MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING

City Hall Conference Room
300 W. Crowell Street
Monroe, NC 28112
Thursday, June 13, 2024 - 8:30 AM

AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of April 11, 2024
2. Finance/Occupancy Report
3. Dowd Center Theatre Strategic Plan Update
4. MTDA Board Roles and Responsibilities
5. Downtown Mural Location Discussion
6. Science Center Update
7. Air Show Update
8. Other

MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

CONFERENCE ROOM

300 W. CROWELL STREET, MONROE, NC 28112

APRIL 11, 2024 – 8:30 A.M.

MINUTES

Present: Vice Chairwoman Pat Kahle, Gina Day, MaryAnn Rasberry, Sheila Crunkleton, Joyce Rentschler and Ron Hinson

Absent: Chairman Robert Burns and Arpan Bhakta

Staff Present: Communications and Tourism Director Pete Hovanec, Finance Director Lisa Strickland, Accounting Manager Ashley Ivey, Communications and Tourism Assistant Alison Nichols, Dowd Center Theatre Supervisor James Vesce, Webmaster Payton Mills, Senior Staff Attorney Terry Sholar, Legal Assistant Angela Carnes, and Assistant to the City Manager Lisa Hollowell (arr. 8:31)

Staff Absent: Downtown Director Matt Black, Monroe Science Center Supervisor Lauren Fike, Communications Specialist Bradley Lucore, and City Manager Mark Watson

Visitors: None

Vice Chairwoman Kahle called the Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of April 11, 2024 to order at 8:30 a.m.

Item No. 1 Approval of Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of March 14, 2024 Ms. Rasberry made a motion to approve the Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of March 14, 2024. Ms. Crunkleton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Day, Rasberry, Kahle, Hinson, Rentschler, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

Item No. 2 Finance/Occupancy Report Ms. Ivey reported that February collections were $62,730 and collections overall were up $8,300 from last year. The capital fund unreserved budget is at $1.1 million, to be designated for the next capital project in the future. The special revenue fund is used for debt service for the Science Center building, and a big payment will be made next month. Overall, nothing is out of line in the budget.

Mr. Hovanec noted February's collections were down a bit compared to February's collections last year but are nothing to worry about.

Ms. Day opined that March will reflect strong collections. April may be light, but May will also be strong.

Mr. Hovanec agreed, noting that people are still traveling.

<u>Item No. 3 Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Contract for the Monroe Tourism Development Authority</u> Ms. Ivey explained that the City and the Tourism Board use the audit firm Martin, Starnes & Associates. Staff is asking for the annual contract approval as well as approval for the five-year service agreement. This year's contract will cost $7,500 and will include the same level of service. Martin Starnes always works well with the City. They are based out of Hickory, NC.

Mr. Hovanec remarked that $7,500 is about three times higher than contracts in past years.

Ms. Ivey explained that the last five-year service agreement was created in 2018, so inflation has increased those numbers. Also, audit standards change and require more work, and Martin Starnes has always done excellent work.

Mr. Hovanec noted that this audit contract also now includes work for the Science Center accounts.

Ms. Rentschler made a motion to approve the audit contract with Martin Starnes & Associates, CPA's, P.A. for $7,500. Ms. Rasberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Day, Rasberry, Kahle, Hinson, Rentschler, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

<u>Item No. 4 Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget</u>

<u>A.Public Hearing</u> Vice Chairwoman Kahle opened the duly advertised public hearing.

Mr. Hovanec shared the budget on the screen and noted that additional money had been added to the marketing and promotions line as discussed at last month's budget presentation, noting that it would be good to discuss ideas of its use at a future meeting. He also noted that an additional $5,000 was added as a cushion to the vehicle line as Mr. Bhakta had suggested the purchase of a hybrid vehicle.

Mr. Hovanec said that staff is currently working on a potential partnership with the Monroe Rotary Club. Rotary would like to donate $65,000 to build a picnic shelter to be built in the little park area outside the Science Center. It would include sidewalk and picnic tables. This is a great opportunity. The total cost of the picnic shelter would be $135,000. City attorneys are drafting an agreement wherein Rotary will donate $25,000 up front and then donate $8,000 annually thereafter. The TDA would need to lay out $135,000 up front out of the capital fund, and Rotary would pay back $65,000. The overall cost to TDA in the end would be $70,000.

Mr. Sholar asked if this would be an amendment to the TDA budget.

Ms. Strickland answered that it would be a budget ordinance passed through City Council.

Mr. Sholar advised adopting the budget as is without the picnic shelter line and coming back for a budget ordinance.

Mr. Hovanec asked if the budget ordinance could be approved now.

Mr. Sholar responded that it could be approved now but separately from the budget.

Mr. Hovanec asked about the difference between including the vehicle in the budget and not the picnic shelter.

Ms. Strickland explained that the vehicle is a one-time purchase bought with operating funds while capital purchases like the picnic shelter are bought with capital funds that go through City Council.

Mr. Hovanec asked if Mr. Sholar's direction is to approve the budget as is during this public hearing and then come back and do the picnic shelter approval separately.

Mr. Sholar confirmed that Mr. Hovanec was correct.

Mr. Hovanec said that in that case, nothing else with the budget has changed since the presentation with the exception of the aforementioned marketing and promotions increase and the extra $5,000 in the vehicle line. Mr. Bhakta had questions about how the marketing money would be tracked and park enhancements at Parks Williams. Staff would like to discuss these things at the next meeting.

There being no other speakers, Vice Chairwoman Kahle closed the public hearing.

B. Action – Resolution and Budget Ordinance to Adopt FY 2024-2025 Budget Ms. Rasberry moved to adopt Resolution R-2024-01:

MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION TO ADOPT AN ANNUAL
BALANCED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

R-2024-01

WHEREAS, the Monroe Tourism Development Authority is required by the North Carolina Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act to adopt an annual balanced budget; and

WHEREAS, a balanced budget has been prepared for the Monroe Tourism Development Authority for fiscal year 2024-2025 under the provisions set forth in the above referenced legislation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Monroe Tourism Development authority adopts the following budget ordinance:

BUDGET ORDINANCE
BO-2024-01

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Directors of the Monroe Tourism Development Authority:

Section 1A The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the General Operating Fund for the operation of the Authority and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, ending June 30, 2025:

Physical and Economic Development	$ 1,030,102
Distribution to Capital Project Fund	273,863
	$ 1,303,965

Section 1B It is estimated that the following revenues will be available in the General Operating Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025:

Restrictive Intergovernmental	$ 821,590
Sales and Services	425,000
Investment Earnings	19,538
Miscellaneous	5,000
Other Financing Sources	32,837
	$ 1,303,965

Section 2 A copy of this Budget Ordinance shall be furnished to the Director of Finance of the Authority to be kept on file for direction in the disbursement of funds.

Adopted this 11th day of April, 2024.

Ms. Day seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Day, Rasberry, Kahle, Hinson, Rentschler, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

Mr. Hovanec thanked the Board and stated that he would like to schedule a long meeting to discuss marketing option and the role of the Board. Back to the picnic shelter, last week was the busiest week ever at the Science Center with over 1,000 visitors and over $11,000 in revenue. There is no food allowed inside the building, so it would be phenomenal to have a picnic shelter. It is a little pricey at $135,000, but these are turnkey with picnic tables and everything. The size is 24 feet by 18 feet on a slab with a sidewalk. This is a good way to continue TDA's partnership with Rotary – they are a big part of the community.

Vice Chairwoman Kahle said she would like to state out of transparency that she and Ms. Crunkleton both serve on Rotary and have checked to make sure there is no conflict of interest.

Mr. Sholar reminded the Board that the naming of the picnic shelter will have to go through the City Council naming process.

Mr. Hovanec showed the picnic shelter site on the screen, noting that a fence would need to be built on the Windsor Street side for safety.

Vice Chairwoman Kahle asked if the use of this particular space would interfere with any other plans.

Mr. Hovanec responded that it would not. The potential mini golf area would be located in a different section of the parking lot.

Ms. Kahle asked for a motion to recommend a budget ordinance for an additional $135,000 for the Science Center picnic shelter for approval by City Council. Mr. Hinson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rentschler, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Day, Rasberry, Kahle, Hinson, Rentschler, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

Mr. Hovanec added the caveat that this is all contingent upon Council approval and possibly naming rights. It will be presented at General Services in May and then at the May Council meeting. If all passes, construction could begin as early as July.

Item No. 5 Dowd Center Theatre Update Mr. Hovanec said the Dowd has been busy. Currently the theater is on a pause with private rentals. At the March Council meeting there was discussion about policy and procedures with private rentals, so that is being navigated now. Staff has put out a Request for Proposals to strategic planning companies to help the City develop a strategic plan for theater operations, staffing, and development to help give staff guidelines to follow. The RFP is due May 1. Staff will evaluate all submissions and award the project to a company that will develop guidelines for the theater moving forward. This Board started the theater process six years ago with a vision and concepts.

Ms. Crunkleton stated that this was a very meaningful project to a lot of people on the Board and asked if the theater was on a pause with booking all events.

Mr. Hovanec answered that the theater is still booking bands and acts, which is considered the City's "own programming."

Ms. Crunkleton said that she sees the value in private rentals and asked if this will affect rentals of every City facility.

Mr. Hovanec said that it potentially would. The theater is a different animal, and each facility has its own functions.

Mr. Sholar interjected that there has been interest over the last year in evaluating City facility usage and the strategy of public use of public facilities and the private use of public facilities. The process right now is focusing on the Dowd and identifying a good business model going forward but also with other facilities, particularly the private use of public facilities.

Mr. Hovanec stated that this is not a bad thing. It is good for the theater staff to have clear direction. Staff works for City Council, so they have the final say. The Board's goal was to get the theater built and for it to serve as a catalyst, and the theater is the reason Downtown is doing so well now.

Mr. Hinson remarked that Wingate ran into the same rental issues with the Batte Center.

Mr. Hovanec reminded the Board that this is just for information. There is a lot coming up at the Dowd, and the theater still has a good partnership with the Arts Council.

Vice Chairwoman Kahle noted the importance of recognizing the loss of Barbara Faulk, who was an Arts Council icon who loved her community.

Mr. Sholar reminded the Board that Ms. Faulk was the first chairwoman of the TDA.

Mr. Hovanec said that the air show will look different this year with many development projects underway at the airport. Those could squeeze out the air show in the next year or two, but staff is currently moving forward with this year's show.

Mr. Hovanec also stated that the new rainforest exhibit will be on display at the Science Center in May. Staff will be looking at discounts to make it more affordable for people who are struggling.

Ms. Carnes noted that it is hard for some families with multiple children to pay the admissions fee.

Ms. Crunkleton asked if staff is looking at memberships yet.

Mr. Hovanec said that might be considered next year and that the Science Center would probably lose money on memberships.

Ms. Rasberry asked about the gift shop.

Mr. Hovanec answered that it is doing really well.

The Board discussed some upcoming community events.

Ms. Crunkleton made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Rentschler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Day, Rasberry, Kahle, Hinson, Rentschler, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

ATTEST:

Robert Burns, Chairman

Alison H. Nichols

MTDA/4-11-24

CITY OF MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA
HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTIONS HISTORY

Month	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	Collections FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	Total from Inception
July	$28,654.11	$43,035.55	$50,935.50	$57,757.87	$49,237.75	$52,555.67	$50,502.69	36,361.82	$58,632.48	$77,203.59	$71,311.91	
August	30,116.04	36,977.80	48,845.23	56,430.47	53,328.43	53,326.15	56,119.30	33,717.52	$57,897.52	$72,112.89	$70,250.44	
September	26,188.56	36,170.00	43,971.63	52,501.28	49,280.40	57,322.54	54,601.79	36,333.99	$57,646.95	$67,860.45	$70,961.74	
October	32,977.87	39,730.02	50,450.31	62,852.14	54,883.77	61,478.56	58,576.63	47,918.88	$60,324.82	$72,465.20	$78,388.15	
November	28,593.65	36,201.55	44,935.28	53,718.49	52,159.03	52,344.58	44,677.93	33,689.77	$62,776.88	$69,846.82	$66,133.93	
December	24,367.81	29,698.95	37,857.15	42,905.99	43,020.41	41,248.49	35,855.88	30,608.58	$55,627.44	$58,041.30	$61,688.92	
January	28,568.49	33,174.57	47,446.36	49,314.76	44,917.89	45,790.70	37,998.34	34,555.26	$47,425.62	$57,371.07	$66,446.68	
February	31,618.26	43,506.47	49,690.07	50,786.19	49,090.46	50,174.09	41,074.64	35,790.58	$55,074.93	$64,640.72	$62,730.49	
March	35,351.64	45,588.42	54,238.06	58,370.59	58,151.91	55,628.08	44,213.52	49,982.86	$68,473.24	$77,373.44	$73,443.47	
April	33,561.95	44,006.59	56,185.32	54,463.65	55,541.22	52,298.83	24,603.84	54,315.36	$72,023.49	$69,155.17	$68,463.29	
May	33,436.34	46,174.97	55,415.35	59,183.07	56,465.45	58,606.08	30,748.09	57,003.16	$72,299.75	$76,655.92	$0.00	
June	37,334.32	46,835.97	56,036.83	53,968.10	56,273.88	54,481.57	36,285.75	57,435.41	$72,729.08	$74,197.82	$0.00	
Penalties/Interest	2.00	130.10	40.29									
Total Collections	$370,771.04	$481,230.96	$596,047.38	$652,252.60	$622,350.60	$635,255.34	$515,258.40	$507,713.19	$740,932.20	$836,924.39	$689,819.02	
Distribution of Collections												
Administrative Fee	$11,123.13	$14,436.93	$17,881.42	$16,522.53	$16,415.73	$16,352.55	$15,152.58	$15,077.13	$17,409.32	$17,296.09	$16,898.19	$450,005.36
Operating (2/3)	$119,882.64	$273,630.07	$385,443.97	$423,820.05	$403,956.58	$412,601.86	$333,403.88	$328,424.04	$482,348.59	$546,418.86	$448,613.89	$5,109,705.77
Capital (1/3)	$239,765.27	$193,163.96	$192,721.99	$211,910.02	$201,978.29	$206,300.93	$166,701.94	$164,212.02	$241,174.29	$273,209.43	$224,306.94	$4,217,767.83
	$370,771.04	$481,230.96	$596,047.38	$652,252.60	$622,350.60	$635,255.34	$515,258.40	$507,713.19	$740,932.20	$836,924.39	$689,819.02	$9,777,478.96

Operating Fund Activity:

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue*	Operating Expense	Capital Fund Transfer Out	ncrease/(Decrease in Net Assets	Fund Balance
2004	172,430	249	114,830	57,351	57,351
2005	245,420	49,354	163,613	32,453	89,804
2006	268,539	70,628	176,514	21,397	111,201
2007	292,730	69,590	191,873	31,267	142,468
2008	319,940	79,519	210,593	29,828	172,296
2009	327,232	85,108	217,376	24,748	197,044
2010	286,292	105,147	190,079	(8,934)	188,110
2011	306,323	141,300	199,809	(34,786)	153,324
2012	338,380	218,328	214,473	(94,421)	58,903
2013	366,349	157,025	223,162	(13,839)	45,064
2014	389,562	132,144	239,765	17,653	62,717
2015	505,323	229,769	193,164	82,390	145,107
2016	603,262	324,214	192,722	86,326	231,433
2017	677,786	243,750	211,910	222,126	453,559
2018	634,804	270,913	201,978	161,913	615,472
2019	643,745	257,345	206,301	180,099	795,571
2020	599,412	270,236	166,702	162,473	958,044
2021	501,615	385,603	164,212	(48,200)	909,844
2022	732,524	459,705	241,174	31,645	941,489
2023	973,576	720,369	273,209	(20,003)	921,486
Fund Balance as of June 30, 2023					$921,486

* Includes total occupancy tax collection less adminstrative fee plus interest earnings and revenue for The Tinker Belle.

Capital Fund Activity:

Revenue			$4,217,767.83
Proceeds from 2018B Limited Obligation Bonds - Science Center			$3,651,935.65
Interest Earned Trustee Account for 2018B Limited Obligation Bonds			$84,497.15
Investment Earnings			105,381.65
Donations/Sponsorships			440,233.25
Grants			100,000.00
Expenses:			
Professional Fees for Civic Center			86,838
Monroe Park Master Plan and Site Assessment			23,058
Air Museum Advance Planning			19,240
Purchase "The Tinker Belle"			150,000
Capital Improvement to interior of "The Tinker Belle"			18,500
Storage Building			8,175
Tourism Study			7,500
Snow Machine			6,129
Tinker Belle Navigational Equipment			1,480
Center Theater Property			248,273
Tinker Belle Engine Purchase			80,046
Tinker Belle Tail Wheel			5,151
Purchase of Property Adjacent to Center Theater			260,497
Purchase of 318 E. Franklin Street Property			449,875
Capital Improvements to Science Center Building			3,866,342
Architectural/Engineering Services/Exhibits Consulting - Science Center			669,225
Fund Raising Services - Science Center			100,439
Capitalized Equipment/Exhibits - Science Center			569,947
Center Theater Expansion - Consulting Services			62,000
Branding Initiative/Website Design			33,830
2018B Limited Obligation Bonds - Issuance Costs - Science Center			84,256
2018B Limited Obligation Bonds - Debt Service & Annual Admin Fees			583,082
ERP Project			3,220
NC DNCR Grant Capital Equipment Expenses			99,346
Cash Balance of the Capital Project Fund as of May 24, 2024			$1,163,366.27
Portion of Cash Balance Currently Committed in Projects:			
Projects:			
Branding Initiative	$	-	
Monroe Science Center Building		2,505.28	
Center Theatre Expansion		-	
Science Center Exhibits		6,932.98	
	$	9,438.26	
Unreserved Cash Balance of the Capital Project Fund			$1,153,928.01

($0.00)

Occupancy Tax Special Revenue Fund Operating Activity FY 2024

		Budget	FYTD Actual
Revenue:	Occupancy Tax	213,723	$ 201,714
	Sales of TinkerBelle	0	112,500
	Investment Earnings	7,060	13,702
	Appropriation of Fund Balance	35,882	-
	Total	256,665	327,916
Expenses:	Debt Service - Principal & Interest	255,785	227,015
	Debt Service - Bond Admin Fees	880	1,056
	Total	256,665	228,071
Net Income (Loss)		-	99,846

Monroe Science Center Operating Activity FY 2024

		Budget	FYTD Actual
Revenue:	Admission Fees	350,000	$ 150,638
	Gift Shop Sales	-	$ 28,444
	Birthday Party Packages	10,000	$ 11,644
	Misc Annual Membership	5,000	$ -
	Rent Science Center Facility	10,000	-
	Total	375,000	190,726
Expenses:	Salaries & Benefits	447,529	292,970
	Bank Service Charges	2,500	6,099
	Technical Contracted Services	11,757	7,684
	Repairs & Maintenance - Buildings & Equipment	11,670	3,404
	Sofware License & Support	0	-
	Repairs & Maintenance - Copiers	700	577
	Property Damage/Wellness & Clinic Cost	3,248	3,248
	Marketing & Promotions/Printing	23,000	15,430
	Training and Travel Exp	2,000	889
	General Supplies	5,300	4,358
	Small Equipment	2,200	1,689
	PC's Peripherals	0	-
	Utilities & Telecommunications	22,049	24,318
	Items for Resale - Giftshop	31,266	21,216
	Organizational Dues	10,000	420
	Subscriptions & Publications	300	517
	Special Events	4,100	1,725
	Other Operating Expense & Cost Allocations	5,521	5,323
	Total	583,141	389,867
Net Income (Loss)		(208,141)	(199,140)

STAFF REPORT

TO:	Tourism Development Authority
VIA:	Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE:	June 13, 2024
FROM:	Peter Hovanec, Communications and Tourism Director
SUBJECT:	Dowd Center Theatre Strategic Plan Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Staff solicited RFP's for a strategic plan to assist in future planning, event management and overall planning for the operation of the Dowd Center Theatre. Nine proposals were submitted ranging in price from $25,000 to more than $140,000. Staff evaluated each proposal based on meeting the objectives outlined as well as various factors including cost, staff time involved, overall time to complete the project and experience with similar venues.

Staff unanimously selected Webb Management based on meeting the criteria outlined in the RFP as well as the period detailed to complete the project. Webb's proposal was $42,500 and fell within the lower mid-point of the submissions.

Staff has had initial contact with Webb and is in the process of developing a detailed timeline for the strategic plan development.

REVIEW

Within the parameters of Webb's strategic plan process, there will be significant stakeholder participation as well as information gathering from the community that will play a vital role in the overall direction of the Center Theatre moving forward.

Once the overall plan is completed, it will be presented to not only the Tourism Development Authority but also the Monroe City Council for additional input or clarification before final adoption. Once City Council adopts the strategic plan, staff will have a written roadmap to follow for the operation of the theatre as well as execution of policies and procedures associated with the operation.

The complete Webb proposal is attached for reference to the scope of work being proposed.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s): Webb Proposal

building creativity

Proposal

Strategic Planning for the City of Monroe's Dowd Center Theatre

April 30, 2024

CONTACT

Duncan Webb
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New York, NY 100250
212 929 5040
duncan@webbmgmt.orgg

webbmgmt.org

Firm Profile

Webb Mgmt is a leading provider of advisory services for the development and operation of cultural facilities, organizations, agencies, and districts. Our 500+ clients include municipalities, colleges and universities, nonprofit arts organizations, community and private foundations, commercial developers, economic development agencies, and various friends of the arts.

Our work is not intended to sit on a bookshelf, but rather to provide direction, a detailed roadmap, and, oftentimes, a fundraising tool for those charged with turning project concepts into reality. Our firm has provided planning and analysis for arts and cultural projects across North America for over 25 years. Our team, headed by principal Duncan Webb, has training in arts administration, programming, business, finance, and research.

We value:

- A sound research process that leads to **achievable and sustainable strategies** for every assignment, organization, and community.
- The **integrity to pursue the right answer** as opposed to the easy answer.
- A commitment to **collaboration and partnerships.**
- A belief in the positive and **beneficial impacts of the arts and creative industries** on people, communities, and society.

Services

CULTURAL FACILITY DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONS

One side of our practice is focused on the development and operation of arts, cultural, and entertainment facilities.

Needs Assessment: Studies that consider whether and what facilities should be developed or expanded based on market conditions and opportunities.

Business Planning: Plans for the operation of arts and cultural facilities that address how they should be programmed, operated, and sustained.

Facilities Strategic Planning: Comprehenive strategic plans for arts, cultural, and entertainment facilities that inform long-term planning, addressing capacity building, audience development, earned revenue growth, capitalization, organizational evolution, staff re-organization, and board development.

CULTURAL RESEARCH & PLANNING

The other side of our practice provides research and advisory services to the arts sector.

Sector Assessment: Comprehensive analysis of the cultural ecologies of cities, counties, and districts. Stakeholder engagement, data compilation and analysis, and recommendations on strategies to foster thriving, authentic arts sectors.

Organizational Strategic Planning: Collaboration with board and staff of nonprofit organizations to develop sustainable, actionable multi-year plans driven by organizations' vision and values.

Cultural District Planning: Studies that evaluate the need and opportunity for the development of cultural districts, addressing market conditions, the built environment, branding and identity, district management, and funding strategies.

Relevant Experience

1 Dowd Center Theatre

MONROE, NC | 2016

Starting in 2013, the City of Monroe worked with the Center Theatre Development Group to reanimate the community's historic Center Theatre. The facility had opened as a movie theater in 1940, but closed in 1991 due to declining attendance. With multiple community and city-driven efforts to revitalize Monroe's downtown underway, the City hired Webb Management Services to assess the feasibility of rehabilitating the former theater.

Our two-phase study paid particular attention to growth projections for the City of Charlotte and used ticket buyer data from local arts groups to
determine a potential market area for the renovated Center Theatre. We then inventoried local and regional performance, film, and meeting and event facilities and their programming to determine where there might be gaps for a new facility. This research, combined with an assessment of potential user demand, allowed us to conclude that there was a case for the redevelopment of the Center Theatre.

We then moved on to develop a business plan for the building. This work suggested that the City of Monroe own and operate the Center Theatre, working in close collaboration with the Center Theatre Foundation. It also suggested that, in order to maximize facility use, partnerships be developed with the local community college, the Union Symphony Orchestra, and Union County Public Schools. The venue re-opened during the COVID-19 pandemic as the Dowd Center Theatre.

2 The Glove Theatre

GLOVERSVILLE, NY | 2023 **[SEE EXAMPLE REPORT]**

The Gloversville Theatre Corporation hired Webb Mgmt in 2023 to identify community needs and market opportunities for the historic Glove Theatre in order to guide the development of a comprehensive renovation plan for the venue.

The study looked at the resident and tourist segments of the market, cataloged competitive facilities, interviewed possible users, and considered how the renovated venue might support the broader goals of the Gloversville and the surrounding county. As part of efforts, we also conducted research on a series of comparable venues in the region, searching for appropriate benchmarks and best practices that would inform programming and marketing strategies.

The study concluded with a series of recommendations on how and for what purposes the theatre should be renovated, specifying elements of the building that should be improved, and how those various elements should be prioritized.

3 The Keene Colonial Theatre

KEENE, NH | 2010-2024

Webb Mgmt has been a guiding partner to the Colonial Theatre Group (CTG) in Keene, NH since 2010 when we were engaged to consult on the potential renovation of the original 1924 theatre.

In 2022, CTG engaged Webb Mgmt to develop a new strategic plan. At the time, the organization, having completed a $12.5 million capital campaign, was in the process of renovations to existing facilities and the opening of a new, smaller venue that was one of the recommendations of our prior feasibility study.

Work with CTG began with a board retreat where critical issues and goals were established. That was followed by internal and external assessments, including audience mapping, survey analysis, a financial review, interviews with key stakeholders, and a review of broader forces and trends in the sector.

Using our work as a foundation, the theatre's strategic planning committee has articulated strategic goals for the next five years. Still to come is the implementation phase of our work, which will have us working closely with staff and leadership to map out tasks and initiatives for the next five years, also projecting the impacts of the plan on the operating budget and developing targets and measures to help the organization track progress for the coming five years.

4 Goshen Theater

GOSHEN, IN | 2022-2024 **[SEE EXAMPLE REPORT]**

Webb Mgmt was engaged by the Gosh Theater's Board of Directors to support a five-year visioning and strategic planning process for this recently renovated historic theater. Members of the community raised $5 million toward the renovation, which was also supported by the City of Goshen. The theater opened its doors in January 2020, only to close for more than 18-months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the leadership of a new Executive Director, the theater re-opened and focused on establishing itself as an asset for the community and a leading performing arts venue in the region.

Webb Mgmt began the process with a retreat for the planning committee. This resulted in articulated goals for the process that our team used in designing our research and community engagement process. Our SWOT analysis suggested that the best way for the theater to build visibility and engage community members was through a focus on a small number of strategic partnerships and investment in arts education offerings to serve learners of all ages.

We then moved into the implementation phase, determining human and financial resources needed to reach the goals articulated in our five-year plan. Earlier this year, we presented them with key recommendations to chart a path forward that will allow them to take advantage of the opportunity to purchase an adjacent building that would increase programmatic space and revenue.

Project Team

Duncan Webb

PRESIDENT
DUNCAN@WEBBMGMT.ORG

Duncan Webb founded Webb Mgmt to provide consulting services to the arts and cultural industries and has led the firm since 1997, completing over 500 assignments for the advancement of cultural communities, organizations, and facilities.

Duncan's career in the arts began onstage in a 1969 production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*. After college, he became a banker, spending seven years in commercial lending and international finance. After many years of volunteer work in the arts, he came into the field as a producer of experimental, industrial, and commercial theatre, with such credits as the Canadian premieres of *Changing Bodies*, *Blood Brothers*, *Orphans*, *Marshall Bravestarr* and *Barbie and the Rockers*. He also developed marketing and sponsorship programs for the Canadian premiere of *Les Miserables*.

A Certified Management Consultant (CMC), Duncan is an active speaker and published writer on arts management and the development and operation of arts facilities.

500+ Completed Cultural Planning Projects

40 Years of Experience in Arts Administration and Cultural Research and Planning

Education

Bachelor's Degree in Economics, University of Western Ontario

Master's Degree in Business Administration, University of Toronto

Key Project Experience

Cultural Facilities Master Plan & Covid-19 Arts Stabilization Plan for the City of Arlington, TX

Cultural Infrastructure & Creative Spaces Implementation Strategy, Mississauga, ON

Feasibility Study for Fairfax City Center West Performing Arts Center, VA

Cultural Planning for the City of Lee's Summit, MO

Stacey Cooper McMath

SENIOR CONSULTANT
STACEY@WEBBMGMT.ORG

Stacey Cooper McMath is an expert in public sector policy, grantmaking, cultural research, and strategic initiatives. She specializes in facilitation, strategic planning, and advisory services for local arts agencies and funders. In 2020 she was named a Women in Power Leadership Fellow by the Belfer Center for Innovation at the 92nd Street Y.

Prior to joining Webb Mgmt in 2022, Stacey served for eight years as Director of the Programs Unit in the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. She led the agency's grantmaking team in a full equity audit of the $28M Cultural Development Fund and implemented improvements to New York's competitive funding process. In her policy work she supervised two demographic studies of the cultural workforce in New York City, two reports on the impact of COVID-19 on the agency's constituents, and a data-driven analysis of $300M in grant funding. Stacey has taught in the theater departments at Marymount Manhattan College and Barnard College.

20 Years of Experience in Arts Administration

16 Years of Experience in Cultural Policy, Research, and Initiatives

Education

Bachelor of Arts in American History, Barnard College

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Management & Producing, Columbia University

Key Project Experience

Strategic Plan for the Clemente Cultural & Educational Center New York, NY

Lease Assessment and Equity Audit, San Diego Cultural Plan, San Diego, CA

Grantmaking Strategic Redesign and Implementation Plan for ArtsinStark, Canton, OH

Study Brief

The Dowd Center Theatre opened in downtown Monroe in 2020 and has slowly ramped up operations, starting with live programming and then adding film. Though the venue has been a success in many respects, there are still operating challenges and differing opinions about how the venue should be programmed.

Based on our review of the situation, we propose a study rooted in the following questions:

- How does the city define success for the theatre, and what does that mean in terms of how it is programmed, operated and sustained?
- What staff, skills, tools, and other resources are needed for the venue to pursue success?
- How can the views and interests of the community, and in particular City Council, be reflected and honored in regards to the programming and operations of the Dowd Center Theatre?

Our study can and will address these issues, leading to specific recommendations on the governance and operation of the Dowd Center Theatre. We will do so with a comprehensive and inclusive process to ensure that all perspectives are heard and are informed by best industry practices.

Scope of Work

PHASE ONE: INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

This first component of the process is the collection of data, viewpoints, and experiences that lead to a clear picture of the past and present of the Dowd Center Theatre buildng and organization.

Stakeholder Interviews: We will work with the City of Monroe staff to organize and conduct a comprehensive set of online interviews with Dowd Center Theatre staff, board members, volunteers, partners, and funders. In these meetings, we will collect information to understand the strengths, opportunities, and specific challenges associated with the current Dowd Center Theatre organization, facilities, programs, capacity, and goals. We will set a rough target of thirty completed interviews to inform our work.

Organizational Assessment: Building on the interviews, we will collect and analyze additonal information to examine the history and operations of the Dowd Center Theatre, including the following components:

- **Mission, Vision, & Values:** Consider the current mission statement and other work on vision and values that should influence future programming and operations of the theatre.
- **Activity & Financial Review:** Review all activity and financial performance of the venue since opening, based on data provided by the theatre's management. Address how the presenting and rental programs are designed and executed, and how goals are set for those programs.
- **Marketing & Communications:** Review the process and resources used to promote the Dowd Center Theatre, addressing practices around audience development, communications, community engagement, and outreach efforts.
- **Operating Policies & Practices:** Consider the policies and procedures used to manage operations of the organization and its spaces, including scheduling, rental rates, ticketing, safety and security, food and beverage operations, and policies related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- **Staffing & Leadership:** Review and assess current staff and volunteer resources, identifying both strengths and gaps in skills and resources that should have a bearing on programming and operations.
- **Facility & Infrastructure:** Review Dowd Center Theatre's facilities and infrastructure in terms of opportunities and constraints, suggesting improvements where appropriate and programming strategy that takes best advantage of the venue as it exists today.

PHASE TWO: BENCHMARKING, BEST PRACTICES, FORCES, AND TRENDS

Comparable Organization Benchmarking: We will benchmark the Dowd Center Theatre's governance structure, activity, staffing, earned and contributed income, expenses, and other metrics against at least three organizations/ facilities of comparable size, position, activity, and mission.

Best Practices: We will conduct additional interviews with managers of comparable regional facilities to collect best practices in such areas as how shows and events are booked, rental policies, and how government owners of theaters can and should influence operations.

Forces & Trends: Identify and explore broader issues that may have a bearing on the future of Dowd Center Theatre and its programs, such as changing views on the role of live performance, technology and the world of virtual entertainment, and trends in consumer behavior.

PHASE THREE: RECOMMENDATIONS

We will present recommendations to City of Monroe designed to move the organization forward, including:

Mission, Vision, & Values: Suggest revisions to mission and the additional development of a vision statement and/or statement of values that should guide future operations.

Programming Policy & Practices: Suggest revised or additional policies on how the Dowd Center Theatre is programmed, including parameters for presented events and rental programs. Also make recommendations on how programming and operating policies and practices are shared with city leadership on an ongoing basis.

Staffing & Leadership Plan: Recommend additions and/or changes to the Dowd Center Theatre's human resource structure to support the goals and initiatives outlined in the plan. We will set compensation ranges or fees for any new or modified positions or contractors and recommend hiring dates.

Pro-forma Operating Budget: Using Dowd Center Theatre's existing financial model as a base, we will develop a multi-year pro-forma operating budget that starts with the current year and reaches forward a minimum of five years, incorporating specific goals, initiatives, and plans as noted above.

Workshop & Final Strategic Plan: We will deliver a draft strategic plan and then meet with venue and city leadership to review the plan and collect feedback. We will incorporate those comments (and any provided after full review and reflection) and deliver a final plan to be reviewed and considered for ratification by the City of Monroe. We also will participate in meetings and discussions related to the review and approval of the final strategic plan.

Timeline & Fee Proposal

We are ready to begin work as soon as notice to proceed is received. We anticipate a project duration of three months to complete the work described in this proposal. As is always the case, the project duration will depend on our ability to access the resources and people needed, schedule meetings, and collect feedback in a timely manner.

We propose professional fees of $39,500 plus expenses to complete the services described in this proposal. For expenses, we estimate an allowance of $3,000 based on two, one-person trips at $1,500 per trip.

We bill fees monthly based on the progress of the study. Expenses will be billed monthly as incurred with no mark-up. This proposal is valid for a period of sixty days from the date of issue.

City of Monroe
Where Heartland Meets High Tech

STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: June 13, 2024

FROM: Peter Hovanec, Communications and Tourism Director

SUBJECT: MTDA Board Roles and Responsibilities

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The TDA will be presented with information/review of the roles and responsibilities of the Board.

REVIEW

City Attorney Terry Sholar will discuss MTDA Board roles and responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):

City of Monroe
Where Heartland Meets High Tech

STAFF REPORT

TO:	Tourism Development Authority
VIA:	Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE:	June 13, 2024
FROM:	Matt Black, Downtown Director
SUBJECT:	Downtown Mural Location Discussion

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The TDA will be presented possible locations for murals in the downtown area.

REVIEW

Staff is preparing for a possible allocation of $30,000 in mural funding for the next fiscal year's budget. The process will include scoping out possible locations, easement agreements with property owners, RFQ for local artists, and brainstorming creative mural ideas with staff and City Council appointed boards.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is requesting feedback on where the TDA would like to see murals in the downtown area and would like a general discussion of the content in the murals.

City of Monroe
Where Heartland Meets High Tech

STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority

VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager

DATE: June 13, 2023

FROM: Peter Hovanec, Communications and Tourism Director

SUBJECT: Science Center Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The TDA will be presented an update on science center attendance numbers and programming.

REVIEW

The science center had a busy spring with school field trips and expect a busier summer with prescheduled summer camps. In May, we installed and opened our first traveling exhibit "Rainforest Adventure". We have received a lot of positive feedback since opening day.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):

STAFF REPORT

TO:	Tourism Development Authority
VIA:	Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE:	June 13, 2024
FROM:	Peter Hovanec, Communications and Tourism Director
SUBJECT:	Air Show Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The TDA will be presented an update on Warbirds Over Monroe Air Show plans.

REVIEW

The annual Warbirds Over Monroe Air Show is scheduled to take place on November 9-10 at the Charlotte- Monroe Executive Airport. The air show serves as the largest event in Union County, drawing upwards of 50,000 people over the duration of the event, and the Monroe Tourism Development Authority is its largest sponsor. This year the air show will face challenges due to construction at the airport, but staff is working to adapt to the limitations. Staff is contracting with television, radio, newspapers, billboards and social media to advertise the event.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):