

CITY OF MONROE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
JUNE 8, 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
	Chris Collins	Board Member
	Lee Malcom	City Council Representative
Those Absent:	Myoshia Crawford	City Council Representative
	Whit Holder	Board Member
	Wesley Sisk	Board Member
Staff Present:	Leigh Ann Aldridge, Logan Propes, Beth Thompson, Beverly Harrison, Chris Bailey, Kaitlyn Stubbs, Dwayne Day	
Visitors:	Nolan Gray	

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Roll Call

Chairman Anderson noted that all Committee Members were present except Myoshia Crawford, Whit Holder, and Wesley Sisk. There was not a quorum, so no action could be taken.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

a. May 11, 2023 Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes to be approved next month.

3. Approval of Financial Statements

a. April Financials

The Committee reviewed the financials to be approved next month.

II. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no public comments.

III. POCKET PARK UPDATE

Ms. Camille Garrison, a landscape designer, gave an update on the Pocket Park. She has been Chairman of the Farm to Table Event Committee for the past six years. She helps create Bikes, Trikes, and Magical Lights through Childers Park, is on the Tree Board, and loves Downtown Monroe. There was a historic freeze last December. The first quarter of this year she assessed the situation, did a heavy cleanup, weeded, and mulched. The second quarter she spent \$1,200 on plants; she also put in over 30 hours replanting, replacing, weeding, mulching, and fertilizing. She created a sensory garden in the park, with each plant having a small label and description.

She discussed replacing plants as the die or get damaged. Ms. Garrison stated that \$4,000 annually covers the plant costs, materials, and some of her time. She usually takes a loss on the total amount of time she spends in the park annually. She discussed the various plants in detail. She has met with two contractors about ways to fix the leaning arch; she plans to pay for it to be welded in the third quarter. She plants tulip bulbs each fall, waters weekly, and blows everything out. She also puts a Christmas tree and reindeer on the roof each year.

The Committee, Ms. Garrison, Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge, Mr. Logan Propes, and Mr. Chris Bailey discussed the various plants, watering, and cleanup in detail. They discussed using City resources for things like getting the welding done.

Chairman Anderson stated they will discuss it more at the Retreat.

IV. FARMERS MARKET UPDATE

Ms. Audrey Fuller, Manager of the Farmers Market, gave an update. She stated there are 86 approved vendors this year; some of them are on a rotating schedule. One of the produce vendors has already started coming this year and a few others will be starting within the next couple of weeks.

The Committee, Ms. Fuller, and Ms. Aldridge discussed adjusting the timing. The market could start later in the season, possibly around the middle of May.

Ms. Fuller explained a lot of the greenhouse vendors go to the bigger areas where they can make more money. She stated there is a waiting lists for the artisan vendors.

The Committee and Ms. Fuller discussed the quantity of visitors, types of vendors, and making new guidelines. They discussed whether the artisan vendors are a conflict to downtown businesses.

Ms. Fuller stated getting farmers is going to get harder and harder. She suggested the possibility of going to the State Farmers Market to pick up some fruits and vegetables to bring back to the market.

V. CITY UPDATE

City Administrator Logan Propes discussed DDA getting back to the Committee system, which can be talked about at the Retreat. Ms. Kaitlyn Stubbs will send the Executive Summary to the Committee Members. He met with GDOT yesterday about signaling the ramps for Highway 11 and Highway 78 at the bridge. Mr. Dwayne Day will be more dedicated to the Downtown area and will be in charge of the golfcart. He discussed easements for the alleyway behind Blue Rooster.

The Committee, Mr. Propes, and Mr. Bailey discussed the alleyway, utility relocations, and the time frame for completion.

Mr. Chris Bailey discussed areas that will be focused upon. He stated the two-hour parking signs and noise signs have been installed.

Committee Member Andrea Gray questioned the progress for the Town Green.

Mr. Propes answered construction completion is still on schedule for late July. Earlier this week they decided to completely redo the streets on South Madison Avenue and Church Street.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the four applicants that have applied for the vacant board seat and the interview process.

VI. COUNTY UPDATE

There was no update from the County.

VII. COMMUNITY WORK PLAN & REPORTS

1. Downtown Design

Chairman Anderson read a letter from Ms. Kim Mulkey Smith concerning the vandalism, trash, and activities at the Hammock Park. She stated that Ms. Susan Brown also called her with basically the same concerns.

The Committee, Ms. Aldridge, and Mr. Bailey discussed the issues at the Hammock Park and alternative ideas for the area.

City Administrator Logan Propes stated staff will work on some potential ideas and bring suggestions to the Retreat.

2. Redevelopment Projects

There were no projects.

3. Entertainment Draws

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated there were about 6,000 people at the First Friday Concert. She is already getting calls about Fall Fest and the Christmas Parade. There were around 8,000 people at the Flower Festival; they are looking at moving it to June next year, due to the feedback.

Committee Member Andrea Gray discussed Downtown being dead the week of Memorial Day, which was when the Book Fair was held.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the Garden Tour.

Committee Member Chris Collin left at 9:08.

VIII. PROGRAMS

There were no programs.

IX. FUNDING

1. Sponsorship

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.

X. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Next Meeting – July 13, 2023 at 8:00 am at City Hall

2. Yearly Board Retreat – July 24, 2023 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

XII. ADJOURN