

A Plan Committee Meeting of the City of Gray, Georgia was held on Wednesday, February 9, 2022 in the conference room at City Hall.

Present: Mayor Ed Barbee, Mayor Pro Tem James Collins, Councilman David Tufts, Police Chief Adam Lowe, City Clerk Cindy Yancey, and Assistant City Clerk Ashley Roberson.

Guests: Haley Watson, Sherri Rollins, Cecil Ethridge, Casey Gallager, Jennifer Crawford, Amber Ayers and Debbie Lurie-Smith, *The Jones County News*.

Plan Committee:

Mayor Pro Tem Collins called the meeting to order at 10:15am.

1. Main Street Gray

- Main Street Gray Director Haley Watson explained the setup of Main Street Gray. Currently, the Chamber of Commerce board is the Main Street Gray board. The City gives Main Street \$25,000.00 each year broken down into quarterly payments. Main Street also has a promotions budget that is separate from the money she receives from the City. These funds come from vendor fees and sponsorships and what she raises she puts back into the community through free events.
- Haley explained that when she first started eight years ago, she worked for Main Street part time and since then, Department of Community Affairs has changed the requirements of Main Street and in order to be a Classic Main Street program you must be a full-time employee with at least 75% of your job directly associated with Main Street. The way that they were able to work around that was merging the two positions of Chamber Director and Main Street Director into one.
- If the City chooses to keep the Main Street Director a part time position, Gray will have to go down to the Affiliate level of Main Street and the Director would have to dedicate 100% of job responsibilities to Main Street.
- Mrs. Watson also keeps the financials and does minutes for Downtown Development Authority, as well as manages Butler Hall. She explained that DDA is the economic leg of Main Street so that will come along with the Main Street Director position.
- Assistant City Clerk Ashley Roberson stated that she has been researching and the most common setup across the state according to DCA is for the Main Street Director to be a City employee and report directly to the City Manager/Administrator or City Council. Surrounding communities such as Eatonton, Milledgeville and Forsyth do it this way and in Milledgeville their Main Street Board is their DDA board. There would still need to be an advisory board even if the Director reported to the City Council.
- DDA Chairman Sherri Rollins stated that DDA will be supportive of making whatever is decided work.
- Assistant City Clerk Ashley Roberson stated that a big part of Main Street is the four-point approach. Design is one of those four standards. She pointed out that she currently handles agendas and minutes for Design Review Commission and that could be tied into the Main Street Director position as well.

- Councilman Tufts stated that it seemed like with all of the work that Haley is doing it would be to the City's advantage to take the DDA and Main Street out and have it done separately, and the Chamber of Commerce can have someone solely dedicated to the Chamber.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins asked if the position was not split who would handle the hiring for it. Mrs. Watson and Casey Gallagher explained that the Chamber board would appoint a committee for interviewing and then the decision would be left to the full board. Mrs. Gallagher stated that they need to know how to move forward with hiring and whether they would be hiring both positions together or if they are just hiring for the Chamber of Commerce part time position.
- Haley recommended for Assistant City Clerk Ashley Roberson to reach out to Jessica Reynolds with DCA for help with the transition.
- Mayor Pro Tem Collins and Councilman Tufts agreed that they wanted to discuss this further with Councilman Fulford and Favors present. They asked for it to be added to the February 28th All Committees Meeting for further discussion.
- Members of the Chamber who were present were concerned about that date not giving them enough time to advertise and take applications. Mayor Pro Tem Collins will try to set up a meeting Friday morning.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Assistant City Clerk