

CITY OF MONROE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MAY 11, 2023 – 8:00 A.M.

The Downtown Development Authority met for their regular meeting.

Those Present:	Lisa Reynolds Anderson	Chairman
	Meredith Malcom	Vice-Chairman
	Andrea Gray	Secretary
	Whit Holder	Board Member
	Wesley Sisk	Board Member
	Chris Collins	Board Member
	Myoshia Crawford	City Council Representative
	Lee Malcom	City Council Representative

Staff Present: Leigh Ann Aldridge, Beth Thompson, Beverly Harrison, Chris Bailey, Kaitlyn Stubbs, Sara Shropshire

Visitors:

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call

Chairman Anderson noted that all Committee Members were present. There was a quorum.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

a. April 13, 2023 Minutes

To remove Ross Bradley from being a Board Member.

To approve the minutes as amended.

*Motion by M. Malcom, seconded by Collin.
Passed Unanimously*

b. April 17, 2023 Minutes

To approve the minutes as presented.

*Motion by Collin, seconded by M. Malcom.
Passed Unanimously*

3. Approval of Financial Statements

a. March Financials

The Committee discussed whether line items with zero activity will come off at some point.

Ms. Beth Thompson explained that items cannot be removed, but she can exclude the items with no activity from the report. She will be closing the CVB account with Wells Fargo this week. The DDA account with Wells Fargo will have to stay open longer, due to the automated transactions going through the account.

The Committee discussed whether or not there should be an expiration date on the Downtown Dollars.

To approve the March 2023 Financials.

*Motion by Collin, seconded by Crawford.
Passed Unanimously*

II. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no public comments.

III. CITY UPDATE

Committee Member Lee Malcom stated she appreciates everything that the Downtown Development Authority did in support of the Alcohol Ordinance situation, and the argument letter read by Chairman Anderson was great. They can move forward with the Ordinance cleanup, and possibly include the expansion of the Entertainment District out to the Mill area.

Committee Member Meredith Malcom questioned whether the expansion would match the DDA District boundaries.

Committee Member Whit Holder stated the Walton Mill redevelopment is ongoing. Recruiting businesses can be difficult, because the businesses want to be inside the Entertainment District. He feels that expanding the Entertainment District to the DDA boundaries will be a big benefit for the ongoing redevelopment of the Mills.

Committee Member Chris Collin discussed the beautiful grounds and green spaces at the Mills, where people could walk around and enjoy those spaces. He thanked Council and Council Member Lee Malcom for standing up for their opinions.

Chairman Anderson thanked Committee Member Andrea Gray for putting their concerns into such a great letter. She thanked Council Member Lee Malcom and Council Member Myoshia Crawford for their support.

IV. COUNTY UPDATE

There was no update from the County.

V. COMMUNITY WORK PLAN & REPORTS

1. Downtown Design

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated the planters look beautiful. She discussed the meeting regarding parking that she and Ms. Sara Shropshire had with the Carl Vinson Institute. They have great ideas about branding and signage for the current parking. She explained they will need guidance on what the City wants done. Their idea is to connect more parking areas and improve the look of the lots; their goal is to make the areas visibly inviting. They will help the City to make the most of the current parking areas.

The Committee and Mr. Chris Bailey discussed signs and sign placement.

Committee Member Chris Collin requested for the City to take a look at the path between LR Burger and the Visitors Center to see if it is safe enough. The LR Burger staff parks at the Visitors Center and walks back and forth.

Mr. Chris Bailey stated he would get someone to check the path, and then get with Mr. Middlebrooks.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the pocket park planters. The consensus was to terminate the services for those planters, and to send a letter notifying about the termination.

2. Redevelopment Projects

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated Gwinnett Appliance has requested to extend their lease, because they need more time before their new lease is ready.

Mr. Chris Bailey explained the City will not be able to get started on the project until mid-July.

To extend the Gwinnett Appliance lease until the end of July.

*Motion by Collin, seconded by Holder.
Passed Unanimously*

The Committee and Mr. Chris Bailey discussed the Wayne Street Project details, lot design, and timeline. They also discussed the building next to Malcom and Malcom Realty.

Committee Member Meredith Malcom discussed the meeting with Mr. Bruce Verge concerning the water tower signage. The LED lights will be able to change colors for holidays and events. She is waiting for Mr. Verge to come back with the design, pricing, and the contribution amount from IMEC.

Committee Member Andrea Gray questioned whether the project will need to be bid out or whether it could be done as a sole source project.

Mr. Chris Bailey explained it could be done as a preference or donation project. Mr. Verge could donate the structure, and the install could be done under professional services.

The Committee discussed the time frame for the project and the possibility of raising funds for the remainder of the cost.

3. Entertainment Draws

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated that the First Friday Concert was a big success, with about 6,500 people. The Flower Festival will be on May 20.

Committee Member Chris Collin stated the concert was a great night. There were people everywhere, without any incidents.

The Committee discussed the possibility of using the Town Green for concerts this year and the logistics for when concerts are held there.

VI. PROGRAMS

1. Farmers Market

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated opening day for the Farmers Market was a huge success, with about 2,500 people and 60 vendors.

The Committee discussed a possible pay increase for the Market Manager, Audrey Fuller.

VII. FUNDING

1. Sponsorship

a. 2023 Sponsorship Update

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated the sponsorships are still coming in.

2. Façade Grants

There were no façade grants.

3. Community Event Grants

There were no community event grants.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

The Committee discussed the open position for a board member and possible suggestions for filling the position, which will be posted until filled.

Mr. Chris Bailey explained the position must be posted for a minimum of ten days.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the Main Street Reporting changes, education for the board members, and the DDA Reform.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Next Meeting – June 8, 2023 at 8:00 am at City Hall

The Committee discussed possible dates for the Summer Retreat, which will tentatively be July 24 from 8:00 to 4:00.

Committee Member Lee Malcom requested information on the rezone for the landfill on Highway 78. She questioned whether it is for household garbage or recycling.

Committee Member Wesley Sisk explained it is a Transfer Station, not a landfill. This has been a controversial topic. The owner of Roll Off Systems also owns the Walton C&D Landfill, and that is who is proposing this facility. They are family owned and operated; they employ over 100 people. He is in full support of it, because he has seen numerous trash related issues in Gwinnett County over the years. He discussed the steps that garbage goes through prior to getting to the landfill, the growth of Walton County, and the need for another landfill. He stated what better place to put a landfill than between two others, on a four-lane highway, on over 100 acres. He explained that a Transfer Station is a holding area for garbage before it goes to a landfill; it is only passing through there. The smell on Highway 78 is coming from wet sheetrock and gypsum; there is not any household garbage in those existing landfills. The new facility would sort the sheetrock out and haul it somewhere else.

The Committee discussed various landfill issues at different locations.

X. ADJOURN

*Motion by Holder, seconded by Collin.
Passed Unanimously*