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MINUTES

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**1. Call to Order**

*at 6:00pm by Chairperson Tracy Jordan*

**2. Approval of Minutes: November 13, 2023 meeting**

*Motion to approve with no changes by Sri Kumar, seconded by Joe Vogt, and all in favor.*

**3. Financial Report**

*will further review the financial statement provided by Finance Director Tiffany Wheeler*

**4. Report of Committees (Areas of responsibility)**

a. **Chair – Overseeing All Committees**

b. **Secretary/Treasurer**

*-will fill this seat soon; accepting applications now and will informally interview each applicant*

c. **Historic Downtown**

*-Marsha Hunter explained that the time capsule is ready to pack and seal once the Shutterfly book is received.*

*-Mariya Bentz asked if the time capsule might be dedicated at the Spring Gala or if there will be a ceremony. Hunter replied that she hoped to finish the project this year.*

*-Jordan remarked that a special event should be held for the dedication and added that the Shutterfly book needed further editing to reflect a “Wow” factor.*

*-Vogt reported that the clock will be delivered in early spring. (a 40% deposit has been paid.)*

*-Vogt also said that the Historic Preservation Committee has been discussing upgrades to the Darby building and Magnolia property but will need funds to proceed. One project the HPC can accomplish with limited funds is the creation of storyboards displaying the history of Hoschton’s founding families.*

*-The historical photographs with descriptions in the old City Hall building should be brought over to display in the new Community Center.*

d. **Marketing & Branding DDA/Promotions of Events**

*-Mariya will take over the DDA’s social media presence and marketing from Jessica Greene. DDA members will need to decide how Hoschton should be presented/what focus should be highlighted?*

*-Greene added that she loved sharing updates on the downtown businesses and hopes that will continue.*

e. **Special Events Coordinator**

*-With the departure of Jessica Greene, the DDA Board will be researching how best to fill this role. The plan is to start with a few events, execute them well, and then grow to support larger/more events in the future.*

f. **Long-/Short-Term Projects**

*-Dr. Kumar summarized the GDOT meeting that he recently attended. GDOT is taking a holistic approach to relieve traffic along the Hwy 53 corridor, considering all highways in the area. GDOT presented several options to attendees, ranging from a short-term \$30 million project to a long-term \$900 million project. Kumar stated that the future direction of Hoschton will be determined by GDOT's decision in the corridor. The DDA is in receipt of a \$700,000 grant to be used toward the planning and scoping of the highway 53 downtown region to help minimize traffic (4-5 year project); could be increased to \$1-2 million, depending on the scope. Kumar will be working with the City Council and City Engineer to get the ball rolling next year. The long-term plan can tie into the beautification project in the hope of beautifying the entire corridor, not only the downtown area.*

g. **Grant Writing/Fundraising**

*-Hunter explained that the Board needs to decide which grants to pursue; will need to know specific cost of each proposal and how the grant funds would be used.*

*-The DDA did not receive the T-Mobile \$50,000 grant that was previously discussed.*

*-The commemorative brick sales project originally intended to help fund the Oak St. Park project can be adjusted to name the Mulberry Park project, instead. (Need to update the sales website to reflect the change) Should a goal of \$4,000-5,000 be set for Christmas of 2024? It would be beneficial to have sample bricks on display for the public to see. (Need to figure out a high-visibility location)*

*-The time capsule will be displayed in one of the new cabinets to be located in the Community Center foyer. The cabinet containing the time capsule will house a fixed display and a second cabinet will display an exhibit that will change periodically through the year.*

## 5. Old Business

a. **Board Member Recommendation**

*-Interested parties are encouraged to submit an application. There will be an informal interview with applicants.*

b. **2024 Retreat: best day/time for board members?**

*-Waiting on City Council to set their retreat date first; will have a chance to attend the Council retreat to speak about the DDA*

## 6. Events

a. Spring Gala

*-The factory has been delayed because of Georgia Power, but Dr. Kumar is willing to donate it as a location. Will work around schools/UGA football calendars. Evening will include dressing up, dinner, dancing. Jackson County previously raised \$30,000-40,000 at their similar event. Historic Preservation Committee would like to hold a silent auction at this event.*

- b. Foodie Fun Festival
  - Food trucks (combine with BBQ Festival?); Do any local businesses have food trucks?*
- c. BBQ/ Pickleball Festival
  - GA BBQ manages the event at a cost of \$500-1000; the cost of the prize money is approximately \$10,000; 10-15 BBQ vendors*
  - The plan is to hold this to coincide with the Cresswind pickleball tournament, but the BBQ festival may not be held on the Cresswind property. The additional courts are expected to be finished in 2025, so the next event would be larger.*

## **7. Announcements & Reminders**

- a. Jingle Mingle 2023 Report
  - 131 tickets were sold; approximately 400 attendees were present*
  - \$3680.00 profit realized*
  - Northeast Georgia Motorsports provided golf carts and church pews on a trailer to shuttle guests around*
  - Oh So Cozy donated a recliner as the grand prize*
  - Mayor Martin presided over the lighting of the Christmas tree and singing of Silent Night*
  - A 20-foot tree has been purchased for next year*
  - Add more kid-friendly activities next year?*
- b. Coffee & Conversations: 1-year mark in January 2024
  - Will continue in 2024, but might offer different times*
- c. Quarterly Newsletter: continue in 2024?

## **8. Public Input**

*No comments from the public.*

## **9. Chair Recap**

*-Thank you to all of the Jingle Mingle Sponsors.*  
*-Director Jessica Greene is moving on from the DDA; her enthusiasm and excitement for Hoschton was much appreciated. We wish her well in the future.*

## **10. Adjourn**

*Motion to adjourn at 6:55pm by Vogt, seconded by Hunter, and all in favor.*

Roll Call

Tracy Jordan, Chairperson  
Dr. Sri Kumar, Co-Chair  
Mariya Bentz  
Dr. Marsha Hunter  
Joe Vogt

Also Present

Jessica Greene, DDA Director  
Jen Williams, Asst. City Clerk  
Media

Approved:

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Tracy Jordan, Chairperson

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Date

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Jennifer Williams, Assistant City Clerk