



Downtown Dahlonega Minutes

June 02, 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 the 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

Vice-Chair Joel Cordle
Board Member Ryan Puckett
Board Member Tony Owens
Board Member A.C. Moore

ABSENT

Chair Amy Thrailkill
Board Member Huguley
Board Member Logan

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Cordle called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. and introduced guests in attendance, Jennifer Ramsey from the Dahlonega Nugget, George Albert, Chief of Police, C C Felty from the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber & Visitors Bureau, Jessica Worthington, State Director of Georgia Main Street Office, Ellen Hill- Compliance Director - Main Street Office, Elizabeth Elliott- Downtown Preservation- Main Street Office. He thanked the Main Street Team for visiting this morning.

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

1. Dahlonega Downtown Meeting Minutes May 5, 2022

Danna Foster, Assistant City Clerk

Vice-Chair Cordle called for a motion

Motion made by Board Member Moore, Board Member Puckett announced an error in the minutes in the section of Approval of the Minutes, and with that correction, he

would Second the motion

Voting Yea: Board Member Puckett, Board Member Owens, Board Member Moore

Promotion

a. Programs Report – May 2022

Skyler Alexander, Downtown Coordinator

Coordinator Alexander reviewed her report highlights with the Board. She asked for support for the 4th of July with judges and announcers.

Organization

a. Organization Projects Report – May 2022

Ariel Alexander, Interim Main Street Manager

Interim Manager Alexander indicated she has been working closely with Bobbi Larson who is connecting her with other departments at UNG and resources. She is also collecting history on the Head House for a grand opening event.

Mayor Taylor arrived at 8:45 a.m.

Board Member Owens offered photos of his grandfather at the Head House from the 1930s when it was a boarding house for the Cadets. Interim Manager Alexander also added the collaboration of a shared calendar with other agencies. She shared the EDGE program proposal in her report. Mayor Taylor indicated that this was a project worth pursuing.

b. Downtown Database

Ariel Alexander, Interim Main Street Manager

Interim Manager Alexander referenced the database in the package. Board Members discussed various addresses.

Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce Director Robb Nichols joined the audience.

c. Strategic Work Plan Six Month Update

Ariel Alexander, Interim Main Street Manager

Vice-Chair Cordle reminded the board of the planning retreat and indicated this was a six-month checkup to see where the tasks were aligned. Interim Manager Alexander indicated she was proud of the plan with most tasks started and many completed already.

Director Csukas stated this is an update to see where we are going in this one to two-year plan. Benches and trashcans are on back order for greenspaces. Green areas have been identified and Mark is working with the property owners of those areas not owned by the City.

Interim Manager Alexander announced to be on the lookout for an invitation for a walk about with multiple groups to be scheduled for August or September in the downtown area for the purpose of collaboration.

Vice-Chair Cordle reemphasized the focus was on community input and historic preservation.

Mayor Taylor shared she was speaking at Dahlonga Women's Club tonight, and Downtown Dahlonga Business Association next week DDBA, where she planned to mention façade grants and sprinkler systems which are important to maintaining downtown.

d. Financials

Allison Martin, Finance Director

Director Csukas indicated we were on track and the big dollar amounts for the 4th of July will be coming up.

e. Department of Community Affairs: Designation Discussion

Vice-Chair Cordle introduced the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Main Street Program, Office of Downtown Development, Director Jessica Worthington:

Director Worthington stated she was present to be a resource. She reminded those present that Dahlonega had been designated as a Great American Main Street Community by the National Main Street Center in 2016. She explained the state designations and the change to the Classic designation from GEMS which are reviewed every 3 years. She felt like transition in several areas changed the course of direction of the city and stable, consistent leadership, on all levels with a unified vision is critical to success.

Mayor Taylor asked about the differences between our DDA and other DDA's in the state. She also expressed concerns across cities with understaffing. Director Worthington shared realistic expectations for the focus of the Main St/DDA program. She discussed being conservative with property management and looking at more ways to be self-sustaining. Mayor Taylor discussed the upcoming housing study and her vision for rezoning and adding homes to address the housing concerns. Director Worthington reminded the board of the need to have one vision and added the goal of the Main Street program is to help revitalize and restore the downtown corridors. Additional discussion was had about events, development, and working together with businesses and agencies in a unified vision, remembering the role the University plays in the community. Mayor Taylor thanked Director Worthington for coming and sharing her thoughts with the board. Thanks were given to Ariel Alexander and Skyler Alexander for their relationship with the businesses and their work.

Partner Agencies

1. City of Dahlonega

Mayor Taylor announced upcoming projects such as the housing study, and engineering for Park Street infrastructure which will take 2-3 years. She reminded those present of the passing of the Distilled Spirits Ordinance and the search for a new City Manager.

2. University of North Georgia

There was no UNG presence.

3. Chamber of Commerce/Tourism

Director Robb Nichols stated he was excited about the new direction he was hearing about. He offered his experience saying he crafted a mission statement to do less, better.

C. C. Felty of Dahlonega- Lumpkin Tourism announced a tv partnership with streaming tv for commercials about Dahlonega which will run for 5 months. She added additional marketing campaigns that will include a sweet treat blog, filming an additional spring commercial, upcoming filming for Fork in the Road on PBS at Dahlonega Resort and Vineyard and Big Creek Distillery, as well as more 4th of July posts

4. Historic Preservation Commission

Director Csukas announced that Interim Manager Alexander had spearheaded bringing up the amount of the façade grants to \$5000 and there is an application in the process now. Vice-Chair Cordle indicated how important this program is to take care of the assets that we have.

5. Planning & Zoning Commission

Mayor Taylor mentioned a single-family housing zoning issue being presented and the Citywide Sidewalk Plan as the new items.

6. Downtown Dahlenega Business Association

Board Member Moore commented the upcoming meeting is next week and there was nothing to follow up on last month. He also added that he is hosting a restaurant group out of Atlanta today, Victory Entertainment, which owns 8 restaurants in various communities. One of the partners has already moved up here and they are very serious about locating a restaurant in the City or County. They are looking for input on what the community would like.

Vice-Chair Cordle invited Chief George Albert from the audience if he had anything to add. Chief added his staff was excited to be out there with a can-do attitude and they were ready to support everyone.

Adjourn

Vice-Chair Cordle called for a motion to adjourn at 10:05 a.m.

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

Voting Yea: Board Member Puckett, Board Member Owens, Board Member Moore