

# **DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/MAIN STREET BOARD**

**March 13, 2014**

## **MINUTES**

**DDA Members Present** – Chris Welch, Larry Odom, Denson Martin, Donna Logan, Tony Owens

**DDA Members Absent** – Hal Williams, Mac McConnell

**Partners Present** – Gary McCullough, Bruce Georgia, Jay Markwalter

**Staff Present** – Joel Cordle & Rebecca Shirley

Chris Welch called the meeting to order at 0850 AM.

**I. Approve January 9 meeting minutes** - A motion to approve the January 9 minutes was made by Denson, seconded by Donna. All members present unanimously approved the motion.

**II. Approve financial report** – Joel asked board to refer to the financials included in the board packet. He detailed the January and February expenses and current balances. A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Tony and seconded by Larry. All members present unanimously approved the motion.

### **III. DDA Task Force Reports**

#### **ORGANIZATION**

1. Approve 2014 DDA Work Plan and Staff Work Plan - A motion to approve the DDA Work Plan and Staff Work Plan was made by Larry, seconded by Denson. All members present unanimously approved the motion.
2. Support Designation of S. Park St. Residential Historic District and Expansion of Existing Downtown Commercial Historic District to S. Chestatee, E. Main, N. Grove – Joel reported the HPC has almost finished review of the Design Guideline Updates to be approved by Council at the April meeting, next step would be the Park ST Designation.
3. Assist Council with Downtown Master Plan Implementation - No update at this time.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. Work with Partners on Regional Center for Business & Investment – In regards to the RCBI, Bruce said the Mayor and Council are meeting with UNG president to be briefed on the Board of Regents plans for the project at the end of the week. The public announcement of the capital projects will be announced in April at the Board of Regents meeting here in Dahlonega so there will be additional updates for the DDA board at that time. Joel reported the executive summary of the hotel feasibility study was very positive, and the summary is included in the board packet for review.
2. Support City Council on Parking Management – Bruce reported that out of the retreat a priority from Council was to relook at the parking plan and he will be putting together an action group to facilitate the action items from the plan. Will be coordinating to make sure the right people are in the action group.
3. Develop Downtown Arts Strategies Engaging Arts Groups for Economic Development - Joel reported that a quarterly meeting with partners is scheduled for March 31.
4. Support Master Plan Catalytic Real Estate Projects and Property Owners Development/ Redevelopment Of Strategic Sites – Joel reported the committee met recently and will be creating a project team to look at a specific residential project. Once that group is put together there will be more to report to the board on.
5. Keep Inventory of Available Spaces & Businesses Seeking Spaces – Joel asked the board to refer to the board packet with the inventory sheet of properties and prospects.

#### **PROMOTION**

1. Support Downtown Shopping with Retail Promotion & Advertising – Rebecca reported on the completion of the winter advertising campaign on HGTV in partnership with Chamber, renewed the linkable ad on UNG electronic newsletter, and will be working with Tony & Chris to create a Main

Street money focus group to discuss the idea and determine interest from downtown business owners.  
More to report in April.

### **DESIGN**

1. Support Streetscape Construction for Pedestrian Safety & Landscape Improvements –Joel reported the planning team is researching affordable ways for relocating utilities and that the project cannot move forward until the decisions are made on the placement of these utilities. Joel also reported that the Tiger 6 grant applications are now open and that he'll be working on this for the April 28 deadline.
2. Conduct Walks with Partners to Pinpoint Issue Areas & Monitor Implementation of Findings – Rebecca reported the spring walk around is scheduled for May 13, 5 PM. She reported that the document submitted last year is currently being reviewed by herself and the public works director. This document will be shared with the board prior to the May walk around. Bruce suggested sharing the event with more property owners to encourage their participation.
3. Expand Dahlonga Stories History Plaque Program – Rebecca reported brochures were delivered to each participating building earlier in the week and the next step is to plan a committee meeting.

### **IV. Staff Report**

Board members received a copy of the Staff report and Joel and Rebecca reported on the major projects worked on during the previous month.

### **V. New Business**

- Request to renew Holly Theatre rental agreement – The board agreed that prior to taking action on this item they would like to receive a summary of The Holly's business/financial plan for the future. Bruce said he would coordinate with Chris Andrus to come and report at next board meeting.
- UNG Strategic Plan – The board agreed that Joel should send Andy the talking points he compiled as the DDA's comments/suggestions to the strategic plan.

### **VI. Announcements from partner agencies**

- Dahlonga 2000, Inc. - Joel reported that the McGuire House grant closed. He filed the annual tax forms with IRS, and annual corporate registration with GA Secretary of State. He spoke with Ms. Mason about wiring grant for Battle Branch Building. Currently there are 3 outstanding grants in progress.
- City of Dahlonga - Gary reported that construction on MMP finally started. He also asked the board to think about the individual booths at the antique mall not each having an individual business license and if there are suggested changes for the future. Bruce reported the City has hired a new utility billing clerk and 3 new employees for public works department. He also reported that the Mayor and council had their annual planning retreat last week to look at mission and vision statement, came up with 8 strategic goals as a roadmap to accomplish the goals and will be using a "dashboard" as a tool for viewing measurable data.
- Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Office - Jay was present to report on current projects and activities of the Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Office.
- University of North Georgia – No report at this time.
- Historic Preservation Commission - Joel asked the board to refer to last month's meeting minutes in the packet.

### **VII. Adjourn**

- Denson made a motion to adjourn, Donna seconded the motion, and all members present unanimously approved the motion. Chris adjourned the meeting at 10:25 AM.