



REGULAR MEETING

March 18, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.

Public Works Training Room

121 Legion Drive

MINUTES

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

Jon Feichter

Bob Williams

Joyce Massie

Alex McKay

Grace Mason

Hannah White

Jay Spiro

Staff present: Beth Gilmore, Executive Director, Downtown Waynesville Commission

Others present: Connie Allen and Andy Rogers, 540 Broadcasting Station

Jerry Jackson, Salmagundi Gallery Owner

Becky and Charlie Trump, Olde Brick House store owners

Jose Gonzalez and Gabe Munoz, J Gabriel store owners

Hayley Printz, Administrative Assistant Visit Haywood/Haywood Co. Tourism Development Authority

During time allotted for public comments, Charlie Trump, The Olde Brick House owner, said that "Main Street used to be the crown jewel" but is not being maintained well. He cited issues including cleanliness, overflowing trash cans and sidewalk bricks that have become safety hazards and need to be repaired.

Connie Allen, Marketing Agent, distributed information packets about 540 Broadcasting highlighting the benefits of partnering with the station. Allen and Operations Manager Andy Rogers told the board about advertising and marketing opportunities that will strengthen businesses and attract tourism to Downtown Waynesville. They highlighted opportunities for cooperative advertising among district businesses that will significantly reduce costs, amplify the overall impact and raise the return on investment. Joining forces will enhance the message, attract different listeners,



reduce costs, and lead to more foot traffic. A lifelong resident of Haywood County, Rogers noted that 540 broadcasting is also a small local business. “It’s all about teamwork and bringing local businesses together,” said Rogers.

DWC Treasurer, Grace Mason, presented the monthly financial report along with a report explaining end of year expenditures and remaining funds that are available through June 30, 2025.

DWC Member Feichter said the Waynesville Town Council will meet Friday, March 21 to begin annual planning and budget development for the upcoming fiscal year.

DWC Member Garrick asked about expenditures noted for Art After Dark to confirm if the event is happening.

DWC Director Gilmore invited gallery owner Jerry Jackson to offer a planning update on the Art After Dark gallery stroll. Jackson said gallery owners and merchants gathered on March 13 for a meeting to discuss the future of Art After Dark and plans for a potential rebrand to make the event more inclusive to all businesses. There will be a second meeting on March 20. Gilmore said she will attend the meeting on 3/20 and encouraged other board members to go, as well.

DWC Director Gilmore explained that expenditures included on the end of year report are “proposed” based on verbal commitments the DWC board has agreed to in prior meetings but have not been voted on.

Director Gilmore told board members that the deadline has been extended to use the \$10,000 Community Enhancement Grant awarded last year to the DWC for the heritage mural project. The deadline has been extended by one year. The project hit a snag when it became time to post a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Gilmore was instructed to not post an RFQ until the funds were available to complete the project, but project costs cannot be determined until an RFQ is posted and artists respond with proposals. It’s safe to assume that the project will cost more than \$10,000 and will require additional fundraising efforts to complete the project within the grant timeframe.

A motion by Jay Spiro to accept the extension and proceed with the mural project, and make every effort to raise additional funds, was seconded by Jon Feichter and carried unanimously.

DWC Member Garrick Jessica questioned how funds will be raised.

DWC Member Massie said “it can be done. We just have to work at it.”

DWC Member Feichter said he is concerned about how we will raise the money if we don’t know how much we need to raise and offered to speak with town staff about how to resolve that issue so the project can move forward.



DWC Member McKay suggested simplifying the landscape design by not extending the image all the way to the top of the wall. He said the alleyway is narrow, which prohibits anyone from seeing the entire mural from a broad view. Shrinking the mural in this way would likely reduce the cost without affecting the overall view.

A motion by Kirk Noonan to revisit the mural design to simplify and reduce cost was seconded by Jay Spiro and carried unanimously.

DWC Director Gilmore asked for clarification about how the process will proceed and who will revisit the design. DWC Chair Barone suggested the design be turned over to the new design committee for review and recommendations. The Design Committee will review only phase one of the design- the hand painted landscape- and not the design of historic images overlayed on top.

DWC Director Gilmore said the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority is accepting applications for grants, asked the board for direction regarding projects they intend to pursue and funds she should request.

DWC Member Spiro pointed to email correspondence among board members, said most people were interested in pursuing a TDA capital grant for the heritage mural. DWC Member Massie suggested a tourism and promotion grant for the 2026 “Meet me at the Arch” June concert.

TDA Administrative Assistant Hayley Printz was invited to give a summary of the different grant opportunities. Printz said tourism and promotion grants can be applied toward new events that are not eligible for legacy event grants and used for advertising, market research or operations. A new requirement in place this year says that all applications must align with Visit Haywood’s destination master plan. Each application must have a fully flushed out marketing plan and can’t compete with anything that Visit Haywood is already doing.

A motion by Jay Spiro to move forward with a capital grant application for funds to complete the heritage mural project was seconded by Joyce Massie and carried unanimously.

A motion by Joyce Massie to pursue a tourism and promotions grant for a “Meet me at the Arch” concert in June 2026 was seconded by Jay Spiro and carried unanimously.

DWC Member Mason asked if the Town Grants Manager is available to help with the application process. DWC Director Gilmore explained that it’s easier for her to complete the application herself because she is more familiar with project details and objectives. The grants manager will be heavily involved in the tracking and reporting process.



Committee Reports

Organization Committee Chair Mason gave a report on efforts to form a nonprofit. Mason said Town Attorney Martha Bradley is drafting documents for the board's review. Bradley agreed to prepare two options for structuring the nonprofit board. Mason said she is waiting for a reply from Bradley about when those documents will be available. In the meantime, Mason, Barone and Gilmore have a meeting scheduled with the Main Street Director in Belmont to hear about their quasi-public program. Belmont has a unique set up, Mason said. They have one board that presides over both entities- both as an advisory board to Town Council and as a board of directors for their nonprofit. Mason said it's an 11-member board that includes a mix of property owners and merchants. "We really need to move forward with this," said Mason. "I feel like we are really so close to being able to do really good things, we just have to get it over the hump." Mason said she does not have the authority to urge Bradley to prepare the documents but asks the board to direct Beth to do so. DWC Member Feichter said he will reach out to Bradley for an update.

DWC Member White said once the organization can solicit funds, it would be wise to have clearly defined financial policies prepared about how those funds are spent.

DWC Member Massie requested funds to move forward with the planning of the "Meet me at the Arch" concert scheduled for June 7, 2025. She estimates the can be done for \$4,000 to 5,000. She said there may be an opportunity to partner with the Downtown Waynesville Association.

DWC Member Feichter said taking advantage of the Arch is a great idea and he feels confident about the DWA kicking in. He asked if the DWC would agree to pick up whatever the DWA isn't able to fund, up to a 50/50 match.

A motion by Jay Spiro, seconded by Bob Williams, to match funds provided by the DWA up to \$2,500 for a 2025 "Meet me at the Arch" concert on June 7, carried unanimously.

Gilmore asked for direction for planning a third Appalachian Heritage festival in 2026 and for clarity regarding an application for TDA grant fund for that event.

Gilmore explained that plans for the 2025 event have come together nicely, but it has been a challenge for such a small team to put together. The event itself was launched two years ago by a team of five that no longer exists. Gilmore is the only original team member. Two of the other original partner organizations have new directors- both fully committed to the event but not involved in the original vision. The other two partners have backed off the team. Gilmore said direction is what she needs most from the board, urging them to initiate a re-visioning process and form a planning committee to move the event forward if they intend to proceed.



DWC Member Feichter said it comes down to whether DWC board members are willing to get involved and asked for a show of hands to indicate interest in moving forward. Everyone raised a hand, except DWC Member Garrick.

A motion by Jon Feichter, seconded by Jay Spiro, to plan a third Appalachian Heritage festival in 2026 and apply for TDA grant funds for the project, carried unanimously.

DWC Director Gilmore urged the board to establish a planning committee to move the 2026 event forward.

Design Committee Chair Noonan said gallery owners Roger Reid (Twigs & Leaves) and Jerry Jackson (Salmagundi Gallery) have agreed to join the Design Committee. A meeting schedule has been established for the first Thursday of each month.

DWC Chair Barone said the Church Street string light project hit a kink last week and he is now looking for a different light vendor. He said the project is going to require stanchions, which also must be purchased. Otherwise, that project "is moving along very well... we are still waiting on final costs," he said. Regarding the Miller Street shade project, Barone said he spoke with a sales rep to quote the project last year and the same rates apply. In the meantime, the same design has been installed in Brevard and looks nice. Barone said he is still gathering cost information.

DWC Member Spiro asked to set a deadline for the project, "so we can land the plane." He asked if the end of April is a reasonable deadline. DWC Chair Barone asked if the DWC has the money. Director Gilmore said it depends how much the project costs.

A motion by Jay Spiro to complete the Miller Street shade project by the end of April, seconded by Grace Mason, carried unanimously.

DWC Director Gilmore said the Town plans to purchase new planter boxes for Main Street. Board members chose one design option.

DWC Member Spiro requested that time be scheduled during the next board meeting for a discussion about the recent Main Street Conference in Mooresville.

DWC Member Massie said the board has discussed numerous times the idea of purchasing mugs from a local potter, branded with the Appalachian True logo, to sell as merchandise during the heritage festival. If the board plans to proceed, the order needs to be placed as soon as possible.



A motion by Jay Spiro, seconded by Bob Williams, to spend \$1,000 for 50 branded mugs by local potter Kimberly Gray, carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn by Kirk Noonan, seconded by Alex McKay, carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

ATTEST:

Dave Barone, Board Chair

Beth Gilmore, Executive Director