

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

Minutes: Meeting of Monday, March 24, 2025

Present: Dr. Curtis Lewis, Chair; Mr. Steven McGee, Vice-Chair; Rev. Earl Williams Jr.,
Mr. Ronald Morgan

Absent: Mr. John Carroll, Mr. Chris Patel, Mr. John Callis

The special call meeting of the Greater Alexandria Economic Development Authority was called to order by Commissioner Lewis at 3:36 p.m. Executive Director, Angela Varnado, called the roll. A quorum was present.

Commissioner McGee moved to approve the Administrative Assistant position description, with a second by Commissioner Morgan. Following discussion and with no further comments, the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McGee moved to authorize the Executive Director to hire a full-time Administrative Assistant. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morgan. After discussion and with no additional comments, the motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner McGee moved, and Commissioner Williams seconded, approval of a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Explore Alexandria/Pineville for an amount not to exceed \$15,000 for meals and marketing/advertising, and \$5,000 for fireworks for the Louisiana Future Farmers of America (FFA) Conference scheduled for June 2-5, 2025. Following discussion, the roll call vote was as follows:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
 - Commissioner McGee: Yes
 - Commissioner Williams: Yes
 - Commissioner Morgan: Yes
 - Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
- The motion carried with four votes in favor.

Commissioner McGee moved to approve a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Central Louisiana Regional Chamber of Commerce for an amount not to exceed \$5,500 to support its 2025 programs. Commissioner Williams seconded. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
 - Commissioner McGee: Yes
 - Commissioner Williams: Yes
 - Commissioner Morgan: Yes
 - Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
- The motion carried with four votes in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve a grant request for Kent Plantation House in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 for advertising and marketing of the Le Tour De Bayou event scheduled for September 19-20, 2025. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
 - Commissioner McGee: Yes
 - Commissioner Williams: Yes
 - Commissioner Morgan: Yes
 - Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
- The motion carried with four votes in favor.

Commissioner McGee moved, and Commissioner Williams seconded, approval of a grant request for Manna House not to exceed \$10,000 to support meals and advertising/marketing for the AM Pro Tour taking place April 2-5, 2025. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
 - Commissioner McGee: Yes
 - Commissioner Williams: Yes
 - Commissioner Morgan: Yes
 - Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
- The motion carried with four votes in favor.

Commissioner McGee moved, and Commissioner Morgan seconded, approval of a grant request from the Louisiana Department of Veterans of Foreign Wars in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 to support its State Convention scheduled for June 26-29, 2025. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
 - Commissioner McGee: Yes
 - Commissioner Williams: Yes
 - Commissioner Morgan: Yes
 - Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
- The motion carried with four votes in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve a grant request from the Grand Lodge of Louisiana F. & A.M. in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 for the 214th Annual Grand Lodge Session scheduled for April 25-28, 2025. Following discussion, the roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
- Commissioner McGee: Yes
- Commissioner Williams: Yes
- Commissioner Morgan: Yes

- Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
The motion carried with four votes in favor.

Commissioner McGee moved, and Commissioner Williams seconded, approval of a grant request from the Diocese of Alexandria not to exceed \$5,000 for the Genesis of Eve Women's Conference, "Be The One," to be held September 12-14, 2025. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
- Commissioner McGee: Yes
- Commissioner Williams: Yes
- Commissioner Morgan: Yes
- Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
The motion carried with four votes in favor.

Commissioner McGee moved to approve a grant request from the Kappa Psi Southwestern Province for an amount not to exceed \$10,000 to support the Kappa Alpha Psi Southwestern Province Membership Training Academy, scheduled for April 4-6, 2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
- Commissioner McGee: Yes
- Commissioner Williams: Yes
- Commissioner Morgan: Yes
- Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
The motion carried with four votes in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner McGee, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve a grant request from the Knights of Columbus for an amount not to exceed \$10,000 in support of the State Convention scheduled for May 2-4, 2025. The roll call vote was:

- Commissioner Lewis: Yes
- Commissioner McGee: Yes
- Commissioner Williams: Yes
- Commissioner Morgan: Yes
- Commissioners Carroll, Patel, and Callis: Absent
The motion carried with four votes in favor.

Executive Director's Comments

Executive Director Angela Varnado thanked the board for approving full-time staffing and expressed appreciation to the grantees. She mentioned the need for a future meeting to evaluate the direction of GAEDA's grant program, particularly in light of its ongoing relationship with the City of Alexandria. She indicated that legal counsel would continue to review the matter.

Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner McGee provided insight into GAEDA's ordinance and mission, highlighting its significance to the residents of Alexandria.

Public Comments

Mr. Jay Scott expressed gratitude to the board for their decision to move forward in collaboration with the City.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.