



## Main Street Board

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A regular meeting of the Main Street Board was held on Monday, March 6, 2017, beginning at 4:00 p.m. at Brenham City Hall, 200 W. Vulcan Street, Brenham, Texas.

Members present:

Chair Margie Young, Vice Chair Susan Cantey, Jon Hill, Mark Schneider, Connie Wilder, Tiffany Morisak and Jim Moser.

Members absent:

Traci Pyle, John Hermann and Walter Jackson

City staff present:

Main Street Manager Jennifer Eckermann, Director of Community Services Wende Ragonis, Police Chief Craig Goodman, Director of Public Works Dane Rau, and Community Services Assistant Alexandra Dill.

Others present:

Chamber/CVB Representative Lu Hollander.

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

Margie Young called the meeting to order.

**2. Citizen/Visitor Comments**

None

**3. Approval of Minutes from Monday, February 6, 2017 Meeting.**

A motion was made by Susan Cantey and seconded by John Hermann to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2017 meeting.

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

Chair Margie Young	Yes
Susan Cantey	Yes
Traci Pyle	<b>Absent</b>
John Hermann	<b>Absent</b>
Walter Jackson	<b>Absent</b>
Jon Hill	Yes
Mark Schneider	Yes
Connie Wilder	Yes
Tiffany Morisak	Yes
Jim Moser	Yes

**4. Report by Police Chief Craig Goodman and Public Works Director Dane Rau on City of Brenham Plan for Use of Bollards to Close Streets for Downtown Parades and Events.**

Public Works Director Dane Rau presented this item. Rau stated that due to current world events and their desire for public safety, he and Chief Goodman have been looking into the use of bollards to block off streets to vehicular traffic during Downtown events. The bollards they have researched can be placed into permanent holes drilled into city streets with the actual bollard being removable when not being used. Rau and Goodman ensured that the bollards can be locked into the ground, painted to match the surrounding cement and safe for vehicles to pass over when not in place. Rau stated they have been quoted four bollards per intersection, including the alley next to The Pomegranate which is wide enough to accommodate a vehicle. A total of 47 sites would be drilled. Chief Goodman stated we, as the City, need to be proactive. On Highway 36, vehicle blockade would still need to be utilized because the Texas Department of Transportation will not allow the installation of bollards on streets that they control. Rau emphasized that the bollards are steel, 48 inches apart and five and a half feet tall. Chief Goodman expressed that this discussion is just the preliminary phase and that many cities and towns are adding these protections to their streets. Susan Cantey wished to know how far back from our typical parade route the bollards could be placed. Chief Goodman stated that we would utilize the bollards but also include police and other vehicles outside the bollards to increase public safety. Connie Wilder expressed concern about the height of the bollard's hole cap above the ground and how easily they could be tripped over. Dane Rau stated that he would research further their actual height above the ground when closed as well as visit with the City Attorney regarding the liability should a citizen injure themselves on one.

**5. Discuss and Consider Approval of Design Committee Recommendation to Reimburse Property Owner for Incentive Grant Fund Project for Work on the Glissmann’s Building.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated that the grant request was submitted by Gloria and Lowell Nix for work they had completed on the Glissmann’s building. The work was approved by the Main Street Design Committee and they are recommending the reimbursement of \$7,000 to the Nix’s. The building had a new roof installed and had 17 windows restored. Eckermann stated that after a reimbursement payment to the LaRue’s last month for their restoration project, she estimated that we had remainder of approximately \$9,900 remaining in the account with no other requests for reimbursement currently submitted.

A motion was made by Jon Hill and seconded by Susan Cantey to approve the reimbursement to Gloria and Lowell Nix for the repairs on the Glissmann’s building.

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

Chair Margie Young	Yes
Susan Cantey	Yes
Traci Pyle	<b>Absent</b>
John Hermann	<b>Absent</b>
Walter Jackson	<b>Absent</b>
Jon Hill	Yes
Mark Schneider	Yes
Connie Wilder	Yes
Tiffany Morisak	Yes
Jim Moser	Yes

**6. Update on Southside Property Owner Meeting Concerning Zoning Change to B4-Neighborhood Business District and Plans for Moving Forward.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated that a meeting was held on February 21, 2017 for the property owners of the Southside business district to review the plans for the B4 zoning change. Eckermann stated that the meeting was not very well attended, but that no one has of yet expressed any concerns with the change. Wende Ragonis stated the next step will be for the zoning change request to go to Planning and Zoning meeting on March 27, 2017 and then City Council on April 6, 2017 for its first reading. Eckermann stressed that they wish to answer all of the public’s questions prior to the Planning and Zoning meeting in hopes of making a smooth transition.

**7. Report on Wayfinding Bid Opening Held February 14 and Timeline Moving Forward.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated the bidding opened on February 14, 2017, however the weather was hazardous that day and they only received one bid in the time-frame allowed. One bid arrived six minutes too late. Eckermann stated the bid they did receive on-time was much too high so it was decided to reject the bid and reopen bidding on March 21, 2017 with the

hopes that there will be more competitive bids within the budget of \$150,000. Wende Ragonis stated the budget includes the Downtown mural between the west end of Alamo Street and Main Street.

**8. Design Committee Report to Include Scheduling of a Sign and Graphics Workshop; Continuing Work on Lighting of Alamo Alley and Belle's Alley; Desire to Get Courthouse Cleaned; Moving Forward with Design of Convertible Street on Douglas; Possible New Sign Ordinance; and Discussion on Lighting Downtown Buildings Throughout the Year.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated that the Design Committee has scheduled a sign and graphics workshop in early May. Elizabeth Price spoke with Curtis Roberts of FD2S to present the workshop. An exact date has not been scheduled for the workshop yet.

The lighting in Alamo Alley and Belle's Alley was discussed. The LED lights would be strung between the buildings and Eckermann stated that should a property owner not wish to have the lights fixed to their building, the Design Committee is researching the possibility of using simple vertical poles placed parallel to the building that could hold the lighting so that it would not be adhering to their building.

Margie Young stated that another project of the Design Committee was the possibility of lighting the Downtown area year-round. Young noted that the committee discussed if the cost to the businesses would be billed as an extra amount on their monthly electric bill. Eckermann stated that this item was presented to some business owners at a Merchant Mixer held on February 16, 2017.

Margie Young stated that the Design Committee is also pursuing the task of getting the Washington County Courthouse exterior cleaned. Wende Ragonis stated a community member has brought it to her attention as well. Eckermann stated the Design Committee is willing to meet with the Judge to discuss options and that the intent is to have the Courthouse cleaned before spring tourism increases.

Eckermann stated the design of the convertible street on Douglas is continuing with the help of Tommy Upchurch who is working with a landscape architect on the design for the project and we are awaiting a presentation.

Lastly, Wende Ragonis presented information on a possible new sign ordinance. Ragonis stated that on April 6, 2017, Erik Smith will be presenting the new sign ordinance. The new ordinance could have a significant influence, especially for the Downtown business owners and she invited the group to attend the meeting. Ragonis continued that Main Street and Alamo Street are Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) right-of-way, which means that regardless of what sign ordinance the City creates, the City cannot do anything on Main Street and Alamo Street. The City has an agreement with TxDOT that states that the City will not permit anything on the TxDOT right-of-way. She emphasized that Jim Moser has been working with our State Senator and State Representative in creating a "pedestrian retail zone" which would create an addendum in our TxDOT agreement which would allow the City to govern this issue.

**9. Economic Restructuring Committee Report to Include Report on Fire Suppression Estimates; Southside Zoning Change Update; Review of Engineer's Report on Drainage Issue; and, Update on Possible Pedestrian Retail Zone.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated that an estimate was requested of HG Fire Systems for three different blocks regarding fire suppression. Eckermann stated that information is needed from HG Fire Systems in order to research how to possibly make the cost of installing fire suppression systems for palatable for property owners. Initially, an estimate for John Hermann's building totaled around \$300,000. Jim Moser stated that per HG Fire Systems', the quote also depends on the type of space and material. In John Hermann's case, the fact that it is furniture and textiles may affect the cost. Moser also stated that the committee is working to find possible cost savings. Eckermann emphasized that their work with HG Fire Systems was simply a quote and a starting point to gather information.

Eckermann stated that the City has paid for an engineer's report on drainage issues in Downtown toward the Southside District. The report identified three areas of concern; Unity Theatre and surrounding areas, Park Street going south, and Baylor Street going south. The area around Unity Theatre was projected to be a more simple repair estimated around \$50,000, however the repairs on Park Street and Baylor Street were estimated around \$250,000 each. Jim Moser stated that the primary issue is that in heavy rain, water is unable to move past the train tracks and pools dangerously close to doorsteps. Eckermann stated that there are grants the Economic Restructuring Committee is looking into to help fund these repairs; one being the Texas Capital Fund Main Street Grant which can provide up to \$150,000, the other being the Texas Capital Fund Infrastructure Program that can fund \$50,000 up to \$1.5 million for improvements. This fund has job creation requirements which could be another possibility with the help of property owners.

Jim Moser updated the group on the Pedestrian Retail Zone. Moser stated that the zone would give the City an exemption with TxDOT to control three aspects of the TxDOT right-of-way on Main Street and Alamo Street. These include: (1) signage, (2) speed/control of traffic, and (3) streetscape. Having control of these aspects would allow us to better protect Downtown visitors and management of the streetscapes. Texas Senate Member Lois Kolkhorst's office continues to work on this item with TxDOT. Texas House Representative Leighton Schubert has also been involved in this process.

**10. Organization Committee Report to Include February Merchant Mixer; Local History Update; Possible Ways to Improve the Visitor Experience; Gathering of Downtown Business Hours; Continuation of Oral History Project; and, Gathering of Emails for Quarterly Newsletter.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated the Merchant Mixer was held on February 16, 2017 in which a survey of business information was taken, including business hours. A spreadsheet has been started with Downtown business hours in hopes to provide that information to all merchants to help continue tourism into Sundays.

Eckermann also stated that with the Brenham Heritage Museum being closed currently, some changes will be required to occur for Local History Day. Ant Street Inn has offered their ballroom as an alternative space. An art show may be a new feature during the week of Local History Day. Eckermann stated the show would be art of Brenham, rather than

artists from Brenham. Eckermann has contact with Lloyd Mays and several other potential artists and photographers for this event.

Eckermann stated that a compiled list of emails from previous events and online sales will be used to send out a new quarterly newsletter.

Susan Cantey stated for the Oral History Project that she is contacting three people from the community to interview and record at the Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library. Cantey hopes to have these interviews completed by the end of April as she will no longer be serving on the Main Street Board as she is seeking election as a City Councilmember.

**11. Promotion Committee Report to Include Initial Thoughts on New Summer Wine Event.**

Jennifer Eckermann stated that with the Brew Step no longer being an event the City will host, a summer wine swirl will take place instead. The glasses will be a little less expensive and less wine will be offered. The event will be beach themed with a possible concert on Baylor Street. The event has been dubbed the Summer Sip and will be slightly different than the Uptown Swirl.

**12. Brenham Heritage Museum Report.**

Wende Ragonis opened this item stating that Tommy Upchurch has been chosen as the architect for the Museum's renovation project. Ragonis stated that Doug Price of the Brenham Heritage Museum explained that there is a budget shortfall to complete the necessary repairs and renovations. The City is working with their insurance to find code compliance funding to help offset the costs. Ragonis stressed the possibility of fundraising to most quickly and efficiently get the museum opened again.

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

Lu Hollander stated the wildflowers are in bloom and that the season is expected to be longer. There is a "Wildflower Watch" page on the Chamber website which will be updated regularly. Hollander also noted that tourism has begun work on a project called "Adventure 290" in which towns from Chappell Hill to Bastrop are coming together to formulate ways to bring traffic off of 290 and into their towns.

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

Jennifer Eckermann updated the group on the Eve of Texas Independence event which took place on Friday, March 3, 2017. The reviews have all been very positive.

**15. Next Meeting – Monday, April 3, 2017.**

**16. Adjourn.**

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Margie Young  
Chair

**ATTEST:**

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Alexandra Dill  
Community Services Assistant