



## DDA/MainStreet Board Meeting AGENDA

Thursday, July 2nd, 2026 8:30 am

Cornelia City Hall: Downstairs Conference Room

Meeting called to order at 8:32am by Frank Wolf, seconded by Zach Staggs, all in favor.

Motion made to adopt agenda by Jace Reeder, seconded by Lindsay Dillbeck, all in favor.

### 1. Financials:

Operating-

\$6,337.40

Façade-

\$6,930.70

Savings-

\$20.11

### 2. Old Business

#### a. Click up- Update Tasks

Noah pulled up the DDA's Click Up page to review tasks that were either passed due or due within the next month. Noah read the tasks and the DDA members deliberated about said tasks, determining if they were completed or not. Noah marked the tasks that were completed and put an extension on the ones the members felt needed a little more time to address. Noah also removed members and staff who have left the board since the creation of it back in Nov 2025. Noah added new current members to take on the tasks of the absence members. Due to discussion about the budget taking most of the meeting. The board agreed to table discussion about click up tasks until the August meeting, to go into more depth.

### 3. New Business

#### a. Big Red Apple Festival

Noah went over the plan for Big Red Apple Festival this year. The plan is to leave food vendors on Clarkesville St, move promotional and craft vendors in Donald Anderson Park. Noah asked for as many of the board members who are able to attend and won't be running their business that day to help out with set up and event operations throughout the day. The board members who cannot assist agreed to do some volunteer recruiting to aid in their absence.

Jace Reeder asked if there would be live music in the park during the festival. Noah claimed there probably wouldn't be enough room with all the vendors and the construction of the theater. However, live entertainment next year with the completed stage will be a different story. Zach Staggs suggested having speakers in the park playing music to have no pockets of dead silence during the festival. Noah

mentioned that WCON attends every year and plays music through their own speakers, this could be a solution to Zach's suggestion.

Donald Anderson mentioned that Noah and him met with Kristen Lashoto regarding the 5k they put on the morning of the festival. This year the city and First Baptist Church will be partnering to aid in the marketing and overall support of the race. Noah mentioned to the board that an agreed idea upon during the meeting was to get with local businesses to provide coupons to the runners that would keep them in the city after the run.

#### b. Budget Discussion

The DDA is preparing to propose a budget to present to the City Commission. Donald Anderson was in attendance of the meeting to give guidance on how the process works considering the DDA has never inquired about funding from the city. Donald explained that the budget will go through Noah for approval and then the board will make the actual pitch, there is no guarantee that the board will get the money requested. The budgets are due by the end of July.

On the topic of funding Matt Varhotes asked if the DDA has done any fundraising in the past. Noah claimed they haven't done anything aside from small events to generate money. Nobody as he could remember has ever gone to businesses to pitch ideas and acquire funding. Matt comes from a background in fundraising for non-profits. Matt claimed he would be more than happy to help in heading up DDA fundraising. All he requested was that the board have a plan in place with a goal in mind and time frame. This way he can know how much time he'll be able to invest in it. Lindsay Dilbeck claimed she loves the planning side of things more than actual face to face interactions. She volunteered to make the plan, Noah claimed he would aid in that as he does the fundraising/sponsorships for the city. After discussion the board agreed to start immediately fundraising and attempt to hit a goal of 25K.

Frank Wolf originally proposed a budget request of 10K for the Operating account and 25K for the Façade. Donald Anderson brought up that this is city money being requested and that limits the use. Donald claimed that city can't be used to directly aid in redevelopment of individual businesses. With that in mind it was suggested that the DDA instead request 25K for the Operating budget and strictly focus on fundraising to fund the Façade account. The board agreed to this and will move forward with this in mind.

Gloria Gambe asked if digital funding would be a possibility, such as a GoFundMe. Donald Anderson made a point that would put the board under the unnecessary fire of internet trolls. So it was suggested by Lindsay Dilbeck that the board look into another method of obtaining digital funding, as GoFundMe's have a bad rep of being associated with desperate times.

Regardless of how the board obtains funding, Frank Wolf made a point that the DDA must find their proof of non-profit status. As with many property owners leasing their buildings this means more business owners will reach out to the DDA for services. Noah said he would begin tracking down the paperwork to help get the fundraising underway. Lindsay Dilbeck suggested that the board find methods to promote these vacant buildings with pictures and estimations from realtors on the cost of necessary repairs. Frank Wolf asked Donald and Noah if the DDA is allowed to purchase buildings? This led to Dee Anderson stating that this has always been the point and goal of the DDA. Donald Anderson claimed many of the building housing downtown businesses were owned by the DDA originally (Big Daddy's, CBT, Fenders Alley, etc). This discussion led to Donald Anderson mentioning that the old Habersham Hardware building was just listed by YearOne for sale. This led many board members asking about the possible things that could go there? Matt Varhotes suggested looking into the addition of a community center. The county has nothing that would constitute as a community center and it could bring people to town. Noah claimed that there are many grants that would aid in the acquisition and development of real estate for community needs. Noah will begin looking into some routes to go about obtaining the necessary funding for this project.

Next Board Meeting- Thursday August 6<sup>th</sup> 8:30 am Cornelia City Hall:

Downstairs Conference Room

Motion made to adjourn meeting at 10:03 am by Matt Varhotes,

seconded by Gloria Gambe, all in favor.

Present- Frank Wolf, Lindsay Dilbeck, Gloria Gambe, Matt

Varhotes, Zach Staggs, Noah Hamil

Absent- Brooke Shedd

Guests- Dee Anderson