



Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority/Main Street Program Meeting Minutes

June 08, 2023 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

Board Member Deb Rowe

Board Member Awtrey Moore

Board Member Ryan Puckett

Board Member Donna Logan

Call to Order

Chair Thrailkill called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Board Member Logan, Seconded by Board Member Puckett

Voting Yea: Board Member Moore, Board Member Rowe

Approval of Minutes

1. Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority & Main Street Program Meeting Minutes, May 4, 2023
2. Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority & Main Street Program Special Called Meeting Minutes, May 25, 2023

The board moved to approve both meeting minutes at the next regular meeting.

Promotion

- a. Downtown Dollars Presentation
Skyler Alexander, Main Street Manager

Manager Alexander presented a program opportunity to provide downtown gift certificate options to locals and visitors. It would be provided through an online platform called Yiftee, which would manage the purchasing and distribution of a digital e-gift card that could be used at

any participating business downtown. The board asked for more clarification on how the card charges would affect the business owners, as it would be processed just like a credit card. Manager Alexander said she would get more information and report to the board.

b. Promotion Work Plan Items Update

Skyler Alexander, Main Street Manager

Manager Alexander reported that she created a private Facebook page to keep merchants updated on projects and urgent messages regarding downtown.

Economic Vitality

a. Economic Vitality Work Plan Items Update

Ariel Alexander, DDA Director

Director Alexander reported that DDA staff has partnered with the tourism staff, local artists, and business owners to form a “Bears on the Square” bronze statue committee. This group is working on pricing, mapping, and other logistics to get this program up and running. She also reported that the “Friendly Faces” Ambassador team had their first meeting and there are 11 participants so far. They will go on a walking tour of downtown to learn the area better before they go out and begin their duties. Chair Thrailkill asked if they would go out on random days and not necessarily associated with events, and Director Alexander said yes. She also reported that staff would be purchasing some yard games to place downtown using the money that was donated by the UNG Alumni Association for the 4th of July celebration. 4th of July planning is progressing as expected and staff is looking forward to the celebration.

Organization

a. Organization Work Plan Items Update

Ariel Alexander, DDA Director

Director Alexander reported that the assistant that they hired has taken over all social media responsibilities and is doing a fantastic job. Board Member Logan asked for an update on the Farmers Market and staff reported that it was doing very well.

b. Head House Rental Project

Ariel Alexander, DDA Director

Board Member Thrailkill stated that there were two applications still active for the space. Director Alexander stated that she had provided detailed explanations from both tenants to the board via email, addressing the questions that they posed at the last special called meeting. Board Member Puckett asked if the intention for the space was to be more of an incubator or as a space for a more long-term tenant. Director Alexander said she did not think an incubator space was the intention, but the lease is currently for three years, so if for some reason the board wanted to seek a new tenant they could. Director Alexander stated that there was a third applicant that was very interested in the space and was present at the meeting. She introduced D.J. Derosiers. Mr. Derosiers asked if he could share his plans for the space with the board as his information was not relayed by the realtor. Chair Thrailkill welcomed him to speak. Mr. Derosiers stated that he and his business partners were purchasing the 27 on Park Hotel, and if they were selected as the tenant they would use the space as concierge for the hotel, and might eventually add some amenities and hospitality options there as well. This would allow them to better utilize the space they have across the street to expand restaurant service and event venue space. Board Member Moore asked if he would need to make any renovations to the space, and Mr. Derosiers said no. Board Member Rowe asked for the opportunity to score Mr.

Derosiers proposal with the point system and reassess. Chair Thrailkill stated that they would meet again once they have all of Mr. Derosier's information in writing and then the board will make a final selection.

c. Financials

Chair Thrailkill asked for questions regarding the financial reports.

Board Member Logan motioned to accept the report as presented. Board Member Moore Seconded.

Voting Yea: Board Member Rowe, Board Member Puckett

d. July Meeting and Meeting Times

Amy Thrailkill, Chair

Chair Thrailkill asked the board for a motion to cancel the July regular meeting and also asked for a discussion on whether the meeting time was convenient for all board members. The board agreed that 8:30 a.m. worked best for them and no change needs to be made.

Board Member Moore motioned to cancel the regular July meeting. Seconded by Board Member Rowe.

Voting Yea: Board Member Puckett, Board Member Logan

Partner Agencies

1. City of Dahlonega

City Manager Allison Martin stated the Development Authority of Lumpkin County will be hosting the groundbreaking for their broadband project on June 29th and the governor will be present. The Hancock Park dumpster pad enclosure project continues, and the East Main Street Utilities project will kick off July 10th. City Public Works staff are working with DDA staff to educate business owners and residents. presented a preliminary park plan for 147 N. Park Street. It included a covered pavilion for the farmers market and other outdoor events, a bike track for children, and several green space areas. It also included a basketball and pickleball court in the lower lot. The board shared interest in the plan. Board Member Rowe stated that this was one of the few proposals that truly sparked her interest. Chair Thrailkill expressed her appreciation for the green space, as the city is seeing and will continue to see more development in other areas. City Manager Martin said that she would bring this plan to the City Council at their next meeting.

2. University of North Georgia

No reports from the University of North Georgia.

3. Chamber of Commerce/Tourism

No reports from the Tourism staff. Chamber Director Robb Nichols shared that Leadership Lumpkin County applications are open until mid-July.

4. Historic Preservation Commission

No reports from the Historic Preservation Commission.

5. Planning & Zoning Commission

City Manager Martin shared that there is a developer looking to develop a large tract of land zoned R-1 for single-family housing.

6. Downtown Dahlonega Business Association

No reports from the Downtown Dahlonega Business Association. Manager Alexander shared that the new DDBA president will preside over their August meeting.

Design

a. Mural Project Work Session

Ariel Alexander, DDA Director

The board discussed opportunities for the mural project downtown. Director Alexander reported that she is working with the art department at the University of North Georgia to facilitate a mural class, where the DDA would pay for the materials and an upper-level college class would execute the design and painting of the mural downtown. The board was supportive of this idea and indicated that they would support this program for multiple projects.

Adjourn

Chair Thrailkill called for a motion to adjourn at 9:35 a.m.

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

Voting Yea: Board Member Puckett, Board Member Logan