

times, they have a hard time getting the small business up and off the ground. With the extra financing and the increase in the Main Street Budget, they are trying to develop different grant options for small businesses whether that is in the form of a Rental Assistance Program, a stipend, or a refund on payroll/sales taxes that goes straight from CVDA to small business owners to create more small businesses Downtown. He is not an Industrial Authority and he is not creating 2,000 jobs; however, if he can create an extra 20 jobs Downtown next year, it will greatly impact not just the lives of the 20 employees, but also the lives of the citizens who are able to visit and enjoy the Downtown area. Mr. Bayman asked Council to contact him if they have any ideas about utilizing the Downtown to create funds and grow Downtown.

Mayor Matheson had to leave at 6:16 p.m. to attend the National Day of Prayer event so Mayor Pro Tem Miller-Cody filled in for the Mayor.

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that last week we celebrated our first anniversary for Valdosta On Demand with 65,000 plus rides in 12 months which is an incredible feat for a City our size. We continue to be the most successful launch of a micro transit system that Via has had since they have been around and they are a global organization.

Georgia Cities Week ended April 29, 2022 and we had a lot of events that week which were posted to the Georgia Municipal Association's website. We probably had the most activities of any community around the State.

City Government 101 is going well and the graduation will be held on Monday, May 16, 2022 in the Council Chambers.

Main Street is preparing for the Songwriter Showcase this weekend and the traditional Mother's Build a Bouquet event for Mother's Day.

Friday After Five, formally known as First Friday, will be held on Friday, May 5, 2022. We were trying to re-energize it and our new Main Street Director Brandie Dame is going a great job.

Love Where You Live will be hosting the quarterly River Cleanup Event at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 7, 2022. One of the meeting places is the Troupville Boat Ramp. There will be multiple cleanup sites and it is making a big impact on keeping our waterways clean.

On Saturday, May 7, 2022, there will be a No Water No Beer Festival at Georgia Beer Company. Also, it is National Drinking Water Week and David Frost, Utilities Director, has been going out and talking to students in the elementary schools about the importance of quality water and the process involved.

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that on Monday, May 2, 2022, he and several of the Council Members went to Atlanta to visit the Reapportionment Office to look at redistricting our City zones. Once we receive the final results, we will provide that to the Mayor and Council. It was a very successful meeting.