



Downtown Development Authority of Blakely
MINUTES
Tuesday, January 28, 2025
5:30 pm
Alexander Building
Bynum Conference Room

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Dave Atkins, Jennifer Mulkey, Beau Clenney, Heather Allred, and Franklin Ford.

ABSENT MEMBERS: Edwin James and Brad Clenney

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Susanne Reynolds, Vikki Ford and Celia Bostwick

Dave Atkins, DDA Chairman, called the meeting to order.

- **MINUTES:** A motion to approve the Nov. 18, 2024 meeting minutes was made by Franklin Ford and seconded by Heather Allred. All voted in favor.
- **FINANCIAL REPORT:** A motion to approve the financial report was made by Heather Allred and seconded by Beau Clenney. All voted in favor.
- **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - 52-Week Gun Raffle Final Sales Report: Franklin Ford reported \$34,875.51 in the raffle account at FSB. Atkins recommended transferring \$30,000 to the general operating account at GCB and the remainder of funds to be used for next year's raffle. Ford made a motion to approve the recommendation and Heather Allred seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
 - Christmas Ornament Final Sales Report: Reynolds reported that 73 of the 100 ornaments were sold. A profit of \$70 was generated to be used for next year's ornaments. Reynolds will pick up remaining ornaments at Funny Girl.
 - Main Street 101 Training: Reynolds reminded board to complete training by March 31st. Completers: Dave Atkins.
- **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - Election of Officers: Board members cast their votes on an index card for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer. Once votes were tallied by Reynolds, the majority of members present voted to keep Dave Atkins as the Chair, Jennifer Mulkey as the Vice-Chair; and Franklin Ford as the Secretary-Treasurer. A motion to approve as presented was made by Heather Allred and seconded by Jennifer Mulkey. All voted in favor. Allred mentioned in the future to ask if officers would like to continue to serve prior to voting.

- Facade Grant (2272 S. Main St.): Reynolds presented a facade grant application for an awning replacement on 2272 S. Main St. Contingent on the Historic Preservation Commissions approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, Jennifer Mulkey made a motion to approve \$1500 for the facade grant application. The motion was seconded by Franklin Ford. All voted in favor.
 - Adopting Action Items for 2025: Reynolds presented action items for FY2025, which were initially drafted for the Downtown Blakely Master Plan (Rural Zone). Board members selected items they'd like to take the lead on for the year. This is part of the Main Street Georgia Transformation Strategies and Work Plans. A motion to adopt the action items was made by Franklin Ford and seconded by Beau Clenney. All voted in favor.
- **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Dave Atkins commented on the importance of following through with the action items and goals for 2025. There are local organizations that have said they would do things to help the community, but no one ever does anything.
 - **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Don't forget to complete Main Street 101 Training course by March 31. Reynolds has been speaking with the ECM on a special series of Christmas ornaments. Priscilla Perkins will donate artwork. The proceeds will be split between the DDA and ECM. Stephanie Chandler can help make the ornaments for less than the cost of ordering. A community visioning session with Cullen Larson as the facilitator will need to be scheduled before the summer. This is a Main Street requirement and will help guide the work plans in an appropriate direction. Reynolds encouraged the board to read weekly economic development columns in the ECN.
 - **OTHER DISCUSSIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Celia Bostwick, Blakely-Early Co. Chamber of Commerce President, expressed several concerns: 1. Peanut Proud is in need of volunteers. Did the DDA know Peanut Proud almost didn't happen last year due to lack of volunteers? According to Bostwick, the DDA needs to improve on volunteer efforts in the community. 2. Food Truck Court - Who will have the final say so on the location? Who will enforce this? According to Bostwick, business owners, such as Brad Waller, are already planning for a prospective food court. The DDA needs to be aware of these efforts when planning for a Downtown Blakely Food Court. 3. People need to do what they say they are doing to do and collaborate with those already working towards these goals for Blakely. Reynolds "whole-heartedly" agreed. Vikki Ford commented in response to Bostwick. She said it was "very frustrating" to hear such negative comments presented when the DDA has been accomplishing goals in a short period of time. Ford commented that the goals of each organization in the community is different and that poor leadership is one of the reasons why people in the community have not wanted to participate in the past. Much of the work being done is to meet requirements associated with the Main Street Designation, which will open up more opportunities for improving Downtown Blakely.

Chairman Dave Atkins asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Heather Allred and seconded by Franklin Ford. All voted in favor.

Meeting minutes were recorded by Susanne Reynolds, DDA Director.

Dave Atkins
Chairman

Jennifer Mulkey
Vice Chair