MINUTES
DOWNTOWN NEWTON DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

April 23, 2015

The monthly meeting of the Downtown Newton Development Association Board of Directors was called to order by our Chairperson, Josh Cummings, on Thursday, April 23, 2015 at 6:04PM.

Members Present:
Teresa Blalock, Telisia Cloninger, Walt Cranford, Joshua Cummings, Ott Dillingham, Summer Jenkins, Dean Shepherd, Anne Stedman, Bo Teague and Anne Wepner.

Staff Present: Rob Powell, Randy Williams

Guests Present: Collette Touchette (Appearance Commission), Zachary Perry (Discovery High School), Marisa Carlton (Discovery High School), Jacob Dillingham (Discovery High School)

Absent: Jessica Setzer

There was a quorum present.

Ott Dillingham moved and Walt Cranford seconded that minutes of the March meeting be approved. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Balance: $5,988.08

Josh asked for an introduction of visitors from Discovery High School. The students were 10th and 11th graders working on a Leadership Project to assist Newton. The project will consist of redesigning Newton's website, adding the ability to digitally access historical information, adding a tagging feature to allow people to submit via smartphone photos of areas in need of beautification, and a citywide mobile app to feature all the information residents and visitors need to know about what's going on in Newton. Josh discussed the possibility of the students helping with tech updates for the DNDA's website and mobile app. Josh also asked each member to introduce themselves, and he gave a breakdown of all the committees within the DNDA.

Old Business:

Summer provided a Promotions committee report stating the group discussed the work plan and tasks to accomplish the goals that fall under the committee. She also mentioned the group has chosen Becky Webb as the chair for the "Light Up The Town" event, and they are currently trying to fill the chair spot for "Spooktacular". She stated the group seemed very interested, but are still in the learning stages of their new roles within the committee as part of the DNDA.

Josh provided an update on the Newton Noggin app. He stated Apple has put a 100% hold on all developer apps due to a bug that is crashing apps. Jacob Dillingham asked a few questions about the Noggin, and Josh explained the purpose of the app and invited him to attend our Promotions Committee meetings.

Rob passed out a sample of job descriptions from another MSP. After much discussion among the group, Dean Shepherd made a motion, and Teresa Blalock seconded that the group take descriptions home to review and discuss and vote on at the May meeting. Randy asked Rob to send out the job descriptions from the National MSP for everyone to review. All were in favor.

Randy stated that the position to replace Rob (MSP Manager) has been posted, and the position should be filled by July 1st.

Rob provided an update on the Work Plan. He mentioned he showed it to Liz to review and she said we were on the right track, but we needed to add names beside each task for who is responsible. He also stated we needed to revisit our mission and vision statements. Dean asked to see other MSP vision and mission statements and made a motion to table work plan discussion until May. Bo Teague seconded. All were in favor. Rob stated he would send out the work plan filled out with current goals and our vision and mission statements.

Josh discussed the possibility of memberships to the DNDA. He stated he ran the idea across Liz and she said we needed a 501 (c) 6 to raise funds with memberships. We are currently an established 501 (c) 3 but we can file as both and run together. Randy stated this allows for more opportunity for the DNDA. With a 501 (c) 3 you can allow sponsors for an event, but to allow sponsors for an actual organization, you must be a 501 (c) 6. Rob stated we would have to handle all (c) 3 business in a separate meeting from all (c) 6 business. Dean Shepherd made a motion, and Anne Wepner seconded that we file a 501 (c) 6. All were in favor. Telesia and Rob will work on filing.

Josh then brought up the discussion on what membership would be like for the DNDA and the benefits each would receive. He asked everyone to think of it like the chamber. Dean stated he reached out to the chamber to see if they could meet for ideas and suggestions. Anne Wepner suggested we compare to other towns not the chamber, and Josh stated we would be like the chamber but have a completely different directive and scope. Summer read a few of the benefits that the Organization Committee came up with: Business listed on the Newton Noggin, Business listed on DNDA website with hyperlink, exclusive digital newsletter, Stickers for windows stating "I AM Newton", Promotion of businesses, monthly networking meeting. Dean stated we needed benefits to sell the memberships. Teresa asked who would be responsible for selling the memberships. Rob stated adding memberships is part of the work plan, we just need to decide the goal of having a membership organization – money or awareness. Suggested price range:
Businesses - $25/month or $300/year
Individuals- $100/year

The group discussed a possible incentive for a cheaper rate if all paid in full at one time. Teresa and Anne Wepner stated we needed "internal perks". Josh said we could do a loyalty program on the Newton Noggin which would make it more valuable to individuals. Anne W stated we should setup a booth at Old Soldiers Reunion. The group was in full agreement to have benefits, but to keep it simple. Anne Wepner made a motion to add a project to the work plan to investigate membership and benefits, etc. Teresa Blalock seconded. All were in favor. Josh volunteered to be in charge of this task/goal with the help of Anne Wepner and Teresa Blalock. The goal is to have something decided by the end of July.

New Business:

Rob discussed future events that were taking place in Newton:

1. May 2nd – City wide Clean Up from 8:30 to 12:00PM
2. May 3rd – Art Reception (See Zara if you have any questions)
3. May 9th – Rotary Car Show from 9-3PM
4. May 17th - Unity Day
5. May 22-24th – Great Smokies Basketball Shootout

Randy Williams mentioned that Lincolnton was hosting a Shop Local event May 4-10th to thank their local merchants for being a part of downtown Lincolnton. He suggested this would be an idea we discuss for the future.

Rob stated that several of the way finding signs were up around Newton and eight more were scheduled to go up the following day. Jacob Dillingham suggested we add QR codes to the sign posts to direct pedestrians on foot and provide additional information.

Collette announced that the Appearance Committee is seeking nominations for an elderly individual who needs work done on their house. Application is on the City's website.

Rob passed out a façade grant application. Randy stated we needed to follow the following process to approve grants:

1. Application filed to Manager
2. Design Committee to Review
3. Design Committee make a recommendation to the Board before approval

All grant applications should be reviewed by the Design Committee prior to being mentioned at the Board meetings. Rob passed out the requirements for a façade grant. No decision was made on the grant application. The Design Committee will be asked to review the application.

Randy discussed the Annual Agreement with the North Carolina Main Street Center that needs to be signed by the Chair and MSP Manager. Josh read the benefits of the agreement: Partnership, Training, Technical Assistance, Networking, Funding, Resources, Economic Impact, and Recognition.

Randy discussed the "lease" for the current DNDA office and asked the Officers to stay after to sign.

Bo Teague mentioned that the new owner of the Old Salvation Army building is interested in more buildings and would like to attend an upcoming meeting. The group encouraged him to invite him to the May meeting.

Ott brought up the idea of having an auction after the parade. Anne Wepner stated we needed something after the parade to keep individuals around. She said we would definitely need some type of food. Other ideas were bounced around. Josh asked Ott to write down his idea and present to the Promotions Committee.

Ott Dillingham made a motion, and Dean Shepherd seconded that the meeting be adjourned. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:10PM.

Minutes submitted by Summer Jenkins

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, May 21, 2015 at 6:00PM.

Approved by DNDA Board Summer Jenkins