



REGULAR MEETING

November 19, 2024, at 8:30 a.m.

Town Board Meeting Room

9 S. Main Street

MINUTES

Downtown Waynesville Commission Chair Dave Barone called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present:

Grace Mason
Alex McKay
Joyce Massie
Jay Spiro
Bob Williams
Kirk Noonan
Jessica Garrick

Town staff present: Beth Gilmore

Others present: Corrina Ruffieux, Executive Director of Haywood County Tourism

DWC Chair Barone welcomed board members and presented the minutes of the DWC Special Called meeting on October 29, 2024.

A motion by Jay Spiro, seconded by Grace Mason, to approve the minutes of a DWC Special Called meeting on October 29 carried unanimously

DWC Chair Barone welcomed Haywood County Tourism Executive Director Corrina Ruffieux to the meeting and invited her to update board members about several projects.

Ruffieux presented a sample of the "Haywood Strong" Christmas tree ornament, car magnet, parade banner and beanies that are now for sale as part of the Give the Gift of Haywood campaign. All proceeds raised will go to support



the Haywood Advancement Foundation for Haywood County businesses impacted by Hurricane Helene. Ruffieux asked for help getting the word out about the campaign.

DWC member Mason asked if the foundation accepts donations. Ruffieux confirmed, the foundation does accept tax deductible donations.

Ruffieux answered "yes" to DWC member Spiro who asked if Visit Haywood plans to run print ads for the campaign. Ruffieux distributed copies of an email sent on November 18 regarding upcoming Ice Fest activities, stating that promotional brochures will be available soon.

Ruffieux noted that in 2023, Main Street businesses were invited to purchase custom ice sculptures to display in front of their business as part of the Downtown Waynesville Ice Stroll. This year, Visit Haywood has agreed to purchase about 20 winter-themed sculptures for the Main Street stroll. Businesses who want to purchase a custom sculpture for display in front of their business can still do so for \$400. This year's event will also include fire performers, a photo booth and "Chill Zone" with Adirondak chairs and alcohol. This year's event will span 4-days of activities. County businesses and restaurants are participating by offering their own specials during that time, as well. The deadline to be included in marketing and purchase a sculpture is December 13. The itinerary for this year's event includes a "Cool Jazz" concert on Thursday, Jan. 30; the Downtown Waynesville Ice Stroll on Friday, Jan. 31 and Ice Fest on Saturday, Feb. 1.

DWC Chair Barone said Executive Director Gilmore should be recognized for the effort and work she has put into the past year.

DWC members reviewed the 2022-23 Program Assessment Report from N.C. Main Street.

DWC Chair Barone praised board members, said "we are making small steps toward achieving our goals ... but the time is coming to start taking huge steps."

DWC Chair Barone said he hopes to make progress toward the formation of a non-profit organization to expand funding opportunities. We will be forming a fund development committee to identify new avenues and pursue additional funding.

DWC member Bob Williams asked if the committee will be formed before the nonprofit is formed, or after? Williams asked if the nonprofit would operate under a separate board?



DWC Chair Barone answered, “yes” the nonprofit will operate under a separate board. Details about how that board will be structured and how the organization will operate will be determined under the guidance of Town Attorney Martha Bradley working closely with DWC Executive Officers.

DWC member Williams said, “it’s a smart move” to form a nonprofit.

Referencing the 2022-23 program assessment report recently returned by N.C. Main Street program leaders, DWC Executive Director Gilmore offered a brief review of the assessment process, noting this is “our report card” for progress made during the 2022-23 fiscal year. The DWC learned months ago that the organization earned accreditation, but this report offers a numerical score for progress made in each of the six program standards.

PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE

DWC Promotions Chair Jessica Garrick referenced the analytics report provided by Kanipe Creative. The website is gaining great traction... “that money was well spent,” she said.

DWC Chair Barone applauded Garrick for her “great work on promotions.”

Promotions Chair Garrick offered a review of upcoming events.

Mistletoe Maker’s Market- Garrick said there are 100 vendors registered for the Mistletoe Maker’s Market on Nov. 23 for the Mistletoe Market. Feedback has been great. The event is being advertised heavily on social media. Live music will include the Darren Nicholson Band and Upstream Rebellion.

Downtown Waynesville Christmas Parade- DWC Director Gilmore reminded board members about the parade on December 2, said she will have a vehicle lined up to carry them in the parade. Gilmore will email line up instructions when they are available.

A Smoky Mountain Christmas – Promotions Chair Garrick said the event is set to feature a live Santa and all the traditional features including horse-drawn wagon rides, S’mores, luminaries, a Christmas DJ, short Nutcracker performances, the infamous Elf Trail, a holiday antique car show and live music all the way to the Live Nativity at First Baptist Church.



DWC Member Joyce Massie has lined up music for the event, including: First Baptist Church choral singers, the Tuscola High School Chorus, Bone Fide, Ginny McAfee, Mischa Deese, and strolling performances by HART Theater cast members and the Hominy Valley Men’s Choir.

Chili Cookoff- DWC Member Kirk Noonan said the chili cook off is making a comeback on Feb. 15. To date, there are 50 participants registered. Main Street is well covered, he said. There will be shuttle service available to make it possible for businesses all over town to participate. Planners are expecting a strong turnout, based on the last cook off that garnered 5,000 votes cast for “best chili”. The 2025 event will be Feb. 15 from 12 to 4 p.m.

During other business, DWC member Spiro asked for an update on the Church Street string light project. DWC Chair Barone said the town is still ironing out installation logistics.

DWC member Massie suggested that DWC board members get together for a holiday gathering.

DWC member Mason offered to host a potluck meal in her home, said she will follow up by email with possible dates.

In her director’s report, Gilmore said she has been busy planning events, preparing Christmas decorations for Main Street and working on the progress assessment for FY 2023-24 that is due to the state in January.

DWC member Spiro said there were four design projects worked on last year that are not complete. He would like to see the board move on those projects.

The next DWC meeting will be December 17 at 8:30 a.m.

A motion to adjourn by Grace Mason, seconded by Alex McKay, carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

ATTEST:

Beth Gilmore, Executive Director

Dave Barone, Board Chair