



Main Street Board

A regular meeting of the Main Street Board was held on Monday, April 3, 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, Walter Jackson, Jon Hill, Mark Schneider, Connie Wilder, Jim Moser* and Tiffany Morisak**.

Members absent:

Traci Pyle and John Hermann

City staff present:

Director of Community Services Wende Ragonis, and Community Services Assistant Alexandra Dill.

Others present:

Chamber/CVB Representative Lu Hollander.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Vice Chair Susan Cantey, for her final meeting on the Main Street Board, called the meeting to order.

2. Citizen/Visitor Comments

None

3. Approval of Minutes from Monday, March 6, 2017 Meeting.

A motion was made by Jon Hill and seconded by Margie Young to approve the minutes from the March 6, 2017 meeting.

Vice Chair Susan Cantey called for a vote. The motion passed with the Board voting as follows:

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

4. Discuss Initial Report from HG Fire Systems on Preliminary Estimates for Downtown Fire Suppression

Wende Ragonis presented this item, stating that HG Fire Systems gave an initial estimate of about \$5.11 per square foot for the block on Alamo Street from Hermann Furniture to The Pomegranate. Ragonis stated that this number can be presented to BCDC and will be instrumental in gaining their support. There was no update on the other buildings that were viewed by HG Fire Systems. Connie Wilder questioned if there was a possibility to estimate the entirety of downtown and then look for grant money so that there is a final amount to present to all building owners. Ragonis felt like this was a possibility, especially with BCDC help.

*Jim Moser has entered the Main Street Board meeting.

Moser stated that the risers were not taken out of the total cost and that if the city were to install the risers, the cost could be reduced. He says this issue is ongoing due to code requirements however it is also an obstacle for businesses who want to come to the downtown area. Moser stated he felt it was good for the Main Street Board to be knowledgeable and have answers for the community about this topic. Susan Cantey wanted to know if there was a time limit to become compliant. Wende Ragonis said no, however it is triggered by opening a permit to make modifications to your building and if a business owner does over \$50,000 of work to their building, an additional level of compliance is required.

**Tiffany Morisak has entered the Main Street Board meeting.

Connie Wilder expressed concern that the cost is prohibitive to businesses. Ragonis stated that it is important for the city development staff to visit with City Council to gain direction and create a pathway to compliance. Discussion on this topic will continue in future meetings.

5. Discuss Main Street 5-Year Capital Plan.

Wende Ragonis presented this item, beginning with fiscal year 18, stating that the focus will be on streetscapes in the B4 district, infrastructure, parking in the depot district and wayfinding. For fiscal year 19, the goal is to complete drainage projects and focus on the convertible street on Douglas Street. In fiscal year 20, the focus will be on monument signs for Downtown, complete the wayfinding project, complete drainage repairs on Baylor Street and installing some placemaking in downtown entrances from main highways and streets.

6. Discuss Spring Eggs Art Walk and Review Online Auction of Entries.

Alexandra Dill presented this item stating that there are 46 eggs decorating the downtown area. Online voting and online bidding are new features this year, along with a Golden Egg that travels around the Downtown area promoting people to take a photo with it and post the image to the Downtown Brenham Facebook page to be entered in a drawing to win Downtown Dollars. The money raised from the online bidding goes toward the prize money for the winning egg artists.

7. Report on Wayfinding Bid Opening Held March 21 and Options Being Considered.

Wende Ragonis opened by stating this round of wayfinding bids contained seven responsive bidders with a low bid at \$209,000. The original budget was \$150,000 so there is a gap in funding of approximately \$59,000. Ragonis stated that an option was to have Main Street funds contribute \$20,000 toward the gap and utilize \$38,000 in HOT (Hotel Occupancy Tax) funds to fulfill the remaining balance. Other options could be to reduce the number of signs or split the cost over two budget years. Ragonis advised that the Main Street Board would be approached again in May to vote on this item.

8. Design Committee Report to Include Reports on New Member Doug Peck; Upcoming Workshops; Continuing Work on Lighting of Alamo Alley and Belle's Alley; Discussion on Cleaning of Courthouse; and Design of Convertible Street on Douglas.

Margie Young presented this item beginning that Doug Peck would be joining the Design Committee soon. Young also stated that options are being reviewed for lighting Alamo and Belle's Alley. On the topic of cleaning the courthouse, Wende Ragonis stated that she and Page Michel of the Chamber of Commerce are meeting with Judge Brieden on April 4, 2017 to discuss options. Young stated the convertible street was previously discussed by Wende Ragonis with no further comment.

9. Economic Restructuring Committee Report to Include Fire Suppression Preliminary Estimates; Planning for BCDC Update; Review of 5-Year Capital Plan; Website Training Workshop; Discussion on Cleaning of Courthouse; B4 Zone Change Update; and, Update on Progress of Pedestrian Retail Zone Discussions.

Jim Moser updated the group on the Economic Restructuring Committee's recent meetings. Moser stated the ERC has been working on fire suppression estimate, requesting funds from BCDC to fund 50% on a \$10,000 or \$15,000 grant to expand development downtown. Moser explained that one reason for the delay on cleaning the courthouse is that the stone does not just need cleaned, but costly repair. On the topic of the Pedestrian Retail Zone, Moser stated that they continue to work with Lois Kolkhorst's office and that stop signs are being considered around the courthouse square, as well as an addendum to the current TxDOT agreement to give the city latitude to implement and enforce a new sign ordinance downtown. Wende Ragonis also updated the Board that the proposal for the B4 district is being taken to the Planning & Zoning Committee in May and that it is expected to pass with ease.

10. Organization Committee Report to Include Local History Day Sponsor and Volunteer Update; Review of Mystery Shopping Proposal; Review of Downtown Business Hours Spreadsheet; Update on Oral History Project; and, Review Draft of First Quarterly Newsletter.

Tiffany Morisak presented that Local History Day is still in need of volunteers on May 16 and 18, 2017. Those interested in volunteering can contact either her, Jennifer Eckermann or Sharon Brass. She also stated that a spreadsheet of downtown business hours has been completed. Susan Cantey discussed the oral history project and the problems it has faced with equipment. Cantey noted that the library will soon be hosting training for the film and audio equipment so that future problems can hopefully be avoided.

11. Promotion Committee Report to Include Summer Sip Event; and New Downtown Website Planning.

Wende Ragonis stated that a new Summer Sip is being planned by the Promotion Committee. On the topic of the new downtown website, Ragonis stated that Kevin Boggus has interviewed three potential vendors and that they will move forward with Civic Plus who specializes in municipal website development. Ragonis is optimistic that the new website will be more seamless and user friendly.

12. Brenham Heritage Museum Report.

Tiffany Morisak stated that the museum is still closed, however they will soon be placing outdoor banners to reflect the closure more publicly. She also noted that the Bus Depot will soon be open in May with an event already scheduled in late May. Morisak also stated the museum will be providing items for a "pop-up" exhibit in the display case at the Simon Theatre featuring Maifest. Unity Theatre and other local museums will be another option for future "pop-up" exhibits.

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

Lu Hollander of the Chamber of Commerce stated that the Chamber just celebrated its 100th Anniversary with a picnic celebration at Fireman's Park. She approximated that over 300 people attended the celebration. Visitor counts for walk-ins in March was over 1,100 people. Wende Ragonis stated that the weather is so indicative of tourism. Good weather and good wildflower blooms bring tourism.

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

15. Next Meeting – Monday, May 1, 2017.

16. Adjourn.

A motion was made by Tiffany Morisak and seconded by Jon Hill to adjourn the April 3, 2017 Main Street Board meeting.

Jim Moser
Vice Chair

ATTEST:

Alexandra Dill
Community Services