

MINUTES

DECATUR CITY COMMISSION

Annual Retreat
January 4, 2024; 9:00am – 5:30pm
January 5, 2024; 9:00am – 3:00pm
Brasstown Valley

Mayor Garrett called the Annual Retreat of the Decatur City Commission to order at 9:00am on Thursday, January 4, 2024.

Present: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Dusenbury, Mayer and Walsh.

Staff Present: City Manager Arnold; Deputy City Manager Junger; Assistant City Managers de Castro, and Scharer; City Attorney Bryan Downs; Chief of Staff Roark; Equity and Engagement Director Jackson; and, Planning and Economic Development Director Threadgill.

At 4:45 pm, on a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers, second by Commissioner Dusenbury; and, all voting “aye”, the City Commission entered into an executive session for the purpose of legal matters.

On a motion by Mayor pro tem Powers, second by Commissioner Walsh; and, all voting “aye”, the City Commission adjourned from Executive Session and reconvened the regular meeting.

The meeting was recessed at 5:30 pm.

Mayor Garrett called the meeting to order at 9:00am on Friday, January 5, 2024.

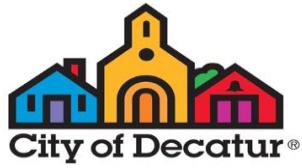
Present: Mayor Garrett; Mayor pro tem Powers; and Commissioners Dusenbury, Mayer and Walsh.

Staff Present: City Manager Arnold; Deputy City Manager Junger; Assistant City Managers de Castro, and Scharer; City Attorney Bryan Downs; Chief of Staff Roark; Equity and Engagement Director Jackson; and, Planning and Economic Development Director Threadgill.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

A copy of the report of the proceedings follows and is incorporated into these minutes.

Meredith Roark
Chief of Staff (City Clerk)



2024

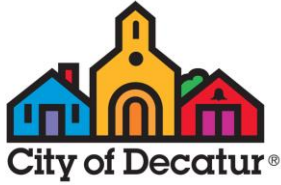
ACTION REPORT

**DECATUR CITY COMMISSION RETREAT
YOUNG HARRIS, GA
JANUARY 4, 2024 – JANUARY 5, 2024**



Coaching | Consulting | Conflict Resolution





Decatur City Commission Retreat Agenda
Thursday, January 4, 2024 – Friday, January 5, 2024

Thursday, January 4, 2024

Time	Session/Events
8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Welcome & Housekeeping Introductions & Role as Municipal Elected Officials Team Building
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Discovering Values & Exploring Strengths
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Discovering Values & Exploring Strengths
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Instant Recall – Let’s Celebrate & Consider
3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Break
3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Delivering More in 2024 – Goals/Priorities
4:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Executive Session
5:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Social Gathering
6:30 p.m.	Dinner

Friday, January 5, 2024

Time	Session/Events
8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Team Building
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Instant Recall/SWOT in Action
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Aligning 2024 Goals/Priorities
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Delivering More in 2024 – Goals/Priorities

Brasstown Valley
6321 US-76, Young Harris, GA 30582



Team Decatur in Action

Strengths-Based + Values-Focused Leadership

Team Decatur explored values-focused & strengths-based leadership. Commonalities and differences were discovered and celebrated.



Regardless of the values . . . daring leaders who live into their values are never silent about hard things.

-Brené Brown

Team Decatur – Top 5 Clifton Strengths:

1. Relator
2. Responsibility
3. Arranger
4. Learner
5. Achiever

There is Strength in Leaders. . .



In Attendance (left to right)

TEAM MEMBER	ROLE	TOP 5 STRENGTHS
Cara Scharer	Assistant City Manager – Public Works	Learner, Futuristic, Relator, Self-Assurance, Restorative
Lesa Mayer	Commissioner	Strategic, Empathy, Relator, Woo, Individualization
George Dusenbury	Commissioner	Learner, Responsibility, Relator, Analytical, Developer
Teresa de Castro	Assistant City Manager – Administrative Services	Communication, Arranger, Woo, Positivity, Includer
Angela Threadgill	Planning & Economic Development Director	Strategic, Achiever, Futuristic, Arranger, Relator
Kelly Walsh	Commissioner	Individualization, Harmony, Responsibility, Arranger, Communication
Patti Garrett	Mayor	Harmony, Responsibility, Learner, Relator, Arranger
Tony Powers	Mayor Pro Tem	Strategic, Communication, Ideation, Achiever, Self-Assurance
Renae Jackson	Equity & Engagement Director	Achiever, Deliberative, Relator, Responsibility, Arranger
Meredith Roark	Chief of Staff (City Clerk)	Deliberative, Individualization, Learner, Responsibility, Discipline
Bryan Downs	City Attorney - Wilson, Morton & Downs, LLC	Responsibility, Relator, Belief, Analytical, Deliberative
Andrea Arnold	City Manager	Relator, Achiever, Belief, Input, Responsibility
David Junger	Deputy City Manager	Arranger, Relator, Developer, Consistency, Strategic
Hugh Saxon (unable to attend)	Capital Projects Manager	Learner, Responsibility, Input, Positivity, Achiever

Facilitator: Michelle E. West, MeWe Consults, LLC

Role of Team Decatur

(Compiled after Team's input)

- Listen & Include All Voices
- Advocate
- Envisioning the future
- Best interest of the community
- Acknowledging the Validity of Perspectives
- Empathetic
- Best Practices
- Community Engagement
- Good-Listener
- Informed
- Impactful
- Deliberate
- Selfless Public Service
- Thoughtful
- Responsibility
- Research
- Make Decisions
- Open Dialogue
- Co-Creator
- Create a Safe Space
- Educate Community on Role
- Co-parent Community w/School System
- Stewardship
- Collaboration

Team Strengthsfinder 2.0 Summary

STRENGTHS	1	2	3	4	5
Achiever	RJ	AA, AT		TP	HS
Activator					
Adaptability					
Analytical				GD, BD	
Arranger	DJ	TD		AT	PG, KW, RJ
Belief			AA, BD		
Command					
Communication	TD	TP			
Competition					
Connectedness					
Consistency				DJ	
Context					
Deliberative	MR	RJ			BD
Developer			DJ		GD
Discipline					MR
Empathy		LM			
Focus					
Futuristic		CS	AT		
Harmony	PG	KW			
Ideation			TP		
Includer					TD
Individualization	KW	MR			LM
Input			HS	AA	
Intellection					
Learner	CS, HS, GD		PG, MR		
Maximizer					
Positivity				HS, TD	
Relator	AA	BD, DJ	GD, CS, RJ, LM	PG	AT
Responsibility	GD, BD	PG, HS	KW	MR, RJ	AA
Restorative					CS
Self-Assurance				CS	TP
Strategic	AT, TP, LM				DJ
Woo			TD	LM	

TABLE KEY: *Team Members are designated by Initials. The #s at the top of the table indicate ranking
 **Yellow Highlight denotes top 6 Strengths for Team
 ***Grayed area reflects descriptors not possessed by team as part of CliftonStrengths assessment.

FOUR DOMAINS OF LEADERSHIP STRENGTH

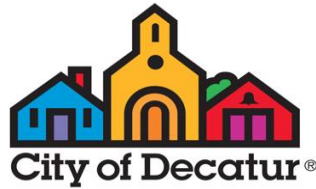
LEADERSHIP EMBODIES THE SUM OF ALL PARTS . . .

While each leader has his/her/their own unique strengths, Gallup has found that the most cohesive, productive, and successful teams possess broader scopes/groupings of strengths as indicated in the table below discussed during the retreat.

Team Decatur leverages their dominant strengths as a group to drive Decatur City expansion, growth, and development.

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
People with dominant Executing themes know how to make things happen .	People with dominant Influencing themes know how to take charge, speak up, and make sure the team is heard .	People with dominant Relationship Building themes have the ability to build strong relationships that can hold a team together and make the team greater than the sum of its parts .	People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes help teams consider what could be. They absorb and analyze information that can inform better decisions .
Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative	Activator Command Communication Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo	Adaptability Connectedness Developer Empathy Harmony Includer Individualization Positivity Relator	Analytical Context Futuristic Ideation Input Intellection Learner Strategic

Image from LinkedIn



2024 Retreat Discussion Topics

Potential topics for discussion were compiled from conference with each City Commissioner. Final discussion topics, denoted by *, were determined by the City Commissioners and Staff at the 2024 Decatur City Commission Retreat.

- Affordable Housing *
- Communication*
- Climate Change – Policy Perspective
- Direct Election of Mayor
- Downtown Experience - Master Plan – Infrastructure Around the Square*
- Joint Meeting with School Board – Sharing of Resources
- Legacy Projects
- Parks and Recreation –Recreatur Master Plan*
- Road Safety - Traffic and Pedestrian*

Modified SWOT in Action – 2023 Accomplishments



Went Well

- Plans – Parks and Recreation Plan, Town Center Plan 2.0, Racial Equity Action Plan, Age Friendly City Community Action Plan
- Land Purchases – 600 Commerce, 1010 N. Parkwood, Landover
- Downtown – Downtown hotel, DDA Downtown Security
- Mobility – Station Soccer at East Lake Marta, Church Street bike lanes and sidewalks, S. Columbia Drive Multi-use Path
- Legal – Kudzu Capital case (Dearborn Park appeal)
- Policy – Tree Ordinance Implementation
- Human Capital Building – Urban Naturalist, Youth engagement – DYC, CFCI, ESB Youth Members, Hired Mental Health Co-Responder
- Financial Resiliency – SPLOST, Homestead exemptions, More Grants – business grants (3 programs), federal funding, reduced millage rate, compensation study, salary adjustments
- New Events – Funk Fest, International Festival, Bicentennial Celebration
- National Awards – All America City

Was Ok

- Parks & Recreation – Department Merger, McKoy Skate Park
- Church Street – Completion
- Warming Center
- Housing – Cottage Center, Missing Middle, Toll Brothers, 600 Commerce
- Planning/CED – Town Center Plan, Circulator Shuttle
- Clean Team
- Police Department – police recruitment, school zone cameras

Growth Opportunities - Could Have Been Better

- South Housing Village
- Park & Recreation Fees
- Communication – Regular updates on Strategic Plan Dashboard, Communication on Projects being implemented, overall communication strategy to residents
- McKoy Skate Park – State Park design changes
- Bicentennial Celebration
- Unhoused Resources – need a strategy, warming center

2023 ACTION PLAN – 2024 RETREAT STATUS UPDATES

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Long term financial planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure money - SPLOST - Non-recurring expenses 	Andrea Arnold	On-going – In progress – SPLOST approved
Recruitment and Retention Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compensation Study 	Teresa de Castro Comp study complete	Now / On-going Q2 Phase II Study
New staff positions created based on internal department re-organization, associated re-structure and demand for services	Andrea Arnold	Q2 Ongoing in multiple recruitments
Explore opportunities to purchase property for future uses Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phase 2 SHV - Land Trust role expansion - Fill staff roles - NOAH preservation strategy-work session 	Andrea Arnold Angela Threadgill	Readiness to react when opportunity comes up In Progress Complete Complete Q3 In Progress
Duplex, Triplex, Quadplex Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pending approval 	Angela Threadgill	Start implementation Jul 1 Complete
Pursue redevelopment opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EX: USPS location - Strategies and process to react: incentives? 	Angela Threadgill	In Progress (Part of Town Center Plan 2.0)
CRM System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research alternatives and make recommendation 	David Junger Meredith Roark	In Progress- Acknowledge requests, automation, modify how to use app WS Q2
Equity and Reparations work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan and process for 2023 - Recommendations / Resolution / Reparations 	Rena Jackson	On-going, Equity plan completed Q3 Q1

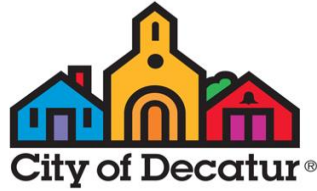
WHAT	WHO	WHEN
School System - Facilitated retreat with City Commission - Legislative agenda meeting - Shared facilities discussion - Over / under utilization of certain facilities	Andrea Arnold	Q2 Q4 Q1
New parks and recreation department work session	Andrea Arnold	Q1 / Q2 Q1
Re-establish pre-meeting dinners	Meredith Roark	Q1 Complete
Increase level of staff updates to City Commission – quality vs quantity; # open & closed businesses	Andrea Arnold	Now / Periodically In progress
Implement downtown Master Plan	Angela Threadgill	On-going In progress
Mental health clinician with Police Department	Andrea Arnold	Q2-Complete
Mobility - Legacy Park shuttle service - Safe routes available for all recreation facilities - In depth data gathering to determine needs - Elevate the concept leading to actions - Electric shuttle	Angela Threadgill	Incomplete – Q2 Work Session Long term implementation Q1 / Q2
Circulator shuttle routes - Pilot shuttle - GO60+ shuttle - Work session	Angela Threadgill Complete Complete Incomplete Q1	Q1 Q2 Q4
Cameras in public places work session with Police Department, and Parks and Rec - Privacy policy - Access - School zone speed enforcement - Red light cameras	Andrea Arnold Transpo v. Public Spaces. Town hall b/f Taskforce vs. Advisory Board	Q3 / Q4 In progress – Q2
Charter Review Committee - Directly elected mayor as part of discussion / review process	Meredith Roark Andrea Arnold	Q4 Not started Q3 2024 (after budget)

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
PATH plan work session on progress, grant search	Hugh Saxon	TBD ongoing
Advisory Boards -Audit/Discovery of need, staff, type - Update charges of group	Andrea Arnold	Assigned to Ops Analyst – new employee
Decatur Square Plan - Unhoused population, safety and cleanliness - Downtown master plan integrated into Decatur Square plan - Continue funding resource opportunities for unhoused - Façade improvement program	Angela Threadgill Andrea Arnold	Q3 In Progress Complete In Progress Complete
Equity and Reparations - Reparations Resolution	Rena Jackson	In Progress (Equity work) Q1
- Equity Action Plan-work session - Certified Welcoming City/GMA Equity Certification (either one)	Complete Beginning Stages	Q3 Q2 Q2
Bicentennial events and celebrations - 200 stories project	Linda Harris and Rena Jackson	In-progress 200 Stories ongoing
Stormwater plan implementation and work session-no set date	Hugh Saxon	Q3 on-going
Downtown grocery recruitment efforts - Part of mobility item (electric shuttle)	Angela Threadgill	In Progress – potential incentive - DDA
Parking reform – Unified system - Safety design standards - Report created and distributed to City Commission - Simplify what we do now and on-going	Education, Accessibility, Rates, Visible Private Lot Parking Angela Threadgill	In Progress, Q2 2024 Q2 On-going

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Tree ordinance check in - Information share to commission-work session	Hugh Saxon	Q1 Work Session Q1
CFCI- check in	Children and Youth Services	Q3 Complete
Boards and Commissions work sessions - Recruitment	Andrea Arnold	Periodic and On-going In Progress
Policies and Procedures for housing trust fund	Andrea Arnold Angela Threadgill	Q1/Q2 Complete



Photo Credit: Zoe Seiler



2024 ACTION PLAN

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?
Work Session – NOAH Strategy	Angela Threadgill	Q3
Work Session – Missing Middle Housing	Angela Threadgill	Q4
600 Commerce Drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick-off & Public Input Demolition 	Angela Threadgill David Junger	Q1 Q2
Land Trust-MOU for Funding	Angela Threadgill	Q1
Cottage Court Tour/Work Session		Q1

COMMUNICATION:

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?
Streamline Communication (pro-active, timely, centralized)	Renae Jackson	Q2
Communication Options Work Session	Renae Jackson	Q2

PARKS & RECREATION:

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?
After School Program Work Session	Cara Scharer	Q1
Parks & Recreation Facilities Assessment	Cara Scharer	Q1
Fees, Staffing, Operations Work Session	Cara Scharer	Q1

ROAD SAFETY:

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?
Safe Streets for All Kick-off <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Recommendations Establish Stakeholder Group 	Cara Scharer Cara Scharer Cara Scharer	Q2 Q3-Q4 Q1
Red Light Cameras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations 	Andrea Arnold/Meredith Roark	Q3
West Howard & Atlanta Avenue Check-In	David Junger & Hugh Saxon	Q2

DOWNTOWN EXPERIENCE:

WHAT?	WHO?	WHEN?
Decatur Square Capital Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble Stakeholder Group Construction Drawings N. McDonough Turnaround 	Angela Threadgill Cara Scharer Angela Threadgill & Cara	Q1 Q4 Q4
Streetscapes Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Session UDO Amendment Standards Details 	Angela Threadgill Angela Threadgill Cara Scharer	Q3 Q4 Q4
UDO Amendment – Semi-Public Spaces & In-Lieu Fees for new developments	Angela Threadgill	Q3
UDO Amendment – Public Art (Plus Beacon Hill Art Exhibit/Mural along Howard Avenue)	Angela Threadgill	Q4
Parking Deck Improvement Conversations	Angela Threadgill	Q2
Ambassador Program	Angela Threadgill	Q1/Q2
Parking Enhancements	Angela Threadgill	Q3/Q4
Open Container District <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restaurant Retail Group Check-in Re: expanding hours 	Angela Threadgill	Q2
Unhoused Population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Staff Recommendations Convene & Facilitate Stakeholder Group 	Andrea Arnold/Angela Threadgill Andrea Arnold/Angela Threadgill	Q2 Q2

Thanks for choosing MeWe Consults, LLC
for the 2024 Decatur City Commission Retreat.

www.meweconsults.com



Coaching | Consulting | Conflict Resolution

Team Decatur is Making a Difference Using What Makes EACH Leader Exceptional



It was a true pleasure to partner with Team Decatur for the 2024 Decatur City Commission Retreat. I truly enjoyed working with you all and would welcome the opportunity to be your Leadership Development Partner at some other point between the annual retreats. Thanks again and I look forward to the 2025 Decatur City Commission Retreat.

In Joy,

Michelle E. West, JD
Founder & Principal
MeWe Consults, LLC
404-441-4612
michelle@meweconsults.com
meweconsults.com
[Connect with me on LinkedIn](#)