

**DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/MAIN STREET PROGRAM BOARD**  
**October 11, 2012 Meeting Minutes**

DDA members present: Donna Logan, Denson Martin, Chris Welch, Tony Owens, Larry Odom, Hal Williams, Mac McConnell

Staff members present: Rebecca Shirley, Joel Cordle

Partners present: Bill Lewis, Jay Markwalter

Others present: Larry Sorohan, Chris Anders

Meeting called to order at 8:40 AM by Chairman Denson Martin

A motion to approve the September 13, 2012 meeting minutes was made by Tony and seconded by Larry. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Joel presented the financial report. A motion to approve the report was made by Mac and seconded by Donna. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

***DDA Task Force Reports***

**ORGANIZATION**

1. *Support of Park Street Area Historic District designation & Downtown Historic District expansion* – Joel reported the GMRC position has been filled, so the project is back moving forward.
2. *Assist council with implementing Downtown Master Plan (consider funding a portion of the ordinance/zoning cost as an incentive)* – Joel reported that council voted for Doug to move forward with RFPs for consultants. This will then give the DDA board and council a better understanding of the actual costs of the project.
3. *Holly Theater report and proposal from Larry Sorohan* – Larry requested the DDA board to refer to the handout in their packets for the detailed request for financial assistance for the Holly. Denson stated the finance committee would review the request and present a recommendation to the board in the near future.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. *Explore NGCSU bonds sponsorships, support for convocation center* – Mac reported that the consolidation of North Georgia is moving forward with January 8, 2013 the official date. There is currently a contract with Lark to determine feasibility of hotel/conference and convocation center. The study should be completed in approximately one month.
2. *Support city council in parking management plan* – No report on this item.
3. *Develop downtown arts strategies, facilities* – Hal reported that the group met last week and heard updates from partnering agencies.
4. *Support master plan catalytic real estate projects, property owners development/redevelopment of strategic sites* – No report on this item.
5. *Keep current inventory of available spaces and businesses seeking spaces* – A report was presented as a handout included in the board meeting packet.

**PROMOTION**

1. *Plan and implement retail promotion and advertising* – Rebecca reported that the committee went through the budget and identified upcoming promotion and advertising markets. The committee has requested a meeting with Jay to finalize winter shopping campaign with Comcast.

**DESIGN**

1. *Support design & construction of Main St. & S. Chestatee streetscapes* – Joel reported the first part of the Tiger II grant has been completed and submitted for review. Once approved, the next step is to move to final design/construction drawings phase.

2. *Expand bronze history plaque program* – Rebecca reported that the program is very popular for visitors and residents alike. The Smith House will sponsor \$500 to the next couple rounds of brochure printing. There still needs to be new participants added to the program.

**Staff Reports** (detail attached at end of minutes)

**New Business – There was no new business.**

**Announcements from partner agencies:**

- Reporting for the City of Dahlonega – Bill reported the LOST negotiations are not going well. There are possibly some upcoming changes to the special events permitting process. Such changes are, no tents larger than 10X10 in Hancock Park, hire law enforcement during festival hours, and if there is marking on the street planned it may require a deposit. The Council is also holding off on renewing the downtown deputy contract at this point.
- Reporting for the Chamber of Commerce/CVB – Jay gave a wrap up report of the Six Gap Criterium and Ride.
- There was no report from NGCSU.
- The minutes from the September 19, 2012 Historic Preservation Commission meeting were included for board members to review.
- There was no report from the Merchant Coalition.

Chris made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Hal. The vote to approve was unanimous, and Denson adjourned the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

**STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT -- SEPTEMBER 2012**

**DIRECTOR  
PROMOTION**

*Sponsorship*

- Provided sponsor partnership for Old Fashioned Christmas

*Partner Events Assistance*

- Provided a post-event evaluation to Lana Hootselle of Woman’s Club regarding Scarecrow Stomp and advised on security improvements
- Assisted Old Fashioned Christmas Committee with seeking volunteers for decorations, and solicited business sponsorships; attended monthly committee meetings
- Set up production meeting of Bear on the Square Committee and city staff

**DESIGN**

*Landscape Projects*

- Facilitated Modern Woodmen donation of memorial tree to city for Hancock Park

*Design Assistance*

- Assisted with design proposal adjustments for Owen’s “Just Baked” property redevelopment

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*Business Retention, Expansion, Recruitment, Education*

- Set up quarterly arts partners group meeting, prepared agenda and minutes
- Updated inventory of business spaces for sale and lease
- Provided information to Glenn Savastano on available properties for startup; provided information to property owner Chris Welch regarding sales and lease prospects

**ORGANIZATION**

*Grants*

- Produced quarterly reports for TIGER 2 grant; coordinated field report meeting of consultants, GDOT, and Federal Highway Administration representatives; completed addendum to TIGER contract
- Set up Dahlonega site visit by ARC grants coordinators to follow up on 2008 “Project C” sewer upgrade project; provided data on job creation and business development
- Researched grant options from Ga. Dept. of Economic Development and Ga. Dept. of Natural Resources

*Reports*

- Prepared and submitted monthly economic activity reports required by Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs

*Presentations*

- Produced content, presented Downtown Master Plan/streetscape program at Ga Planning Association conference

*Partner Business Events*

- Attended Chamber of Commerce Morning Mingle business events

*Main Street Network Assistance*

- Provided information about downtown public wi-fi access to Bryce Jaeck for Madison Main Street

***Administrative***

- Assisted Mayor and Council with reappointment of three DDA members
- Prepared agenda and meeting package items for monthly DDA meeting

***PROGRAM COORDINATOR***

**PROMOTION**

***Marketing Projects to Promote Downtown Shopping and Dining***

- Attended monthly meeting of Chamber’s Tourism Committee for marketing strategies.
- Met with DDA promotions committee on yearly budget, advertising plan, and potential partnerships.

***DDA/Main Street Events Production***

- Drafted & submitted press releases for First Friday Concert & Farmers Market
- Producing First Friday Night Concert Series; coordinating October concert to include “Silver Singers”.
- Producing Saturday Farmers Markets; managed new vendor orientation; verified permits, daily setup and closing of event; coordinated “Seed Swap” in partnership with the Georgia Appalachian Studies center – Sept 22, Sept 29; Researching use of debit/credit cards at Farmers Market
- Working with site manager for production of Appalachian Jam; managed weekly check requests; coordinated & promoted Sept 29 location change; coordinating special Appalachian Jam for Gold Rush.
- Maintaining Facebook pages for DDA, Farmers Market, Jam, and Concert Series
- Submitted events weekly for Chamber’s “Events & Entertainment” e-mail blasts.

***Partner Events Assistance***

- Assisting with event production for Old Fashioned Christmas; merchant coalition events; music; coordinating light & bow parties; coordinating schedule with Ricky; finalizing advertising plan.
- Assisting with permit application for community Halloween event.
- Assisting Dahlenega Jaycees with street light post event banners.

**DESIGN**

***History Projects***

- Updated, printed, and distributed Dahlenega Stories Brochures to participating businesses.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

***Business Retention, Expansion, Recruitment, Education***

- Assisted with updating the inventory of business spaces for sale and lease
- Produced monthly “Business Tips” newsletter for downtown business owners; shared business development articles to downtown business database, on Facebook, and on the DDA website.
- Continued downtown business campaign on Facebook.
- Researched items to be included in recruitment packet for elementary school property.

***Special Projects***

- Working with Chamber to implement frequent shopper card – “Dahlenega’s Golden Ticket”

**ORGANIZATION**

***Partner Business Events***

- Attended monthly Merchant coalition meeting
- Attended Chamber’s “Morning Mingle” and “Business After Hours” events.
- Assisted Dahlenega Young Professionals Group with member recruitment, organization, and programs
- Attended Lumpkin High School’s CTAE Advisory Council meeting.

***DDA/Main Street and City Projects and Programs***

- Assisting City Clerk with GMRC luncheon event.
- Assisting City Clerk with regional clerk luncheon.
- Shared “Ecotality” information with City Manager.
- Assisted City Clerk with City website maintenance.
- Assisting Georgia Mountain Regional Commission with Mt. Hope Cemetery grant application
- Assisting Diving Bell Committee with signage, plaques, and event production details.
- Assisting with staffing the city hall customer service counter until the position is filled.
- Assisted city engineer with hosting ARC to review grant project; submitted economic data for records.

***Administrative***

- Drafted September board meeting minutes.
- Invoiced Chamber of Commerce for July 30 event advertising.

***Communications***

- Updated file of contact information for all downtown businesses.
- Expanded downtown database to include Alicia Lane properties.
- Responded to all inquiries about Jam, Market, and First Friday Concert.
- Drafted and mailed thank you letters to Leadership Lumpkin Class of 2010, the Master Gardeners, & the Georgia Appalachian Studies center for partnerships.
- Updating DDA note cards.
- Posted OFC parade information on DDA & city websites.
- Updated DDA website homepage images.

- Maintained DDA Facebook pages.