

## **Greater Alexandria Economic Development Authority Special Call Meeting**

**Minutes:** Meeting of Wednesday, December 17, 2025

**Present:** Mr. Steven R. McGee, Vice Chair  
Rev. Earl Williams Jr., Secretary/Treasurer  
Mr. Ronald Morgan  
Ms. Zendrea Whitehead

The special call meeting of the Greater Alexandria Economic Development Authority (GAEDA) was called to order at 8:25 am by Vice Chair, Steven R. McGee. Administrative Assistant, Kiana Siders called the roll. A quorum was present.

Attorney Tiffany N. Sanders administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Zendrea Whitehead.

The 2026 Election of Officers was held.

Commissioner Morgan nominated Commissioner McGee for Chair. With no other nominations to come before the Board, a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

Commissioner McGee nominated Commissioner Morgan for Vice-Chair. With no other nominations to come before the Board, a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

Commissioner McGee nominated Commissioner Williams for Secretary/Treasurer. With no other nominations to come before the Board, a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

It was moved by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Williams to accept the 2026 Engagement Letter with the Law Firm of Tiffany N. Sanders. There being no further discussion. A roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

It was moved by Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Commissioner McGee to accept the 2026 Engagement Letter with Knight Masden, CPAs. There being no further discussion. A roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.**

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve the Executive Director's Employment Contract.

A discussion was held regarding Commissioner Williams substitute motion that the Board initiate the Executive Director evaluation and contract review process prior to consideration of any new contract given that the current contract remains in effect through February.

Motion was moved by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead. There being no further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Williams to open public hearing regarding the proposed GAEDA 2026 Operating and Capital Budget. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no public comments, a motion was made to close public hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

The board heard a presentation from Accountant, John Theriot of Knight Masden, CPAs, regarding the Proposed 2026 Budget. A discussion was held.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Commissioner McGee to approve and adopt the Public Records Request Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Williams to approve December 2025 Consent Agenda. There being no public comments, motion passed unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Whitehead and seconded by Commissioner McGee to add to the agenda October 2025 Meeting Minutes. There being no public comments, motion passes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve October 2025 Meeting Minutes. There being no public comments, motion passes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Alexandria Museum of Art in an amount not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the 2026 Exhibition Series. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: No**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: No**

#### **Motion failed by a vote of (2-2)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Rapides Symphony Orchestra in an amount not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the 2026 Concert Series. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: No**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

#### **Motion failed by a vote of (3-1)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Commissioner Williams to approve a grant request from the Louisiana Department of Veterans of Foreign Wars in an amount not to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to assist with meals for the VFW Mid-Winter Conference to be held January 22-25, 2026, at the Hotel Bentley. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Morgan to approve a grant request from the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons in an amount not to exceed Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) to assist with meals, advertising & marketing for the Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons to be held February 26-March 1, 2026, at the Hotel Bentley. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitehead and seconded by Commissioner McGee to approve a grant request from the Louisiana State University (LSUA) in an amount not to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to assist with meals, advertising & marketing for the Red River Athletic Conference Basketball Tournament to be held February 27-March 1, 2026, at the Laborde Earls Coliseum. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a grant request from the Louisiana State University (LSUA) in an amount not to exceed One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing

for the NAIA Men's Basketball Tournament to be held March 12-14, 2026, at Laborde Earls Coliseum. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Morgan to approve a grant request from the Louisiana State University (LSUA) in an amount not to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing for the LSUA Tennis Tournament to be held April 9-12, 2026, at the City of Alexandria Tennis Courts & Aquatics Club Tennis Courts. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a grant request from the Manna House in an amount not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing for the AM Pro Tour Golf Tournament to be held on April 13-18, 2026, at Link on the Bayou. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a grant request from the Louisiana Taxidermists Association in an amount not to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing for the Louisiana Taxidermists Convention to be held on May 14-17, 2026, at the Randolph Riverfront. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**

- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Morgan to approve a grant request from the Louisiana Department of Veterans of Foreign Wars in an amount not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to assist with meals for the VFW State Convention to be held June 18-21, 2026, at the Randolph Riverfront Center. A discussion was held and a roll call was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a grant request from the United Educational Missionary Baptist Association (UEMBA) in an amount not to exceed Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing for the NBCA Great Commission Church Summit to be held February 23-25, 2026, at the Holiday Inn Downtown and Randolph Riverfront Center.

A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Morgan to amend the motion by requesting that the amount of the Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) to be increased to the original amount Twenty-Five Hundred (\$2,500) seconded by Commissioner McGee. A discussion was held and a roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Whitehead and seconded by Commissioner Morgan to approve a grant request from Friends of Bringhurst in an amount not to exceed Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing for the 2026 Bayou Rapides Invitational to be held March 21-22, 2026, at Links on the Bayou. There being no further comments, a roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

### **Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a cooperative endeavor agreement with the Central Louisiana Juneteenth Association in an amount not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to assist with meals, advertising, and marketing for the 2026 Juneteenth Celebration to be held June & October 2026 throughout Alexandria, Louisiana. There being no further comments, a roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

### **Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Commissioner McGee to approve a grant request from the Grand Lodge of Louisiana F&AM in an amount not to exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to assist with meals, for the 215<sup>th</sup> Annual Grand Lodge Session to be held April 17-19, 2026, at the Randolph Riverfront Center. There being no further comments, a roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

### **Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead to approve a grant request from the St. Matthews Baptist Church in an amount not to exceed Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) to assist with meals, advertising and marketing for the program “An Evening of Spirituals” to be held February 12, 2026. There being no further comments, a roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

### **Motion passed unanimously (4-0)**

### **Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner McGee welcomed Commissioner Whitehead to the Board, expressed appreciation for her nomination, and stated that he looks forward to working with her.

## **Executive Director Comments**

Executive Director, Angela Varnado, also welcomed Commissioner Whitehead and expressed appreciation and stated that she looks forward to working with her. She expressed her commitment to continuing the legacy of GAEDA while bringing her own leadership approach to the role.

## **Motion from the Floor**

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and second by Commissioner Whitehead to add the item to the agenda, requested by Commissioner Williams.

Commissioner Williams motion that GAEDA affirms its expanding role in long-term economic development, beyond event support and adopt workforce retention, neighborhood revitalization, and small business development as its priority focused for the upcoming year of 2026.

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee and seconded by Commissioner Whitehead. A roll call vote was as follows:

- **Commissioner McGee: Yes**
- **Commissioner Williams: Yes**
- **Commissioner Morgan: Yes**
- **Commissioner Whitehead: Yes**

**There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.**

## **Legal Counsel Comments**

Attorney Tiffany Sanders advised that all Board Commissioners are required to complete their annual ethics training for the year 2025 and encouraged commissioners to contact her for any additional information.

## **Public Comments**

Catherine Pears expressed appreciation for the new direction of GAEDA and commented on its potential long-term impact on the community.

Jay Scott expressed appreciation for the direction the Board is taking and encouraged continued collaboration in the future.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

