

MEETING MINUTES

City of Newnan
Downtown Development Authority
Wednesday, July 14, 2020
8:00 am – Newnan City Hall
25 Lagrange Street- Council Chamber Room

Members Present: Ray Dubose, Casey Smith , Jim Thomasson, Graylin Ward

Members Absent: Keith Brady, Martha Ann Parks, Brant Frost

Staff Present: Courtney Harcourt, Abigail Strickland, Hasco Craver

Visitors Present: Laurel Huster

The meeting was called to order at 8:02am.

The previous meeting minutes were reviewed by the Authority. Casey Smith made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the previous meeting as presented to the Authority. Jim Thomasson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Courtney Harcourt presented the Financial Report to the Authority, noting the following account balances:

- a. BOZ Primary: 22,563.51
- b. MMI 113,595.37
- c. YTD:
 - i. Income:\$7,674.11
 - ii. Expense:\$15,061.16

Jim Thomasson asked staff if there was an end of year projection for 2020. Courtney Harcourt expressed the difficulty of knowing how the rest of the year will look with the COVID-19 Crisis. Courtney Harcourt noted that staff is currently spending less and focusing on projects that are in line with the 2020 POW. Courtney Harcourt noted there are many expenses that the program would have typically incurred but have not this year, such as conference/training expenses, and some advertising expenses. Harcourt also noted that the program's income will be significantly less this year compared to years past. Ray DuBose commented that he is hopeful that the program will be able to host at least four markets and another large income event. Graylin Ward inquired as to whether we there should be a freeze on spending. Courtney Harcourt stated that it would be harmful to the downtown businesses to freeze spending and recommended the Authority consider maintaining the program.

Staff presented information to the Authority related to the fall event calendar. Several upcoming events and cancellation deadlines were announced. Staff noted that there had been no changes in the recommendations that have been provided by the CDC, or updates to the Governor's Executive orders for hosting special events. Staff noted that the City of Newnan had updated their current operations in respect to Covid-19. Staff noted that the number of Covid-19 cases

and deaths in Coweta County continue to increase, noting that there have been spikes in recent weeks that have been addressed by members of the community. Staff noted that there is an 81% chance of encountering someone with Covid-19 in Coweta County in a crowd of 100 people. Staff suggested that the Authority consider the following options for August Market Day:

- **Host Full Market: eliminate tastings, samples, require PPE**
- **Host Market at First Avenue Park in conjunction with a Retail Roll-out. Space out vendors, eliminate tastings, require PPE.**
- **Host Market on the Square with limited capacity and close streets. Eliminate tastings, samples, require PPE, and work with NPD and volunteers.**
- **Host Roll-Out Market for Annual Vendors**
- **Postpone another month**

Casey Smith stated that it was up to the visitors of the event to decide whether they feel comfortable attending the event. Ray DuBose asked Hasco Craver to provide his input regarding city staff being present at the event. Hasco Craver noted that staff would not be required to work the event if staff felt uncomfortable. Jim Thomasson noted that at the last meeting the Authority voted to host the Labor Day Road Race because it is important to the community. He also noted that downtown businesses are relying on the income from the events. Jim Thomasson stated that we need to make the effort to put on the event and attendance from the community is voluntary. Graylin Ward suggested that we do whatever we can to maximize safety and ensure the vendors are spaced appropriately. Casey Smith inquired if we could spread the vendors throughout the downtown district. Courtney Harcourt reverted back to the Roll Out Market as a way to spread vendors throughout the entire district. Graylin Ward reminded the Authority that in previous years Festival Days during Labor Day weekend, vendors were spread all over the district. Casey Smith asked staff how the Market Vendors feel about participating in the market. Courtney Harcourt noted that many of the vendors are eager to participate and recommended that the Authority only consider hosting Annual Vendors for the August Market Day because they are experienced vendors. Jim Thomasson stated it should be kept simple, and only in one location. Casey Smith inquired as to how staff feels about hosting the event. Courtney Harcourt stated different information comes out daily regarding COVID-19, and her level of comfort changes daily based on the information. Harcourt noted that she would feel uncomfortable providing a recommendation to the Authority for these reasons. Ray DuBose asked Hasco Craver if Newnan City Council would need to approve the street closures for the event. Hasco Craver noted that the city Manager's Office has authority limited to closing parking spaces, and that requests for street closures would have to go before Newnan City Council. Casey Smith inquired how many vendors could participate if we only close one street. Abigail Strickland stated one street can hold approximately 14 vendors, and two streets would be necessary to host all Annual Vendors. Courtney Harcourt reminded the Authority that the event is meant to bring business to the downtown businesses. Jim Thomasson agreed that events and street closures are a part of being downtown. Casey Smith stated that we should give the community credit on making a decision to attend. Casey Smith made a motion to request the closure of North and South Court Square for August Market Day to City Council. Jim Thomasson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

There is no new business to report.

Abigail Strickland provided the manager's report. Abigail Strickland noted that a survey had been sent out to businesses to gather information about the "Retail Roll Out" promotion. The Retail Roll Out was explained as an opportunity for downtown businesses to expand their business onto the sidewalks and/or available public spaces (with permission) to increase foot traffic in the district. Strickland noted that staff had put a name to this idea that was previously discussed by the Authority during the May 2020 DDA Board meeting. During the Retail Roll Out, visitors are invited to walk the downtown streets and browse through blocks of merchandise outside retail locations. Abigail Strickland stated that the program is continuing to investigate expanding the social media campaign Take Out Tuesday into a brown bag lunch music series depending on the trends of Covid-19.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52am.

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, August 12, 2020
8:00am – Newnan City Hall