



MAIN STREET BOARD

A regular meeting of the Main Street Board was held on Monday, May 7 2018, beginning at 4:00 p.m. at Brenham City Hall, 200 W. Vulcan Street, Brenham, Texas.

Members present:

Chair Margie Young, Vice Chair Jim Moser, John Hermann, Jon Hill, Tiffany Morisak, Mark Schneider, and Tom Whitehead

Members absent:

Walter Jackson, Traci Pyle, Dona Lynn Parker, and Connie Wilder

City staff present:

Main Street Manager Jennifer Eckermann and Community Services Coordinator Alexandra Dill

Others present:

Chamber of Commerce/Convention and Visitors Bureau Representative Jenny Mills

1. **Call Meeting to Order.**
2. **Citizen/Visitor Comments.**
3. **Approval of Minutes from Monday, March 5, 2018 Meeting.**

A motion was made by John Hermann and seconded by Mark Schneider to approve the minutes from the March 5, 2018 meeting.

Chair Margie Young called for a vote. The motion passed with the Board voting as follows:

Chair Margie Young	Yes
Vice Chair Jim Moser	Yes
John Hermann	Yes
Jon Hill	Yes
Walter Jackson	Absent
Tiffany Morisak	Absent
Traci Pyle	Absent
Dona Lynn Parker	Absent
Mark Schneider	Yes
Tom Whitehead	Yes
Connie Wilder	Absent

4. Report on Pursuit of Designation of Downtown Brenham as a Cultural District.

Jennifer Eckermann stated that the Organization Committee is pursuing the designation of Downtown Brenham as a Cultural District. Eckermann feels this would be best accomplished by combining the efforts of both the Main Street Committees and Downtown businesses/organizations. The process is lengthy and requires a great deal of reporting and time but the benefits are great, including generating business, attracting tourism, stimulating cultural development and fostering civic pride.

Eckermann says a meeting to discuss this item is currently scheduled for Thursday, May 10 at 5:30 pm.

5. Update on Plans to Calm Downtown Traffic.

Jennifer Eckermann stated the four new traffic flags have been installed on Main and Alamo Streets. These plastic flags were suggested by City Manager James Fisher as an inexpensive and quick solution to slow traffic in the Downtown District before pursuing more permanent measures such as stop signs. Eckermann also stated that Mr. Fisher will be encouraging a more consistent police presence Downtown with the help of the new Police Chief Louis Barrow. The group agreed that they have been highly effective at slowing traffic and allowing pedestrians to cross more safely and easily.

6. Review of Plans to Promote Downtown as a Destination.

Jennifer Eckermann announced that plans to increase awareness of Downtown Brenham as a destination have been in motion. These efforts are funded a variety of ways as outlined below.

The following items will be funded from the Downtown Improvement Fund:

- Billboard on Highway 290 near Chappell Hill - \$9100
 - o Includes an annual contract plus two board installations (one now and another in six months)
- Street banner on Day Street - \$1200
 - o One for "Wine Walk" with interchangeable dates for the Uptown Swirl and Summer Sip
- Display sign at Blue Bell - \$460
 - o A high quality banner promoting Downtown on display near the exit from the highly trafficked Ice Cream Parlor

The following items will be funded from the Main Street budget:

- Rack card in lieu of the shoppers guide - \$1075
 - o Previous shoppers guides are outdated quickly and expensive. A new rack card will direct visitors to the DowntownBrenham.com website which is always up to date.

The following items will be funded from Hotel Occupancy Tax funds:

- Snipes (skirt that is attached to the part of the billboard) - \$900
 - o Promotes the Swirl and Sip events.
- Print Ads - \$3000
 - o Co-op ads with The Barnhill Center and Hot Nights Cool Tunes
- Boosting Social Media posts - \$500
 - o Create traffic to website using Facebook and Instagram

7. Main Street Brenham Project Updates to Include Wayfinding and Local History Day.

Alexandra Dill began with an update on the wayfinding project by stating that foundations have been finished for the TXDOT signs on the outskirts of town. The screws necessary for the Downtown wayfinding signs have experienced some delays but AAG anticipates they will be delivered by May 24 with a projected completion date of May 30.

Jennifer Eckermann stated that the 7th Grade Local History Day on April 12 was a great success with excellent teacher input. Eckermann praised the teachers for creating a Local History Day journal that students needed to complete throughout the day. These journals kept students engaged throughout the day and was an excellent addition.

Eckermann continued stating that 4th Grade Local History Day will be on May 22 and 24. Eckermann noted that the 4th Grade Local History Day was separated into two days primarily because the Giddings-Wilkins House and Giddings Stone Mansion were struggling to accommodate multiple buses of children at their locations and that the group would like to offer the experience of Local History Day to homeschooled and private school children. However, Eckermann noted that when the school district chose the dates for this event, all of the private schools are already out of session for the summer. This may also cause problems with finding volunteers.

Tiffany Morisak arrived during this discussion.

8. Design Committee Report to Include Update on New Incentive Grant Fund Request; Discussion on Request for Help from Texas Main Street; and Discussion of Options on Transformer Art Project.

Jennifer Eckermann stated that there have been a few applications for the Incentive Grant Fund including Teddy Abrams on the two buildings at Main & Austin Streets. Mr. Abrams is replacing windows and the Design Committee is currently confirming if his design includes historically similar windows or not. Eckermann stressed that the fund is limited and will likely be emptied after this request is completed.

Eckermann also noted that Main Street is going to work with architects and designers from Texas Main Street/Texas Historical Commission to discuss opportunities for design on Vulcan and First Streets in regards to pedestrian connectivity and aesthetics.

Eckermann continued that the transformer project has been delayed due to funding concerns. The Committee is considering other options, including possible wrapping of the transformers rather than painting. Margie Young expressed concern about not being able to approve designs. Eckermann stated that a call would go out for artists, which would be require approval prior to painting. Discussion of payment or cash award for the designs was briefly discussed.

9. Organization Committee Report to Include Update on Downtown Farmers Market; Work on Local History Day.

Alexandra Dill reported that the First Friday Farmers and Artisan Market was unable to happen in May due to poor weather conditions. Dill stated 12 vendors were already committed to attend and emails arrive frequently asking for more information on becoming vendors. The June market will be on June 1 from 3-7 pm.

Tiffany Morisak stated that Local History Day goody bags will be stuffed on Thursday, May 17 beginning at 9 am at the All Sports Building.

10. Promotion Committee Report to Include Update on Summer Sip; Discussion of Possible New Harvest on Main Event for 2019; Looking at Ideas for Small Business Saturday; and Determined Dates for Scarecrow Extravaganza.

Jennifer Eckermann stated that the Promotion Committee is continuing work on Summer Sip with no news to report.

Eckermann continued that a possible new Harvest on Main event is being discussed for 2019. This would be another event to promote local restaurants and raise funds for Main Street. This event would be similar to outdoor dining events in Mount Vernon and Bastrop. Eckermann stressed that a lot of research will go into this event thus it will not be held until Fall 2019. Sponsorships would be required in order to make the event happen and to raise funds.

Eckermann continued that the Promotion Committee is beginning to consider ideas for Small Business Saturday and that the Scarecrow Extravaganza will be very similar to previous years.

11. Economic Restructuring Committee Report to Include Projects Update; EIIG Grant Application.

Jennifer Eckermann began the Economic Restructuring Committee report by discussing the Brazos Valley Brewery potentially moving to a larger space for their growing business including the old City Hall property, the old Wells Fargo property drive-thru and the Southside District. The Brewery currently is considering the Wells Fargo property as a potential location but discussions are still ongoing. Eckermann stated that the old City Hall property is being considered as a mixed-use development.

Eckermann also stated that the EIIG Grant currently does not have an application and that Candi Eaton and Page Michel were going to assist in putting together an application for this grant.

12. Brenham Heritage Museum Report.

Tiffany Morisak stated the Maifest exhibit, royalty breakfast and parade watch party held at The Barnhill Center were a success and that the Maifest royalty breakfast and parade watch party was well attended. Attendance for the Maifest exhibit held will be counted after the close of the exhibit.

Morisak continued that a World War I exhibit will be opening at the Chappell Hill museum on May 11.

Morisak also confirmed that the museum is in the planning phase of renovations.

13. Washington County Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau Report, Including Recent Promotional Activities and Special Events.

Jenny Mills reported that the bluebonnet season was a success with over 2300 guests coming to the Visitor’s Center. Mills stated that they are considering initiatives for future bluebonnet seasons to create safe and legal spaces for folks to enjoy the wildflowers.

Mills stated the next Tourism Tuesday will be offsite in Independence and includes a tour of the Cole Settlement and the historic church. The meeting will be May 15.

Mills continued with the Small Business Forum will be on June 12 and tickets are currently on sale online or at the Chamber.

Mills also announced that they have hired college student Troy Freeman to assist as a “Mobile Visitor Unit” who will be available on the streets of Downtown Brenham to greet visitors and provide information to them outside of the Visitor’s Center.

14. Staff Report to Include Building, Business and Program Update.

Jennifer Eckermann announced that lighting in Alamo Alley and signage for the mural at Austin and Alamo Streets will both be completed by the end of the week.

Eckermann also confirmed that Bluebird on the Square is closing its doors by the end of this coming June.

15. Next Meeting – Monday, June 4, 2018.

16. Adjourn.

Margie Young
Chair

ATTEST:

Alexandra Dill
Community Services