

DOWNTOWN WAYNESVILLE COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

February 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.
Municipal Building Conference Room

The Downtown Waynesville Commission (DWC) Chair Jay Spiro called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with the following members present:

Joyce Massie
Bob Williams
Susanne Blumer
Ashley Rice
Jeremiah Smith
Jessica Garrick
Pratik Shah
Alex McKay

Present by Zoom: Thomas Woltz

Town staff members present:

Jesse Fowler, Assistant Town Manager
Beth Gilmore, Executive Director

Chair Spiro praised board members for earning accreditation from the Main Street America program and the hard work that made it possible. It's been less than one year since the current board was sworn in, and already so much has been accomplished.

A motion by Susanne Blumer to approve minutes from meetings on October 18 and November 15 was seconded by Joyce Massie and carried unanimously.

Executive Director Gilmore presented the final draft of a mission statement crafted by members of the DWC during the January planning retreat with John Hornsby.

The statement reads: *The mission of the Downtown Waynesville Commission is to promote healthy economic growth while preserving the authentic fabric of downtown Waynesville. We encourage quality stewardship of our small Appalachian town. As a unique group of merchants, residents, artists, craftsmen, and entrepreneurs, we celebrate a culture of diversity and work together to build a thriving community where everyone feels at home.*

A motion by Ashley Rice to adopt the proposed mission statement was seconded by Susanne Blumer and carried unanimously.

Executive Director Gilmore presented the final draft of a 2023-24 annual work plan that was submitted for Main Street accreditation along with the annual assessment for 2022. Gilmore asked for board input about how projects and action items should be prioritized.

DWC members agreed to omit several action items, including: to coordinate marketing efforts with the Year of the Trail campaign; to design a bandstand structure for the Depot Street mini park; to develop an interactive Appalachian Trail event on Main Street and implementing a rewards program.

Several action items were added, including: install a series of “bumpouts” along Main Street; support the Downtown Waynesville Association’s historic Arch project and develop a “Town Square” area between the proposed Arch and the East/Church Street intersection.

A motion by Susanne Blumer to approve the annual work plan with revisions was seconded by Pratik Shah and carried unanimously.

Executive Director Gilmore provided an update on plans to launch a “name brand” Appalachian heritage event in April 2024. Gilmore has been meeting regularly with a team from Haywood Community College (HCC) and Morgan Beryl, Haywood County Arts Council (HCAC) Director, and a partnership has been formed with the intent of launching a 2-day event that celebrates Appalachian heritage. Preliminary plans are to kick off the event with a Friday night concert on the campus of HCC, followed by a Saturday vendor market on Main Street that features mountain history, art, music, dance, customs and traditions through live demonstrations and educational displays. The event will end with the HCAC’s second annual “Hootenany” fundraiser on Saturday evening. A meeting is scheduled for March to invite representatives from Folkmoot and The Shelton House to join the partnership. Each partner will ask for TDA grant funding to help with their portion of the event.

A motion by Bob Williams to move forward with plans for an Appalachian heritage event in April 2024 was seconded by Joyce Massie and carried unanimously.

Events Subcommittee Chair Alex McKay presented a calendar of events proposed for the upcoming year.

A motion by Susanne Blumer to approve the 2023-24 events calendar as presented was seconded by Ashley Rice and carried unanimously.

After a brief discussion about the traditional “A Night Before Christmas” event, DWC members agreed they would like to host the event for one night only in conjunction with the Live Nativity at First Baptist Church. A second date should be reserved as a possible “rain date” should there be inclement weather.

A motion by Susanne Blumer to host the traditional “A Night Before Christmas” event for one night only on December 9 was seconded by Alex McKay and carried unanimously.

Executive Director Gilmore announced that a TDA grant was awarded for \$5,000 for the “Feichter alley mural project.” Given John Hornsby’s extensive experience with mural and sign design and installation and his familiarity with the DWC’s branding efforts, vision and strategic plan, Gilmore requested an estimate for mural design services by Hornsby Creative.

A motion by Joyce Massie to approve Hornsby Creative’s estimate for mural design for \$_____ was seconded by Susanne Blumer and carried unanimously.

The DWC's next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on March 21 at 8:30 a.m.

A motion by Ashley Rice to adjourn was seconded by Susanne Blumer and carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jay Spiro, Board Chair

Beth Gilmore, Executive Director

Attachments:

- Accreditation letter
- Mission Statement
- Final Annual Work Plan
- 2023-24 Events calendar