



April 7th, 2026 @ 9AM

Golden Isles Development Authority (GIDA) Board Room

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

BILL DAWSON
DAREN PIETSCH
WALTER RAFOLSKI
GREER ANDERSON
RICHARD NIXON

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

RYAN MOORE, STAFF
SHERRI PRUITT, STAFF
MCKENZIE PADGETT, STAFF
JOAN HEARN, STAFF
REES SUMERFORD, COUNSEL
RALPH STAFFINS, BRUNSWICK-GOLDEN ISLES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ROB BURR, GCAC
LORI PEACOCK, GOLDEN ISLES GOURMET POPCORN
MATHEW CARBO, RECOVERY SOLUTION WORLDWIDE (RSW)
TAYLOR HALEY, SAINT SIMONS ISLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
ANDE NOKTES, LUCAS CENTER
PRYCE MAY, LUCASE CENTER
BRIAN WEESE, GICCA
PAUL CHRISTIAN, ROBERTS CIVIL ENGINEERING

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bill Dawson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Darren Pietsch gave an invocation and led Pledge of Allegiance.

ACCEPT AGENDA

A MOTION was made by Darren Pietsch, seconded by Walter Rafolski, and passed unanimously to accept agenda as presented. The MOTION carried unanimously: 5-0.

WELCOME & RECOGNIZE GUESTS

Chairman Bill Dawson welcomed guests.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Bill Dawson invited public comments.

CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS

- **Board Member Advertisement**

Advertisement Period: April 17 – May 1, 2026, Ryan confirmed that the public notice for board member applications will run during this window.

Application Buffer: Additional two weeks - After the advertisement closes on May 1, the Authority will allow **two extra weeks** for applications to be submitted.

Next Steps: Applicant meetings - Once the extended application period ends, the Authority will begin scheduling meetings with all applicants.

- **Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee for the interviews will be selected by Chairman Bill Dawson.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Nixon and seconded by Walter Rafolski to approve March 17th, 2026, Minutes as presented. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

FINANCIALS

Approve February Financials

Joan Hearn reported that February was a relatively quiet month financially, with no significant items to note.

A **MOTION** was made by Walter Rafolski and seconded by Daren Pietsch to approve February 2026 financials as presented. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration for Share the Future Grant for Golden Isles Gourmet Popcorn (GIGP)

Sherri Pruitt reported that the GIGP is pursuing a Share the Future grant in the amount of \$10,000, matched by GIDA dollar-for-dollar. The proposed grant would fund the purchase of a fully automated dispensing vending machine with cashless credit capability. Sherri noted that increasing business demand and ongoing challenges in hiring make the additional machine an important step in maintaining productivity and supporting business expansion.

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Nixon and seconded by Walter Rafolski to approve the Share the Future grant in an amount up to \$10,000, dollar-for-dollar, from GIDA as presented. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

Consideration for Share the Future Grant for Recovery Solutions Worldwide (RSW)

Sherri Pruitt reported that RSW is pursuing a Share the Future grant in the amount of \$20,000, matched by GIDA dollar-for-dollar. The proposed grant would support the purchase of equipment needed to meet steadily increasing business demands. Sherri noted that RSW continues to expand its footprint within the Golden Isles business community and has proven to be a significant benefit to the region.

A **MOTION** was made by Walter Rafolski and seconded by Richard Nixon to approve the Share the Future grant in an amount up to \$20,000, dollar-for-dollar, from GIDA as presented. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

Lucas Center Micro Lending Partnership

Ryan Moore provided an update on the Elevate Glynn Microloan Program and the Lucas Center Partnership. Ryan noted that the partnership between the Lucas Center and GIDA.

A **MOTION** was made by Walter Rafolski and seconded by Richard Nixon to approve the Lucas Center Micro Lending Partnership, as presented and subject to legal review. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

Saint Simons Christian School Bond Request

Rees Sumerford reported on the request from Saint Simons Christian School for a \$9 million bond to construct a new facility on Saint Simons Island. Rees recommended adoption of the resolution as presented.

A **MOTION** was made by Walter Rafolski and seconded by Richard Nixon to approve the Saint Simons Christian School Bond request, as presented and subject to legal review. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

UPDATES

PRESIDENT'S INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

NEW BUSINESS ATTRACTION

Project Update

McKenzie Padget delivered the quarterly update and noted that the Authority is managing 22 active projects. Each project is categorized as mid or large in scope, reflecting a consistently robust workload.

Georgia International Trade Conference

McKenzie Padgett reported that the Annual Georgia International Trade Conference at Sea Island is scheduled for the week of April 27. The Authority will host a dinner for 26 attendees, with Pat Wilson participating along with executive leadership, site selectors, and project managers. More to come.

Site Selector Guild Spring Conference

Ryan Moore reported that, as a member of the Southeast Georgia Alliance (SEGA), the Authority will be able to participate alongside the Alliance at this year's annual conference in Savannah. This engagement will provide opportunities to meet with site selectors and other key stakeholders, strengthening regional visibility and collaboration. Ryan also noted that sessions focused on aerospace and defense will be a top priority on this year's agenda.

GEDA Spring Workshop

Ryan Moore also reported that the Authority will attend the GEDA Spring Workshop, which will be held in Savannah this year. More to come.

EXISTING INDUSTRIES

Amazon Ribbon Cutting

McKenzie Padgett reported that the Authority is preparing for Amazon's ribbon-cutting ceremony, and calendar invitations will be sent out soon. The Authority is coordinating with the Chamber to finalize the date of April 20th

Wings of Grace Share the Future Video

Sherry Pruitt shared the Share the Future video with the group, highlighting Wings of Grace, which received a grant to help subsidize tuition costs for students who would otherwise be unable to afford aviation maintenance training.

WORKFORCE

Strategy Update - Brian Weese, GICCA

Brian Weese provided updates on several workforce and talent-development initiatives, including This Girl Can, the Be Pro Be Proud program, Connect Glynn, work-based learning efforts, Keep Glynn Running, and current employment opportunities. He also announced that Signing Day for graduating students will be held on May 5th from 9:00-11:00 a.m., with more than 500 attendees expected.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Update – Ande Noktes, Lucas Center

Ande Noktes reported her excitement about the progress of the micro-lending program. She announced that the student pitch competition will take place on April 20th for the fourth consecutive year, with 1,270 student entrepreneurs participating. She also noted that the main pitch competition event will be held on May 4th and will run throughout the day, with \$15,000 in grant funding to be awarded.

MARKETING

Marketing Update

McKenzie Padgett presented an overview of the monthly activity summary for the Board and attendees, noting that February activity levels remained steady.

Business Attraction Campaign

McKenzie Padgett reported that the Business Attraction Campaign launched in March and will run through the end of May. Additional updates will be provided as the campaign progresses.

Georgia Logistics Summit

McKenzie Padgett reported that the Authority will be participating in the event, with consultant meetings already scheduled. Additional details will be shared as planning continues.

Community Leader Roundtable

Sherri Pruitt reported on the Quarterly Leader Roundtable, noting that the session featured a series of concise 3- to 5-minute updates from community leaders. She emphasized that the discussion was highly informative and continued to serve as a valuable forum for collaboration across the region.

GCAC

Informational Items reported by Rob Burr:

- The fire station ceremony will take place soon, with additional details forthcoming.
- Bids have gone out for the SSI infrastructure project, with more updates to follow.
- The airfield safety project is well underway at the SSI Airport.
- The Honor Flight event, held in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the United States, will be scheduled for June 13th this year.
- The military operation request was formally denied; however, a second submission has been filed, and further updates are expected as the process continues.

IMPORTANT DATES

- GIDA Board Meeting – Tuesday, May 5th, 2026, at 9am at 209 Gloucester Street, Suite 211, Brunswick, GA 31520

CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session - Real Estate OCGA Section §50-14-3(b)(1)(B)

Closed Session – Pending or Potential Litigation OCGA Section §50-14-2

Personnel OCGA Section §50-14-2 (b)(2)

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Nixon and seconded by Daren Pietsch to enter into Closed Session to discuss Real Estate, Pending or Potential Litigation, Personnel. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

A **MOTION** was made by Greer Anderson and seconded Daren Pietsch to return to Open Session. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

Returned to Open Session

A **MOTION** was made by Walter Rafolski and seconded by Greer Anderson to approve the Scojet agreement as presented and subject to legal review. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

A **MOTION** was made by Walter Rafolski and seconded by Greer Anderson to approve the Richland Rum agreement, as presented and subject to legal review. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0.

ADJOURN

A **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Daren Pietsch and seconded by Richard Nixon. The **MOTION** carried unanimously: 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

Chairman Bill Dawson

Attest:

Sherri Pruitt

Director of BR&E / Golden Isles Development Authority