dollars. A project at East Park Place has already been forwarded to the county's economic development department.

Mr. Brooks included a handout he found yesterday in the board books. Mr. Brooks encouraged everyone to take this with them and look at it at their leisure.

Mr. Auld asked what congressional district we ended up in. Mr. Brooks will provide local maps as well as the maps of the US Representatives. We will provide as much detail as we can. Mayor Bender stated that Snellville will have 4 representatives.

Mr. Brooks also shared that we have joined with Gwinnett County and they have submitted bus shelters for Route 70 in the transit call they had open. We are the only CID with a local bus going to MARTA. It is a huge asset for Amazon. Amazon says that the facility will never go below 3500 employees and may go as high as 6000 so connectivity is very important to them.

- c) Mr. Dwight Harrison inquired about the status of the financial quotes that were due yesterday and if there had been a chance to look at the rates. Mr. Brooks shared that due to some electronic issues at several responding institutions, he feels that it is in the best interest of the CID to re-open the request until Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Auld thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve again. Mr. Garner thanked everyone for letting him serve again.

### **Adjournment**

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By acclamation, the meeting adjourned at 3:33 P.M. The next Board Meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, May 22, 2024, at 2:30 P.M., at 2795 Main Street West, Suites A and B, Snellville, GA 30078.

Approved by the Board this 26<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2024.

  
Secretary-Treasurer

