



**Monticello Downtown
Development Authority**

139 W. Washington St.
Monticello, GA 31064

Meeting Minutes – 04/12/2021

Regular Board Meeting – 04/12/2021
Location – 351 S. Forsyth St. Monticello, GA 31064

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM by Wendall Yoder.

Judy Hunsucker gave the invocation.

Gail Harrell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Attendees Present:

Wendall Yoder
Judy Hunsucker
Michele Celani
Gail Harrell
Towonder Dennis
Nanette Manning
Daniel Jeffries

Attendees Absent:

None

Approval of the Minutes

- Chair Yoder stated the date needed to be changed from 02/08/21 to 03/08/21
- Gail Harrell stated her position title needed to be changed from “Mayor Pro Temp” to “Mayor Pro Tem”

- Director Harrell made a motion to accept the 03/08/21 minutes with the two changes as noted
- Vice Chair Hunsucker seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

Approval of the Agenda

- Chair Yoder made several corrections:
 1. New Business to be discussed before Old Business
 2. Add a discussion of trash cans on the square as letter “i” under New Business
 3. Add the window replacement project to letter “a” of Economic Development
 4. Hold the executive session before the Design Committee discussion
 5. Add a discussion of Microsoft Teams as letter “c” under Old Business
 6. Add the discussion of a 2-person exploratory committee as letter “d” under Old Business
- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to approve the agenda with the 6 changes as stated by the Chair
- Director Jeffries seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

Citizens Comments

- Wanda Cummings, manager of The Shoppes of Monticello, gave a report on The Shoppes during March. She stated the Facebook posts are bringing in some of the customers. She also stated that March Madness was a success and many of the winners were customers from The Shoppes. She stated The Shoppes is still in need of business cards and a phone line. Beginning the first of April, she began on the Mother’s Day and Senior Citizens Day promotions.
- Tasha Williams, candidate for DDA Board Member, spoke on her interest in joining the board. She stated she owns Mail and More which sells various office supplies and fulfills some printing services. She stated she was one of the original DDA board members when it first started. She has enjoyed seeing all the growth in the town and wants to support the board in any way she can.
- Jennifer Stanley, candidate for DDA Board Member, spoke on her interest in joining the board. She stated that she grew up spending her summers in Monticello and loves what the small town has to offer. She stated that one of her goals is to help welcome and grow the younger and middle-aged community in Monticello. She stated whether she becomes a board member or not, she will support the DDA as they help and support the younger community here. She owns Cotton Lake Market, which is now a home-based business.

Executive Director Report

- Executive Director Celani gave the Executive Director's Report. She gave a recap of the Stakeholder's Meeting held on March 8th. She stated there was representatives from the County Commissioners, City of Monticello, Chamber of Commerce, Bank of Monticello, Ameris Bank, Monticello News, Jasper County Charter School System, the Jasper County Historical Foundation, Historic Preservation Commission, Springfield Baptist Church, and St. John CME church, as well as local merchants and residents. The Youth Advisory Council was also presented at the meeting and held a joint board meeting with DDA.

She also stated the DDA Board held a retreat for the board members facilitated by Tara Bradshaw, Economic Development Specialist in Dublin, for the purpose of goal setting and team-work building. DDA decided to focus on three main areas – community serving, foundations, and placemaking.

Executive Director Celani also stated the board approved \$500 for downtown dollars and the unused portion from November will be used to give to our senior citizens for Older American Day on May 21st.

She also gave a report that the public art projects have been approved by the Historic Preservation Commission and have begun being painted in the alley between City Hall and Rusted Roots.

- Vice Chair Hunsucker commented that Executive Director Celani stated she will be attending a meeting with Melissa Horton on April 29th to focus on helping the African American Community here and she would like to attend as well.

Treasurer's Report

- Chair Yoder gave the Treasurer's Report for the month of March. He stated several projects have been completed such as the building of a wall to completely divide the DDA offices from The Shoppes of Monticello and the mural projects have been budgeted for and payments have been made on them
- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report
- Director Dennis seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

New Business

- On-Boarding Packet – Chair Yoder discussed putting together an on-boarding packet for the board that would have standard forms for all board members to fill out and candidates that wanted to apply
- Merchandising – Chair Yoder discussed branding the DDA and creating a brand for The Shoppes of Monticello. Director Jeffries commented that many people do not know who the DDA is and what we do. Vice Chair Hunsucker stated that all branding should fall under the promotions committee.
- Committee Setup and Structure – Chair Yoder discussed that under the Main Street Program, committees are standing and long-term. Because a lot of projects are short-term, it may be beneficial to create temporary committees for specific projects. Director Harrell said that there should be both committees – standing and temporary. Chair Yoder stated the Admin Committee would be a standing committee. Director Dennis stated that creating project-focused committee would better allow each board member to use their talents more effectively.

Vice Chair Hunsucker stated the Economic Development Committee should also be long standing because it is an on-going search. Executive Director Celani stated that economic development should be the responsibility of every board member and information can be shared freely.

Old Business

- Microsoft Teams – Chair Yoder stated that the board needs to officially move to Microsoft Teams as approved earlier to allow for better communication.
- Committee Structure – Chair Yoder stated the board will move to committees as needed and the only standing committee will be the Administration Committee.
- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to create the committee structure as stated by the Chair and that members of the committee are appointed by the Chair. The Chair will not stand on any committees.
- Director Dennis seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

New Business

- Broadband – Chair Yoder stated that the board was asked by the Jasper County Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce to sign a letter encouraging the

Commissioners to spend money to get the broadband. The letter was emailed to all board members previously. Director Harrell asked the city manager, Angela Redding to comment. Angela Redding stated that she attended the county commissioners meeting and they discussed the commissioners are making decisions on it. Director Jeffries stated that if the board asks the commissioners to spend money, they have the same right to ask our board. Vice Chair Hunsucker stated it is not appropriate to tell someone else how to run their board. Angela Redding further commented that a letter of support would be better than a letter of demand. Executive Director Celani stated that our board should simply only collaborate with others.

- Director Jeffries made a motion to show support of the broadband but not sign the letter
- Director Harrell seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

- Treasurer Appointment – Chair Yoder stated he has been serving as Treasurer but now that the board is full, he cannot be both Chair and Treasurer.
- Vice Chair Hunsucker nominated Daniel Jeffries to be the new Treasurer
- Director Manning seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

- Job Fair – Chair Yoder discussed that the businesses here are in desperate need of labor. He spoke to the high school students and they are looking for jobs but do not know where to go. The board should host a job fair. Director Dennis stated that the job fair should be before the schools get out for the summer for those looking for summer jobs
- Director Harrell made a motion to proceed with the job fair
- Director Dennis seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

- Chair Yoder created the Job Fair committee with Director Dennis in charge and all board members are welcome to help

- Electric Charging Stations – Vice Chair Hunsucker stated she was approached by Dr. Hardy about creating an electric charging station in Monticello. She stated other cities around us are adding them and we need to get Monticello on the map. People from other cities don't travel through Monticello because there is no place to charge their vehicles.
- Treasurer Jeffries made a motion to create an exploratory committee for the electric charging stations
- Vice Chair Hunsucker seconded
- Chair Yoder created an exploratory committee for the electric charging stations with Director Manning in charge and Treasurer Jeffries assisting.

- City Trash Cans – Director Harrell stated she received an email asking the board to add more trash cans to the downtown square. Trash cans could be sponsored by various businesses. Executive Director Celani stated this should go before the Historic Preservation Commission to ensure everything maintains within regulations. Director Harrell stated that trash remains a big concern for the city. More trash cans may help with the problem, or it may not. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting.

Promotions Committee

- Executive Director Celani stated that the board needs to approve money from the downtown dollars budget to be used for the Older American Day on May 21st
- Treasurer Jeffries made a motion to use the \$200 from the approved downtown dollars budget for the Older American Day on May 21st
- Director Harrell seconded
- Unanimous approval vote

Old Business

- Trees on the Square – Chair Yoder stated that the Chamber of Commerce rejected helping with the removal and replacement of the trees on the square. He stated the trees are becoming a bigger concern because they are tearing up the sidewalks and causing tripping hazards. If the trees are to be removed, the replacement must be well accepted by the community.
- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to explore further ideas and options and to work with Angela Redding for an original design for the replacement of the trees on the downtown square
- Director Dennis seconded
- Unanimous approval vote
- Chair Yoder put Vice Chair Hunsucker in charge of the committee with Treasurer Jeffries assisting
- Fundraising – Chair Yoder stated there needs to be a committee working on fundraising for the board
- Chair Yoder put Vice Chair Hunsucker in charge of the Fundraising Committee with adding volunteers as needed

Executive Session

- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to adjourn the meeting so the board can go into executive session
- Treasurer Jeffries seconded

- Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 PM
- Treasurer Jeffries made a motion to end the executive session
- Director Dennis seconded
- Executive session ended at 7:49PM

New Business Cont.

- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to go back into regular session
- Treasurer Jeffries seconded
- Unanimous approval vote
- Chair Yoder checked for any attendees waiting outside
- Chair Yoder discussed adding the guitar and music notes to The Welcome Mural instead of the Thomas Persons Hall
- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to finalize the design of the Welcome Mural by replacing Thomas Persons Hall with a guitar and music notes at the artist's discretion and what she deems necessary
- Director Harrell seconded
- Unanimous approval vote
- Executive Director Celani presented the paint purchase of \$735.75 to complete the Art Alley with an estimated \$200 shipping charge. The \$350 raised during the grand opening of The Shoppes has been put towards this cost
- Director Dennis made a motion to approve the \$585.75 purchase for paint for Art Alley
- Treasurer Jeffries seconded
- Unanimous approval vote
- Director Dennis made a motion for building keys to only be given to the Executive Director and the Administration Committee members
- Director Harrell seconded
- Unanimous approval vote
- Chair Yoder stated the board is needing a debit card to be used for small and online purchases. Treasurer Jeffries stated there needs to be a checks and balance system in place for this.
- Vice Chair Hunsucker made a motion to approve a debit card in the Chair's name from Ameris Bank to the DDA Account and with monthly reconciliation to be made by The Treasurer
- Director Dennis seconded

- Unanimous approval vote
- Treasurer Jeffries made a motion to adjourn the meeting
- Director Dennis seconded
- Meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM