



Downtown Dahlonega Minutes

August 04, 2022, 8:30 AM

McCullough Council Chambers – City Hall

Vision Statement

Downtown Dahlonega will retain its role as the heart of the region and the center for community and economic development. It will have an inviting appearance, highlighted by historic architecture. It will enhance the civic, cultural, and economic vitality of the entire community.

Mission Statement

The purpose of Downtown Dahlonega is to stimulate and sustain economic development in downtown area by encouraging cooperation and building leadership; by advancing a positive image of downtown and promoting it as an exciting place to live, shop, and invest; by sustaining and improving the appearance of downtown; and by strengthening and expanding the economic base of downtown.

PRESENT

Chair Amy Thrailkill

Vice Chair Joel Cordle

Board Member Wendi Huguley

Board Member A.C. Moore

Board Member Donna Logan

ABSENT

Board Member Ryan Puckett

Board Member Tony Owens

Call to Order

Chair Thrailkill called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Motion made by Board Member Moore, Seconded by Vice Chair Cordle.

Voting Yea: Chair Thrailkill, Vice Chair Cordle, Board Member Moore, Board Member Huguley, Board Member Logan

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

1. Downtown Dahlonega Meeting Minutes June 2, 2022

Danna Foster, Assistant City Clerk

Chair Thrailkill called for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion made by Board Member Huguley, Seconded by Board Member Moore.

Voting Yea: Vice Chair Cordle, Board Member Moore, Board Member Huguley, Board Member Logan

Promotion

- a. Halloween 2022 – August 2022
Skyler Alexander, Project Coordinator

Coordinator Alexander proposed the Halloween movie night to the DDBA, and they did not seem to support the idea. The current plan is to allow the event to happen around town. Chief Albert will close the streets. Those who want to participate can and they can choose not to.

Director Csukas reminded the board the City used to buy candy and give it out. She asked the board if they wanted the City to buy candy.

The Board did not support that. Coordinator Alexander stated they have offered to get candy donations, and the offer was declined.

The board discussed past Halloween events, their role over the next two years, and what feedback they would need to consider moving forward. Concerns were the day of the week Trick or Treating fell, the cost of candy, thoughts of changes in programming such as movies, and promotional items for adults to bring people back.

b. Dahlenega Selfie Spot Trail – August 2022

Skyler Alexander, Project Coordinator

Coordinator Alexander explained the Selfie Trail was spots in the City to take photos. She picked a few spots to begin, and two other businesses reached out, making nine spots on the trail now. She suggested stickers identifying the spots and a brochure about the trail.

The board discussed the costs. Manager Alexander explained the map in the packet.

Motion made by Board Member Moore, Seconded by Vice Chair Cordle.

Voting Yea: Vice Chair Cordle, Board Member Moore, Board Member Huguley, Board Member Logan

Design

a. Mural Grant Proposal

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Manager

Manager Alexander stated that Kim Strum of Gateway Antiques had expressed interest in getting a mural on the side of her building. She has discussed with John Christian of the Georgia Mural Trail Program who has been extremely helpful in discussing grant funding and application. The Georgia Council for the Arts Application is included in the packet. Ms. Strum and Manager Alexander brought the information to the Historic Preservation Committee, who were on board and very supportive.

The Historic Preservation Committee offered to write a letter of support when the final application is submitted, and Ms. Strum provided a few ideas for design. She would like to focus on the natural beauty of North Georgia and Dahlenega specifically. There is an additional Appalachian Trail Mural program we could qualify for also. We have support from HPC and funding options. What are your thoughts on supporting this and applying for grants on behalf of Ms. Strum?

Chair Thrailkill asked if she was looking for a motion to apply. Manager Alexander indicated yes. Chair Thrailkill asked for a motion.

Motion made by Board Member Logan to approve, Seconded by Board Member Moore. Voting Yea: Vice Chair Cordle, Board Member Moore, Board Member Huguley, Board Member Logan

Discussion continued about murals and drawing traffic to the downtown corridor. The board also discussed the façade grant.

Economic Vitality

a. 147 N. Park Street Committee Report

Mary Csukas, DDA Director

Chair Thrailkill shared the role of the subcommittee to discuss and meet about the old kindergarten property and to bring a plan together cohesively.

Director Csukas stated it was beneficial to hear from the council. She indicated the ideas were to sell or develop for mixed-use, with or without a parking garage. The Parking committee meets quarterly. Director Csukas indicated there were many proposals, a need for parking, and a decision on how many levels a building should be. Discussion ensued about parking and the University lot. This committee meets on August 17th.

Organization

a. Downtown Database

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Manager

Manager Alexander referred to the property list in the packet. Discussion ensued about various businesses in transition. There was some discussion of the Alcohol Ordinances. Councilmember Reagin from the audience suggested the implementation of the EDGE program which could be helpful to businesses in moving through the processes required by the City. Chamber Director Nichols discussed some of the businesses that have been purchased and leased. Those businesses are working through state and local alcohol licensing rules. Director Csukas suggested those who want something different than the Ordinances need to come to Council and Council know their needs.

b. Façade Grant Updates

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Manager

Manager Alexander announced Canopy and the Roots and. El Jimador have applied for and will be awarded Façade Grants.

Director Csukas asked the Board if they wanted to be notified outside of the fact of the application in the process of the Façade grant. The Board previously approved to have the Façade grant be raised to \$5000 and the board agreed with moving forward with internal approval of the grants.

c. Parking Solutions Committee Report

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Manager

The parking solutions committee met last week. Board member Moore and Councilmember Larson are part of the committee. The discussion included more permanent signage and the possible use of thermoplastic signage which adheres to the asphalt. Another idea was a shuttle from the UNG Parking deck and drop-off points for children and the elderly at the loading zones in town. Also, employee parking off the square with a shuttle for safety for late-night parking was part of the discussion.

d. Fundraising Committee

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Manager

Manager Alexander discussed fundraising for the 4th of July and sponsors for movie nights. July 4th costs \$30,000 and the date will come quickly. Fundraising should begin soon and may help with community buy-in. Board Member Logan suggested selling

sponsorships at the Movie Nights where the business is shown as a sponsor prior to the movie. Lumpkin Literacy is looking to be a sponsor for the movies. It was suggested that Board member Owens might be a good resource for targeting fundraising.

e. Financials

Allison Martin, Finance Director

No discussion

Partner Agencies

1. City of Dahlonega- Councilmember Reagin discussed information he learned at the most recent conference- information collected from the local utility companies regarding the demographics of people who visit Dahlonega. This information can be provided at no cost.
2. University of North Georgia- no additional updates
3. Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Director Nichols shared some of the upcoming events. Director Sam McDuffie let the board know there were multiple travel rider events coming through town and they have been using the tracking system Councilmember Readin spoke of, which only tracks Apple phones unless their tracker has been turned off. The average person in Dahlonega is spending \$71/day.
4. Historic Preservation Commission
Chair Thrailkill asked for an update on the Head House.
Director Csukas said the soft date is September 23rd or 24th. The Mayor is asking for a date for the Grand Opening at the Work Session. Board Member Cordle suggested we start thinking about decorating for Old Fashioned Christmas.
5. Planning & Zoning Commission
6. Downtown Dahlonega Business Association
Director Nichols indicated the DDBA were already head-deep in Christmas.

Director Csukas handed out a flyer for National Economic Development online classes. Board Member Cordle asked for the Downtown Development Conference opportunities and Manager Alexander shared the schedule and let board members know to reach out if they didn't have the information.

Adjourn

Chair Thrailkill made a motion to adjourn at 9:41 am.

Motion made by Board Member Huguley, Seconded by Board Member Moore.

Voting Yea: Vice Chair Cordle, Board Member Moore, Board Member Huguley, Board Member Logan