Hamilton Main Street Advisory Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2026
5:30 p.m.
Board Room, Hamilton, Texas

I. Call to Order

Chair Mary called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. A quorum was present.

Board Members Present:
Alicia Saldana-Stephens
Courtney Amaro
Kristi Collett, Vice-President
Mary Owen, President
Michelle Frasier, Secretary
Liz Graves - virtual

Board Members Absent:

Emery McElroy

Staff Present:
Debbie Grieve, Executive Director
Bonnie Harle, Administrative Assistant

Public Attendees:
None

II. Citizens' Comments and Board Introductions

There were no citizens' comments.

III. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes
The Board reviewed the minutes of the March 17, 2026 regular meeting. Kristi Collett made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Michelle Frasier seconded the motion. The motion carried.

IV. Regular Agenda

a. Historic Preservation Design Guidelines: Next Priority Components
The Board discussed priorities for the next phase of the historic preservation design guidelines.

Staff recommended focusing first on signage requirements and potentially addressing awnings concurrently, noting those elements may align more easily with existing city ordinances and code provisions. Board members generally agreed signage should be the primary focus moving forward and discussed the value of reviewing examples from other Texas communities before additional drafting occurs. No formal action was taken.

b. Business and Retail Development / Downtown Inventory
The Board received an update regarding ongoing cleanup and verification of property and business information on DowntownTX.org. Staff explained that much of the current data dates back to 2017–2018 and requires updates to accurately reflect current businesses, available properties, ownership information, and images. Members discussed the importance of creating a more reliable downtown inventory to support business recruitment, historic documentation, and long-term planning efforts. Board members were encouraged to assist with reviewing and verifying information as updates continue. No formal action was taken.

c. Transformation Strategy Goal Areas

Create awareness and promote downtown's historic character
The Board reviewed progress related to the Historic Preservation Month scavenger hunt and history hunt initiative. Draft clues, promotional concepts, advertising plans, and website content were discussed. Staff reported that social media promotion was scheduled to begin May 1, with a related press release planned for publication the following week. Members discussed outreach opportunities with local schools and considered options for onsite location markers, including QR codes and laminated signage. Staff noted that some locations may require approval before materials can be displayed. No formal action was taken.

Beautification and enhancement of public spaces
The Board discussed updates involving murals, banners, and downtown window art displays. Members expressed positive feedback regarding recent beautification efforts and discussed the importance of involving downtown business owners in future planning discussions. Liz was identified as the lead for this strategy area, and staff noted additional planning and coordination would continue. Members also discussed the need to establish budget expectations before moving forward with additional projects. No formal action was taken.

Increase visitors to downtown: Sip & Stroll recap
The Board reviewed the first-year results of the Sip & Stroll event. Staff reported total event revenue of $9,801 and expenses of $9,927, resulting in a net loss of $126, which members viewed positively for an inaugural event. The discussion included attendance, business participation, marketing reach, event logistics, and lessons learned for future planning. Members emphasized the importance of continued attendee engagement through surveys, social media outreach, and stronger future promotion efforts. The Board also discussed possible dates for the 2027 event and agreed to revisit scheduling after members review calendars and potential conflicts. No formal action was taken.

Main Street Market update
Staff reported that 28 vendors had committed for the remainder of the market season, with approximately 26 vendors expected for the upcoming market event. Members discussed musician scheduling, portable restroom needs, event-related expenses, and the long-term sustainability of providing live music during market events. The Board also discussed possible sponsorship opportunities and whether vendor fees may need to be evaluated in the future. One board member offered to sponsor portable restroom expenses for the current year. Members agreed additional discussion regarding market expenses and music programming should continue at a future meeting. No formal action was taken.

d. Main Street Branded Merchandise / T-Shirt Design
The Board discussed progress on a new Main Street t-shirt design and reviewed ongoing revisions. Members also discussed the possibility of incorporating future community or youth art contests into the design selection process. Staff confirmed that funding for the next shirt order is included within the current budget. No formal action was taken.

V. Executive Session

No executive session was held.

VI. Reports

a. Executive Director's Report
Staff provided an update regarding attendance at the Main Street America Conference in Tulsa. Staff noted that many of Hamilton's current challenges are consistent with issues being experienced by other Main Street communities across the country and indicated a more detailed conference recap would be presented at a future meeting.

- **Budget Development Timeline**
  Staff reported that draft EDC and Main Street budgets are due by June 1. Members were also informed that future Main Street budgets will be organized into subcategories aligned with Texas Historical Commission and Main Street America reporting standards to improve reporting efficiency and consistency.
- **Lofts on Bell / BBR Properties Update**
  Staff reported that EDC approved the full $7,500 funding request for the Lofts on Bell project and that work is expected to begin soon.
- **Business Development / Realtor Outreach / Façade Interest**
  Staff reported continued outreach efforts with local realtors to provide small business resource information supporting downtown recruitment and leasing efforts. Staff also reported that one downtown property owner had submitted paperwork to begin façade and awning renderings through the Texas Historical Commission and that another prospective downtown property purchaser expressed interest in future rendering assistance.

e. Board Membership and Development
The Board reviewed three applications related to the current board vacancy and anticipated future board turnover. Staff recommended consideration of two primary candidates and one alternate applicant based on projected membership transitions. Members discussed the importance of strengthening board onboarding, orientation, and training processes for future members. The Board agreed it would be beneficial to invite applicants to attend a future meeting before making final recommendations. No formal action was taken.

VII. Future Agenda Items

The following items were identified for future discussion:

- The Board discussed the need to develop stronger onboarding expectations, orientation materials, and leadership preparation processes for new board members.
- The Board agreed to revisit selection of the 2027 Sip & Stroll event date after reviewing schedules and potential conflicts.
- Members agreed additional discussion is needed regarding Main Street Market expenses, including portable restrooms, live music, sponsorship opportunities, and possible vendor fee structures to support long-term sustainability.
- The Board briefly discussed scheduling a future coordination meeting with partner organizations, including the Chamber and EDC, to strengthen communication, collaboration, and shared planning efforts.

The next regular meeting was noted for May 19, 2026.

Michelle Frasier made a motion to adjourn. Courtney Amaro seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Certification

I, Debbie Grieve, certify that these minutes are a true and correct record of the actions and proceedings of the Hamilton Main Street Advisory Board at its regular meeting held on April 21, 2026.

Debbie Grieve
Executive Director
Hamilton Economic Development Corporation

Approved by the HHMS Board of Directors on May 27, 2026.

/s/ Mary Owen
President
Hamilton Historic Main Street