

CORNELIA



DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY

DDA/Main Street Board Meeting AGENDA

Thursday, August 3, 2017 8:30AM
Cornelia Depot

1. Meeting called to order- Brian Horton 8:34 AM
2. Adopt Agenda
3. Financials- Loan Fund- \$72,343.04; Façade Grant- \$3,956.95; Operating \$4,516.48
4. Old Business
 - A) **4PM- Update- Jessie to update the board about the meetings last week with 4PM and the upcoming tasks from 4PM in the bank building-** 4PM spent the day in Cornelia last week. They met with Jessie and toured the Bank building and the buildings on Hodges Street. The met with the City Manager, the City's grant writer, three local realtors, two prospective tenants, and Tim Lee. They went home with an overload of information to use toward the next step. They came back Tuesday night and met with the mayor and commissioners to introduce themselves and the scope of the project. They will now work toward a proposal for best uses based on the information they gathered during their visit. After approval of the analysis and best uses, they will begin to source for local architects and engineers to help with the design and put out RFQ's for contractors. The plan to break ground by summer of 2018 with completion by 2020.
 - B) **Work Plan 2017- Update- Each board member should have taken some action steps on the work plan by now and we will review each one, as we need to provide a progress report to the commissioners, as well as Joel Cordle. Please be ready to discuss.** There were a couple of items on the agenda that have not been completed. Jessie asked Don to help her get the downtown apartment inventory addresses. She has been unable to get the information. Don told Jessie to go through the city's water meters, as he doesn't plan to help with that action item. Another item is reducing the lot sizes of properties so that you can build new housing in the downtown market. Brian said that he and Don attended a meeting about that sometime earlier and he thinks it was adopted. Jessie said she would double check with Dee and see if that was accurate. Other than that, everything on the Work Plan is either in progress or complete. We have set our annual retreat for November 9th. We will hire Joel Cordle to facilitate again and Jessie will look for a new venue.
 - C) **BRAF Update- Jessie to update everyone on the progress. Habersham Bicentennial potentially joining, as well as Piedmont Alumni Association.** Jessie will attend a Habersham Bicentennial meeting today to confirm if they will join with the Big Red Apple Festival for their celebration. She also said that Piedmont will do an alumni event. Don asked what that was and Jessie explained. It's good exposure for the event. Brentt also mentioned that the Ecological Planning Group will have a booth to try to get community involvement and public opinion to help with our comp plan update. Jessie said having all these extra events will help attract more volunteers, more marketing, more attendance.

D) Chenocetah Tower- **Jessie to update on the success of opening Chenocetah Tower and plans for opening in the future. We need volunteer help to make this happen.** Jessie said that in the 12 hours the tower was open, there were 368 people who toured the tower. She said it was very successful. In discussing ways to keep it open every other weekend without relying heavily on volunteers, which Brian and Don agreed would not be steady, Brentt suggested that Lonny split his hours on Saturday between the tower and the depot, which seems more realistic. Jessie will discuss with City Manager and with Lonny to brainstorm ideas on how to make it work because there is a huge want for it in the city. Jessie also said that the US Forest Service is going to try to donate a uniform to have on display as well.

E) City Manager Update-

1. The contractor for the Level Grove sidewalk project feels that the project is about 45 days from completion. This is phase 1 of the project and goes from Wells Streets to Wayside Street. The city hopes to be able to fund the second phase of the project in 2018 which will go from Wayside Street to the 441 bypass. The estimated cost for phase 2 is \$1.2 million.
2. The property has been cleared and the grading has begun for the new water plant and reservoir. The contractor hopes to have the building constructed by the end of December. The project began in May and will take 24 months to complete.
3. The city has chosen an architect for the new Municipal Complex and staff has already met with them twice. They have presented the city with 4 potential layouts for the complex to choose from. We hope to begin construction within 9 months. Demolition on the old service station and the Windstream building will begin as soon as the asbestos in the Windstream building is complete.
4. The engineering is underway for the waste water treatment plant expansion which is necessary to accommodate Fieldale's expansion. The estimated cost for this project is \$13 million.
5. We have begun working on an application for an ARC grant for the Appletree Alley streetscape project. ARC is a 50/50 grant program so the city will still need \$300,000 in matching funds to complete the project.
6. Code Enforcement took our first structure before the Municipal Judge under our Unfit for Human Habitation ordinance that was enacted in December. The Judge has ruled that since the necessary repairs exceed 50% of the value of the structure the owner must demolish the structure and cleanup the property within 60 days. We have 6 other properties that will be brought before the Judge this month.
7. The Steering Committee for the Comprehensive Plan Update held its first meeting this week. I was unable to attend the meeting but based on feedback from Jessie and our consultant the meeting went very well. Our consultant feels that we have put together a very good committee. The comp plan is very important because it lays out the plan for development and capital projects for the next 10 years. In the past the city has partnered with the county and other municipalities on the comp plan. We have chosen to do our own this time so that it will better reflect the needs of the city. A large part of the project will be the review and update of our Zoning Ordinance in order to better suit the vision of the city today. The existing ordinance was written in 2005 so it does not reflect the current vision for Cornelia.
8. The city's audit firm completed the audit for fiscal year 2016 in June. I am happy to report that for the 10th year in a row there were no management findings to report. What this means is that the city has not done anything illegal or questionable with our finances. Not to brag but our auditor informed us that of the 5 governmental agencies that he audits we are the only one that did not have any management findings. The audit shows that the city is in very good financial shape!

5. New Business

- A) Solar Eclipse Event- **Jessie to inform the board about the happenings surrounding this event.** Jessie said so as not to compete with the other events planned for the solar eclipse, but to serve our own community, the museum purchased 400 pairs of glasses. Everyone who takes a tour of the museum will receive a free pair. We will also have the museum open on the day of the eclipse, so people will be able to get glasses right up until it's time.
- B) Downtown Signage- The City is trying to get downtown signage. There is a PowerPoint presentation that was presented to GDOT . We need their permission to put the signs up because it's on their right-of-ways. The signs that we can put on our own right-of-ways, we will go ahead and do. Some of the signs will be green GDOT signs just pointing toward downtown Cornelia from the major highways. Once you get to the downtown district, there will be historic signage with business listings in the district. Jessie has met with the sign guy and determined the best places for the signs. We are just waiting on the GO from GDOT to put them up. This project is going to cost upward of \$15,000, but we feel it is necessary and will tremendously help with tourism.
- C) Sign Grant Application- Ninth District Opportunity- Mike Fisher and Chrystal Coker came in and introduced themselves to the board. They also gave a description of what they do. It's a non-profit whose offices are out of Hall County. The Cornelia office serves the entire county. After review and discussion of the application, Don motioned that we approve the grant at the full allotment, which would be \$405.26. That motion was seconded by Brentt Cody, all approved, none opposed.
- D) Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate- A motion was made by Brentt to table Executive Session until Dee could be in attendance. That motion was seconded by Matt Cathey and all approved. Executive Session will pick up again next month.

6. Upcoming Events: Big Red Apple Festival, October 7

7. Next Regular Board Meeting: **Thursday, September 7, 2017** at the Depot

8. Adjourn

Present: Amanda Chosewood, Brian Horton, Matt Cathey, Jessie Owensby, Heath Barrett, Brentt Cody, Don Higgins

Absent: Donald Anderson

Guests: Mike Fisher, Chrystal Coker

Ex-Oficio- Joshua Barrett, Bill Loyd