

DAHLONEGA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/MAIN STREET BOARD

January 10, 2013 City Hall

MEETING MINUTES

Members attending: Denson Martin, Chris Welch, Donna Logan, Hal Williams, Larry Odom, Tony Owens

Members absent: Mac McConnell

Guests: Jeff Davis

Partners attending: Amy Booker, Jay Markwalter, Mayor Gary McCullough

Staff present: Rebecca Shirley, Joel Cordle

Denson called the meeting to order at 8:45 AM

I. Approve November & December meeting minutes - A motion to approve November 2012 & December 2012 minutes was made by Hal, and seconded by Donna. All members present unanimously approved the motion.

II. Approve financial report – Joel asked board members to refer to the financials included in the board packet. The report included the 2012 year end numbers as well as expenses for FY 2013 to date. A motion to approve the financial report as presented was made by Tony, seconded by Hal. All members present unanimously approved the motion.

III. DDA 2013 annual meeting

- For the 2012 summary Denson asked everyone to review the written report in the meeting package.
- Approve 2013-2014 Workplan - Donna made a motion to approve the 2013-2014 workplan as presented. The motion was seconded by Chris. All members present unanimously approved the motion.
- 2013 officers election - Denson presented the state of officers as Chairman – Chris Welch, Vice-Chairman – Denson Martin, Treasurer – Tony Owens, and Secretary – Hal Williams. Denson asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. With no additional nominations, Donna made a motion to accept the officers' slate as presented. The motion was seconded by Larry. All members present unanimously approved the motion. Denson turned the meeting was turned over to 2013 Chairman Chris Welch.

IV. DDA Task Force Reports

ORGANIZATION

1. Annual Business Reception & Investment Awards Night –Rebecca asked that the board refer to the handout and mark their calendar.
2. DDA hosts Feb. 5 Business After Hours at Holly –Joel reported the DDA will be hosting the Feb 5 BAH at the Holly Theater. Please attend to help greet attendees and represent the DDA at the event. This is the first event at the Holly under our current contract agreement. State Tourism Product Development Director Bruce Green will be there to speak about downtowns and cultural tourism.
3. Support for Downtown Renaissance Act – Chris reported about the “Downtown Renaissance Act” to be presented at the state legislature. Joel reported the GDA & GMA have been working together on this project for about a year. This program is tax credits for downtown investment throughout the state. It addresses commercial as well as residential investment, rehab or new construction. Joel asked the board take a moment to email or call Kevin Tanner to support the bill in the house when introduced and then be prepared to work with Senator Gooch when it gets to the Senate.
4. Loan sponsorship for McGuire House project –Joel reported a local entrepreneur has a contract to buy the McGuire House property and is asking for loan sponsorship through the Georgia Cities Foundation. The project is for more lodging, 12 rooms in the back with new construction, the old house will be repaired. DDA must “sponsor” the project and endorse it for the borrower to receive money through the GCF funds. When the application is complete we will bring it back to the board for an action item. He hopes to be on the HPC meeting mid-January.
5. Introduce downtown Wi-Fi proposal –Gary reported city council met with a company about putting Wi-Fi in throughout the city, beginning with downtown. The proposal is included in the board packet. City Council will be meeting with the company again. This may be a future DDA/council project.

6. Introduce water plant transfer proposal –Gary reported city council has proposed to transfer the old water plant property to the DDA to market and sell it. The summary of the appraisal is in the packet for review. Doug is preparing a note for the transfer. Joel reported the transfer request is because the DDA can issue RFPs for a range of uses by the buyer based on what we would like to see on the property. Chris stated the next step is appointing a committee to work on the project with Denson, Larry & Mac. Chris will contact Mac to make sure he agrees to serve. Joel will aim for bringing a recommendation back by Feb meeting.
7. Support City Council in Park Street Area Historic District designation & Downtown Historic District expansion and design guidelines –Hal reported that staff and HPC received a draft from GMRC for review.
8. Assist council with implementing Downtown Master Plan – Hal said there is nothing to report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Explore Univ. of North Georgia bonds sponsorship; support convocation center — Jeff Davis reported that the feasibility study is still underway. Hope to have a finished product by the end of January 2013.
2. Support city council in parking management plan – Donna did not have anything new to report other than the committee is waiting on council for recommendation. A consensus was that the 15 minute parking spots are largely ignored and until an enforcement measure is taken it is hard for them to be utilized.
3. Develop downtown arts strategies, support facilities - Hal reported the next meeting of the group is Feb 1. Good news is that the Holly winter show played to an audience of 2100 for 9 shows. The gross revenues were \$33000, net \$29000, with an estimated economic impact of about \$45000 in shopping, dining and lodging. Joel reported that the UNG NEA grant application is being sent today. If funded, the project would begin in Sept 2013 through May 2014.
4. Support master plan catalytic real estate projects, property owners' development/ redevelopment of strategic sites –Chris reported the group has not met. Jeff Davis reported the university space on S Chestatee St now has the weaving and pottery studios from the old kindergarten property. The brick house is being used for temporary offices, and UNG is working with architects for the Sunday school building. The Chapel is a longer term project with a goal of developing a chapel/gathering space.
5. Keep inventory of available spaces & businesses seeking spaces - Joel asked the board to refer to the packet with the inventory sheet.

PROMOTION

1. Plan and implement retail promotion & advertising – Rebecca reported on an advertising opportunity with Georgia Travel Guide. Tony made a motion to approve to move \$2500 from emergency funds to the advertising budget to support the opportunity as presented, seconded by Larry. All members unanimously approved the motion. Denson asked that the advertising committee review their budget to make an accurate recommendation for next FY. Hal requested staff ask about editing the narrative to include the arts.

DESIGN

1. Support design & construction of streetscapes –Joel reported DOT has the proposal and waiting to hear back. Construction scheduled from Dec 2013 through March 2014.
2. Expand Dahlongega Stories historic plaque program– there was nothing to report.

V. Staff Report - Staff reported on their items from November & December 2012

VI. There was no New Business to report

VII. Announcements from partner agencies

- City of Dahlongega - Gary reported the city council has hired a new city manager, Ron Thomas. He has an extensive financial and utility experience. Plan to announce the hiring on the 23rd of January.
- Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Office – Amy looking forward to DDA hosting BAH. Please join them on January 25th for their annual awards luncheon. Jay reported that 250k people came to the visitor center this past year.
- University of North Georgia– Jeff Davis reported that as of Tuesday we are officially the University of North Georgia. At the basketball game tonight the new mascot will be unveiled. The Hoag Student Center has reopened with food court and snacks. Work continues on the new athletic field house scheduled to open April 2013.
- Historic Preservation Commission– Joel asked the board refer to the Nov and Dec meeting minutes in the packet.

At 10:15, Hal made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Denson and approved unanimously.