

CITY OF MONROE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
AUGUST 10, 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
	Brittany Palazzo	Board Member
	Chris Collins	Board Member
	Lee Malcom	City Council Representative

Staff Present: Leigh Ann Aldridge, Logan Propes, Beth Thompson, Beverly Harrison, Kaitlyn Stubbs, Les Russell, Dwayne Day

Visitors: Jeremy Banks

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

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated the minutes would be approved at the next meeting.

3. Approval of Financial Statements

a. June Financials

To approve the April 2023 Financials.

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

II. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no public comments.

III. CITY UPDATE

City Administrator Logan Propes stated the Alcohol Ordinance went through the first reading, but the last pour time still seems to be an issue.

The Committee, Mr. Propes, and Ms. Aldridge discussed the time, locations, and other cities.

Committee Member Chris Collin stated he does not know if the time is necessarily the problem or whether it is the behavior that is happening during that time. It would not be right to punish others for the actions of a few. The issue could possibly be solved with more policing.

Mr. Propes explained they have strengthened the language about serving food the entire time alcohol is being served. Pop-in inspections will need to be done. The Town Green is 99% done; the audio system is still being worked out. The splash pad will not open this year. The demo of the Milner Aycock building has started, and it looks good. They believe it will be done in about eight to nine months.

IV. COUNTY UPDATE

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated that Shane Short has indicated that the County will be selling the two buildings, but he does not have a date.

Council Member Lee Malcom arrived at 8:20 am.

V. COMMUNITY WORK PLAN & REPORTS

1. 2023-2024 Workplan Review

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge gave a brief update from the Retreat. She discussed moving forward with the Carl Vinson Institute on the parking campaign branding. She stated the Committee needs to set a budget amount for the murals and public art. She suggested involving local students in some of the art projects.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed different ideas and options for going forward with the murals and the murals being a partnership with the business owners.

Committee Member Chris Collin stated that he is hearing three different things: signage, murals, and Monroe propaganda. He stated he would like to see more murals, which the artist would design. The murals could double as Instagram opportunities.

Chairman Anderson questioned the next step in moving forward.

Ms. Aldridge stated they have located opportunities in several location.

Committee Member Brittany Palazzo discussed some of the possible art work.

Mr. Anderson questioned whether they could have some ideas by the next meeting.

Mr. Aldridge stated they would have some ideas, and she could get a cost after the design is done.

2. Downtown Design

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge discussed getting new brackets for some of the banners.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the banners for the Town Green.

The Committee, Mr. Propes, and Ms. Aldridge discussed having a Christmas tree lighting at the Town Green, other Christmas decorations, the lights at Childers Park, and sponsorships.

3. Redevelopment Projects

The Committee, Mr. Propes, and Ms. Aldridge discussed the Gwinnett Appliance lot and DDA now paying interest on the loan.

Mr. Propes stated the City will cleanup the lot and gravel it for the time being. Council would have to vote, but he is not sure if the City has enough in SPLOST Funds. He stated the City is about to redo the rear parking lot at the Library.

The Committee and Mr. Propes discussed the Nowell Recreation Building and the possibility of trading something to the County for the building.

Chairman Anderson stated the DDA needs to get rid of some debt.

4. Entertainment Draws

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated the concert went great last week; there were about 6,000 people in attendance.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the alcohol cups, policing the cups, and addressing any situations that may arise. They discussed specific changes for when the concerts start being held on the Town Green, the streets that should be used, the streets that should be closed, and where to put the food trucks.

VI. PROGRAMS

1. Farmers Market

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated the Farmers Market is going well and are averaging over 2,000 a weekend. A date has not been set for the Farm to Table Event yet.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed details for the event.

VII. FUNDING

1. Sponsorship

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge discussed the changes on the Brochure and event sponsorships and opportunities. The Car Show has been increased to four sponsorship opportunities for 2024.

Committee Member Andrea Gray suggested having sponsorship T-shirts for the Car Show.

Finance Director Beth Thompson stated the \$68,000 raised in Sponsorship Funds this year are about \$30,000 more than any of the prior years.

Committee Member Meredith Malcom stated that sponsorship for the Christmas Tree Lighting at the new Town Green could be added under the Christmas Parade.

Committee Member Brittany Palazzo suggested making the Christmas Tree Lighting Event into a mini concert.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed having the Tree Lighting and mini concert on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, at the end of Small Business Saturday; churches and schools could sing Christmas songs. After discussing the fireworks, the Committee decided to leave it on

the brochure even though it is not really an event. They discussed adding the Mural Partnership and the Christmas Tree Lighting Event to the brochure.

Ms. Aldridge stated that she will change the picture of the Courthouse to a picture of the new Town Green and get the Brochure finalized, so it can be sent out in September.

2. Façade Grants

There were no façade grants.

3. Community Event Grants

There were no community event grants.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leigh Ann Aldridge stated that the Museum is interest in the space of the roofing company, but they want it for free.

Chairman Anderson stated that she has talked with Kim Mulkey Smith and Steve Brown; they would like the space for no charge or at least a minimal charge.

Ms. Aldridge discussed moving some spaces around to help the flow and layout. She stated that Stuever Studios has had problems with the HVAC unit, which caused a bad leak. The leak happened over the weekend when no one was there to catch it. They have requested help with replacement of the bookshelf and materials that were ruined by the leak.

The Committee discussed replacing the bookshelf and making sure that all of the tenants have renters' insurance, which should be required in the lease agreement. The tenants are responsible for filters and maintenance.

To credit their rent up to \$200 for replacement of the bookshelf and materials.

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

Chairman Anderson requested for Ms. Aldridge to send copies of the lease agreements to Committee Member Andrea Gray for her to review. The renters need to have proof of rental insurance and have maintenance logs; an addendum may need to be added to the leases. She will talk to Kim Mulkey about liability insurance for the Museum.

The Committee and Ms. Aldridge discussed the space of the roofing company, the space of the tax office, and possibly moving the spaces around.

City Administrator Logan Propes discussed the possibility of folding the Museum into the CVB umbrella and making it the CVB headquarters. He stated the City already pays for the staff member that works there.

The Committee, Mr. Propes, Ms. Aldridge discussed whether the non-profit board would remain or not, the benefits the combination would provide, where the alternate income for DDA would come from, and the monthly rental amounts received.

Mr. Propes stated it will not happen immediately, but it is something for the Committee to think about for now.

Chairman Anderson stated the available seat on the board from Wesley Sisk's resignation has been posted on the City website, and Les Russell has contacted the previous applicants.

Council Member Meredith Malcom questioned what is going on with the McDaniel Tichnor House.

Committee Member Andrea Gray stated they just finished having the Princess & Diva Camp, and they are still doing events. They used to provide full wedding packages but are just running the facility now. She explained there is a full-time executive there all day every day; weddings book a year in advance, so they are trying to recover.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Next Meeting – September 14, 2023 at 8:00 at City Hall

X. ADJOURN

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