



Main Street Program / Downtown Development Authority Board Minutes

March 03, 2022, 8:30 AM

McCullough Council Chambers – City Hall

PRESENT

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

ABSENT

Board Member Wendi Huguley
Board Member Donna Logan

Call to Order

Chair Thrailkill called the meeting to order at 8:32 am

Approval of Agenda

Chair Thrailkill called to approve the agenda.

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

Voting Yea: Vice-Chair Cordle, Board Member Owens, Board Member Moore, Board Member Puckett

Approval of Minutes

1. Main Street/Downtown Development Authority Board Meeting Minutes February 3, 2022

Danna Foster, Assistant City Clerk

Chair Thrailkill called for a motion to approve the minutes.

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

Voting Yea: Vice-Chair Cordle, Board Member Owens, Board Member Moore, Board Member Puckett

Organization

- a. Final Work Plan Approval

Ariel Alexander, Interim Main Street Manager

Director Csukas congratulated Manager Alexander's job on this project and thanked Vice-Chair Cordle for mentoring Manager Alexander

Manager Alexander stated this was the same work plan they had previously seen; it just needed a formal vote to move forward.

Chair Thrailkill called for a motion to approve the minutes.

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

Voting Yea: Vice-Chair Cordle, Board Member Owens, Board Member Moore, Board Member Puckett

- b. Organization Projects Report – February 2022

Ariel Alexander, Interim Main Street Manager

Manager Alexander indicated the documents included in the packet were broken into staff-level projects and organization with the work plan. She is working on the budget, reviewing the fee schedule, reassessing the incentive applications to ensure the information is up to date, reviewing the Dahlenega stories plaques, and continuing working on the downtown database with available properties, existing businesses, and potential interest inquiries.

Director Csukas reminded the Board that the budget needed to be approved and then voted on by Council prior to working on the projects. She stated the board and staff should make sure they are not duplicating what they are doing. In the next month Director Csukas, Manager Alexander and Director Martin will meet to plan projects based on funding. She hopes to have the funding document to Council by April/May for approval.

c. Financials

Allison Martin, Finance Director

Director Csukas presented in Director Martin's absence.

Promotion

a. Promotion Projects Report

Skyler Alexander, Downtown Coordinator

Coordinator Alexander indicated she was beginning to reach out to businesses to participate in a promotional Mother's Day Crawl. She is reviewing previous files on walking tours, and beginning a mural discussion also. She added she was working on the schedule of bands for the First Friday Concerts in the Park, meeting with the Appalachian Jam coordinator and planning for the Farmers Market Open House, which is scheduled for March 23 at 5:30 pm. She is also working on quotes for new Farmers' Market signs.

Director Csukas stated that Coordinator Alexander is introducing our programs which affect downtown.

Manager Alexander explained that she and the mayor met with the farmers from last season to discuss what worked/didn't work and they will implement those suggestions this year. Vice-Chair Cordle stated that several years ago students with FFA programs were involved and Coordinator Alexander said she would reach out to them as well.

b. Upcoming Partner Events – March 2022

Skyler Alexander, Downtown Coordinator

The first Art in Park is this Saturday and will continue through the year, Bear on the Square is coming up in April, and the Arts and Wine Festival is in May.

Director Csukas indicated the city is assisting with festivals and everyone is participating in pre-event meetings for those to ensure all departments are involved in their respective roles.

Vice-Chair Cordle suggested Board Members share any information about events or specials downtown as soon as possible.

Design

a. Design Projects Report – February 2022

Mary Csukas, DDA Director

Director Csukas shared detail of the downtown area and discussed the best placement for benches, trash cans, and additional landscaping. She suggested just a few projects per year as there are 22 areas and reminded the Board that once a location is identified, permission will still be needed from the property owner.

Director Csukas, Manager Alexander, and the board discussed having a list of Contractors who have already completed revitalization work on the square and encouraging other contractors to participate, as all contractors are welcome. There could be contractors with specific restoration skills and the document could be a tool for all.

Economic Vitality

a. Economic Vitality Projects Report – February 2022

Mary Csukas, DDA Director

Director Csukas indicated there is a lot of talk about the 147 North Park Street property and there are a lot of ideas floating around. The mayor would like to make it a hot topic at the Council retreat and come back to this Authority with ideas. There was minimal discussion about ideas presented and Director Csukas is requesting Council discuss concrete ideas of what is desired at the Retreat.

Board Member Owens asked if, in the meantime, the lot could be self-pay parking, and generate some income. Discussion ensued between the Board and City Manager regarding other local Cities that were utilizing paid parking. Board Member Puckett indicated he had heard some discussion regarding disappointment there was no power source at the lot, as that would be a great spot for Food Trucks. Director Csukas stated she would work with City Engineer Buchanan. Discussion ensued regarding sightlines and rooftop restaurants in respect to development.

Partner Agencies

1. City of Dahlonega

City Manager Schmid notified the board that the Head House had been relocated on sight and suggested the Downtown Dahlonega board come through the property now and again when it becomes time to occupy for comparison. Manager Schmid discussed the Local Option Sales Tax and how it is broken down with City, County, State, and School Board. DDA's funding comes from the City so DDA has a key role. Discussion ensued regarding the changes in property values and the benefits to the City, County, and School Board. Downtown contributes to all of this and DDA plays a big role.

2. University of North Georgia – no representation

3. Chamber of Commerce/Tourism

Manager Alexander presented information from the Director of Tourism announcing the chocolate crawl through Monday, and stated they are also developing 2 digital marketing campaigns. They are working on their Snowbirds campaign and filming 2 commercials in the next two months as well as working towards a Virtual events Kiosk for information installed at the visitor's center.

4. Historic Preservation Commission- no representation

5. Planning & Zoning Commission-no representation
6. Downtown Dahlongega Business Association

Board Member Moore announced that the tourism staff and the DDBA are interested in moving the Miners on Main project forward and suggested that sponsorships could be implemented to cover the cost of development and installment. Vice-Chair Cordle suggested the figures be dignified and Coordinator Alexander stated she thought it would be a bear figure with a miner's outfit.

Chair Thrailkill offered that Board Member Huguley wanted to share that the University of North Georgia would be celebrating 150 years in January. Board Member Huguley and Manager Alexander will meet to collaborate.

Vice-Chair Cordle reminded the board about the Holly Theatre/ARC walkthrough the following day. He reiterated this was a very important and impressive appointment, with Federal, State, and Local representatives being here, so attendance is encouraged.

Adjourn

Chair Thrailkill called for Adjournment at 9:10 am

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

Voting Yea: Vice-Chair Cordle, Board Member Puckett, Board Member Owens, Board Member Moore