



REGULAR MEETING

July 15, 2025, at 8:30 a.m.
Town Board Meeting Room
9 S. Main Street

MINUTES

Downtown Waynesville Commission Chair Jon Feichter called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. with the following members present:

Leisa Denti
Kirk Noonan
Joyce Massie
Jessica Garrick
Sam Kearney
Hannah White

The following Town Staff was present: Beth Gilmore, DWC Executive Director

Others present: Carol Adams, Vicinities Haywood
Sarah White, The Mountaineer Newspaper
Becky & Charlie Trump, Olde Brick House

DWC Chair Feichter welcomed board members and introduced newly appointed member, Leisa Denti.

There were no public comments or board comments, and no additions or deletions for the agenda.

A motion by Jessica Garrick to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Kirk Noonan, carried unanimously.

Brian Harvat and Ava Harvat with Slingshot, Inc. presented a marketing proposal for fiscal year 2025-26 that included a "Four-pilar" plan designed to provide consistent communication and further brand development. The plan covers 12 months of marketing through social media and email marketing campaigns, website content creation and event promotion for \$35,200 for one year.

DWC Board Member Sam Kearney said she appreciated the straightforward presentation and agreed that consistent messaging is key. Board Member Kirk Noonan asked Brian Harvat to provide samples of other Slingshot projects.

DWC Chair Feichter asked if the proposal can be scaled back if the board decides they only need certain services, and if the proposal includes the placement of ads or merely the design work.

Brian Harvat, Slingshot owner, explained that the plan can be modified and scaled down and confirmed that the proposal covers creation and coordination of marketing assets and not the actual ad buy.

DWC Board Member Joyce Massie asked questions about event promotions and confirmed that the Church Street Art & Craft Show, Appalachian Heritage Festival, Holiday events and Summer Saturday music is included in the proposed plan. Smaller events like Street Dances and Treats on the Street will be promoted through social media but will now have a full promotions package like larger events.

Brian and Ava Harvat signed out and left the meeting. DWC board members discussed the Slingshot Inc. proposal and the pending Kanipe Creative marketing proposal that was presented to the board in May. DWC Director Gilmore agreed to pass along the Slingshot portfolio to board members when she receives it. She said she is preparing a Google Drive file that all board members will be able to access for copies of estimates and proposals, and all other important operating documents including meeting agenda information and minutes, financial reports and budget forms, annual work plan materials and board rules & procedures.

DWC Committee Chairs provided updates on committee projects.

DWC Board Members received draft copies of Articles of Incorporation prepared by Town Attorney Martha Bradley for the DWC's 501(c)3 nonprofit arm. Board Chair Feichter directed board members to review the paperwork, respond with feedback by email to the entire board and prepare for a formal discussion during next month's board meeting.

During a discussion about the district brochure pending final review and approval, Promotions Committee Chair Sam Kearney said she recommends doing with a rack card design displaying a QR code link to directory information, as an alternative to the proposed trifold brochure featuring a full district map. A full map should be displayed on signage installed throughout town and the rack card QR code will link guests to a digital file of that same map. Utilizing rack cards with a QR code will make edits easy to manage.

A motion by Joyce Massie to have rack cards printed with QR codes linked to a digitized district map and directory, seconded by Sam Kearney, carried unanimously.

Promotions Chair Kearney said the aim of the organization's communications plan is twofold. There are two audiences: Visitors and MSD Merchants. The Slingshot Inc. marketing proposal echoed everything I have laid out for the communications plan, including a monthly newsletter to merchants that allows merchants to respond directly to that email. She recommends hosting a quarterly meeting for merchants and an annual merchant gathering. She said Mail Chimp is a robust and familiar email subscription service.

DWC Chair Feichter and Kearney agreed that it would be good for board members to make in-person visits to district businesses to express the board's intention to improve communications and confirm preferred methods and points of contact.

Feichter and Massie volunteered to visit businesses, and, in the process, help gather statistical information for the annual report due at the end of the month.

DWC Director Gilmore asked how board members want to display the “Scannable Signs” created by Kanipe, and board members agreed that maps should be displayed as large signs installed at each district access point and high traffic areas. DWC Board members Garrick and Kearney will work together to identify where directory style signs should be placed.

DWC Board Members agreed to move forward with an order for table tents and window clings, to do accompany the signs.

DWC Events Coordinator Joyce Massie asked for an update on plans for upcoming events.

DWC Member Noonan said he has been working on plans for a merchant social on September 10 at Sauced but is reconsidering the location after speaking with the manager of the new Roost Chophouse restaurant scheduled to open in August. Noonan suggested that hosting the event there will be a good opportunity for the new business owners to showcase the new restaurant. He suggested the social be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on September 10. He estimates the cost to be around \$25 per person. Planning for 50 to 60 people will require a minimum budget of \$1,500 to \$2,000.

A motion by Kirk Noonan to host a merchant social on September 10 and spend up to \$2,000, seconded by Jessica Garrick, carried unanimously.

Executive Director Gilmore said she recently met with Board Member Jerry Jackson to discuss plans for a merchant forum, and they agreed that waiting until the first part of the new year would be best to allow more time to plan and not interfere with the merchant social and holiday season. Jackson agreed to continue with plans for a merchant forum in January 2026.

DWC Member Massie said there are 63 art & craft vendors confirmed for the Church Street Art & Craft Show on October 11. Applications are still coming in and will continue to be processed until a final show layout has been confirmed.

During the Design Committee report, DWC Director Gilmore said she will order string lights from Mosca for the Church Street project and the small alleyway leading to the Modern Deer store. Design Chair Noonan said he spoke with someone about fabricating 13-foot stanchions. He has requested pricing for 4- and 6-inch diameter stanchions, with powder coating. The Design Committee is also preparing plans for a shade structure for musicians at the Miller Street intersection and an enhancement plan for the mini park at the corner of Depot Street.

DWC Member Massie said the electrical outlets on some of the light poles do not work. Board Chair Feichter, agreed to talk with the Electric Department Superintendent about having the outlets repaired.

Economic Vitality Committee Chair Hannah White said the July meeting was cancelled due to a lack of agenda items. Sales tax is up, she said, but we don’t know how much of that is due to inflation. Occupancy taxes are down across the state. White is working with Haywood County Tourism Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce leaders to process results from a post-Helene impact survey to determine small business needs. Our biggest need currently is for small business funding, she said.

DWC Director Gilmore reported that Town Councilmembers voted to approve a 3-year subscription with Placer.ai and she, Chair Feichter and Parks & Rec Director Luke Kinsland would start the onboarding and training process in the next few weeks. Town Councilmembers when they voted to approve the subscription stipulated that a policy is needed to

define the parameters for making market data available to merchants for their own private business, before that information is offered and made available.

Board Chair Feichter said he strongly believes the DWC should make the information available to merchants and “we need to figure out a way to make it happen.” He requested volunteers to serve on a team to explore issues that need to be addressed and draft a policy for board feedback and council’s approval. DWC Member Noonan volunteered to be part of the team. Feichter suggested the DWC host an informational meeting to educate merchants about the service and share market data.

In her director’s report, Gilmore said she is wrapping up the annual statistics report for N.C. Main Street leaders and program accreditation, due by July 31. She will be in Boone August 4 - 7 for the N.C. Main Street Director’s Conference, back on Main Street August 8 for the mountain street dance.

The next DWC meeting will be held on August 19 at 8:30 a.m.

A motion to adjourn by Kirk to adjourn, seconded by Joyce, carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.