



ROME DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

September 14, 2023

Carnegie

607 Broad Street

MEETING MINUTES

Brock called the meeting to order at 8:34am and welcomed members, city staff and guests. Members present: Harry Brock, Rhonda Wallace, Randy Quick, Megan Watters, DJ Rickman, Tayesha Lytle0 and Kevin Dillmon. City staff present: Aundi Lesley, Jennifer Bailey, Kelley Parker, Ryan Strickland and Doug Walker. Guests present: David Crowder.

ACTION

Approve July 2023 Minutes – Lytle made a motion to approve the minutes. Watters seconded. All were in favor.

Approve BID Financials – Promotions account currently sits at \$53,973. Design account currently sits at \$92,241. Lesley reminded members that funding is available for façade grants. Watters made a motion to approve BID financials. Lytle seconded. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION

First Friday Recap – Lesley shared that downtown saw record-breaking attendance in 2023 for the First Friday concert series. June was the highest attended concert with 4.37k visitors to the Town Green and 19.62k to Downtown. July's attendance – 3.84k on the Town Green and 18.91k Downtown. August's attendance – 2.31k on the Town Green and 16.32k Downtown. September's attendance – 2.41k on the Town Green and 17.45k Downtown. Lesley also stated that Downtown is the highest visited area in Rome-Floyd County. Downtown hosted 25.33k guests on the day of the 2022 Fiddlin' Fest, 29.07k guests on the day of the 2022 Christmas parade, and 22.27k visitors on the day of RoFlo Fest 2023.

Parking Survey Results – A parking survey was sent out to the public in July 2023 in hopes that feedback would help the Parking Committee with future decisions regarding parking downtown. 141 responses were received. The survey shows that locals do not have a firm understanding of the parking program which deters them from spending time downtown. The committee would like to keep locals at the front of mind when make parking decisions.

Stakeholder Meeting – Downtown Development will be hosting a stakeholder meeting on October 19 at the City Auditorium. Invitees include downtown business owners, property owners and residents. This will be an opportunity to connect with the Downtown community, give them updates on all things downtown, and announce the new Promotions structure.

Fiddlin' Fest – Bailey-Bowers provided an update on current Fiddlin' Fest numbers. There are currently over 180 vendors which include craft, non-profit and food vendors. The Armuchee Ruritan Club will host the car show and are all set. DDA will begin announcing the band lineup on Facebook. Volunteers are desperately needed. Bailey-Bowers asked board members to sign up to volunteer, if possible.

Committee Reports –

- Design is currently working on Rotary Plaza. It is being pressure washed. Renderings for the space are being worked on.

Other/Adjourn –

- Lesley shared that staff will officially be moving to the Milner building on Friday, September 15.
- Lesley also shared that there will be a discussion at the upcoming Public Safety meeting regarding the noise ordinance.
- DDA hired off-duty officers to patrol Downtown, the Town Green, and the 3rd Avenue parking deck. It has been successful and will be extended through the first week of November. Officers' reports show that teenagers and the homeless population still pose as a challenge for downtown.
- Lytle asked when Christmas décor will be placed downtown. Per Lesley, that will be the week before Thanksgiving.
- A trip to Monroe, GA is being planned for the next board meeting. Monroe is a GEMS community and has a wonderful public art program.
- West 3rd Street - Pond has submitted landscaping drawings. The change in cost is currently slowing down the utility upgrades needed for the development. Doug Walker stated he had received updated drawings from Pond and would share those with DDA staff. Members questioned the design vetting process, as well as how design changes would affect the TAD. Parker will seek updates on the development.
- Brock called to adjourn the meeting at 9:23am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Bailey-Bowers, Recording Secretary