

Minutes
Business Improvement District
January 12, 2012

Board Present: Julie Duffy, Andrew Ferrin, Doug Lorello, Garry Hackett
Board Absent: Stacey Schaefer, Steve Alley, Hayley Leray
Staff Present: Joan Redeen, Bob Milford
Guests Present: Alison Fried, Brett Doney

- I. **Call to order:** Julie called the meeting to order at 9:03am.
- II. **Guests:** No guests wished to present at the beginning of the meeting.
- III. **Approval of minutes from 12-8-11 meeting:** Garry motioned to approve the minutes from the 12/8/11 meeting. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- IV. **Financials:** The Board received the November financials via e-mail. Julie inquired why the accounts payable was over \$17K on the November financials. Joan noted that with the Board meeting once a month she is only paying bills once a month and the reports were run dated 11/30 but bills were paid by the December board meeting held on 12/8. Joan reported that accounts payable is just over \$5,300 at this moment (\$5K for the Chamber's Low-Cost air carrier initiative and \$300+ for taxes to Cascade County). There being no further discussion on the financials Andy motioned to approve the 11/30/11 financial statements which include the Balance Sheets, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Joan noted that both of the CD's at Stockman Bank are due; \$75K matured 1/6/12 and \$25K matured 1/10/12. In order to payout the Public Drug façade grant a transfer of funds needs to be made. Board discussion followed on grants that are anticipated to be paid out in the next few months; Novak & the Subway building, Stam & the Montana Building. Joan also informed the Board that the City has been delayed in sending us the assessment distributions. The County changed its software and that has caused a delay of payment to the City, hence the delay to us. Julie advised that the two CD's should be cashed in with \$50K going to checking and \$50K going to the money market account, she added that when funding comes in from the City the Board can look at acquiring another CD. The Board agreed with Julie's recommendation and instructed Joan and Julie accordingly.
- V. **Grant Programs:** Joan reported that two grant applications have been received. Church Harris aka Lawyers, Guns & Money LLC, has submitted both a façade and interior grant application for the Baum-Trinastich building at 114 3rd St South. Their initial estimate for all of the work being done, in accordance with their recently completed Feasibility Study, is over \$880K. Discussion followed on how to calculate their façade grant. It was noted that when calculating CTA's façade grant they were eligible for the front of the building and the remaining sides were approved at a maximum of \$1,250 per side. The board noted that these sides are considered exposed sides and backs, as the building is not located on a corner lot. Doug motioned to approve a \$5,000 interior grant and a \$7,500 façade grant for Church Harris. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** The second grant application is from the Brighten Up Frame Shop. Rebecca Hughes is the current owner of Big Sky Images located in the Holiday Village Mall. She recently purchased both the building and the business at 618 Central Avenue and plans to re-locate Big Sky Images downtown. Her initial estimate for interior work is just over \$10K. Andy motioned to approve a new business interior grant for 30% of the costs, up to a maximum of \$3,061.43 for the Brighten Up Frame Shop. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Joan informed the Board that she and Martin recently went up to the Holiday Village Mall to visit with some of the tenants and invite them to consider moving downtown, as the mall is increasing rents. Joan noted that the Business Incentive Grant was capped at \$10K, to date \$5,481 has been spent leaving a balance of \$4,519. The tenants in the mall were informed of this grant. Joan visited

with seven businesses and recently sent an e-mail to the Law Enforcement Museum as well, as they were forced to move out of the mall on 12/31 due to the increase in rent.

Julie tabled the Interior Grant Program Criteria until the next meeting so more board members could be present and provide their input.

VI. Old Business:

Beautification: Adopt-a-Tree program: Joan provided the Board with a draft of an adopt-a-tree program for Great Falls. She compiled this information from other programs found online. Joan noted that a plaque or something must be done to recognize those that fund the program but figuring out how to install a plaque and not create a tripping hazard or harm the tree will be important. She added that she set it up in such a way that a sponsor would agree to a five-year commitment and pay an annual fee. Alison noted that Billings had done something similar in the way of an adopt-a-tree program when they had a bug infestation a few years back. She added that she'd be willing to pay \$50 per year for a total of \$250 for five years. Joan commented that she'd like to create some discount or incentive to encourage multiple trees to be adopted, for example the seven trees located around the Dragonfly building. Joan will continue to refine the Adopt-a-Tree program.

Community Ambassador: Joan reminded the board that the position was only authorized up to 1/31/12. She noted that Bob is currently working Tuesday and Friday, 10 hours per week. If there is snow he will also work at that time, plowing. At this point, he has only removed snow one time and it went well. Bob noted that things are going well; he spends his time picking up trash. He noted that graffiti seems to be a problem. Joan added that come summer Bob will still only be available 10 hours per week so we'll need to do something to cover flower watering. Julie noted that as long as Bob wants to stay we should keep him and come summer we can hire a college student to water the flowers. Andy motioned to make the Community Ambassador position a permanent position through 6/30/12. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Downtown Sound System: Joan reported that Good Vibrations had the system up and running over the holiday season. They left the outlying speakers turned off as they are too far away from the base and would likely just spew static. They've since turned off a few other speakers due to the static issue. Jim at Good Vibrations noted that the antennas that are out there are \$25 antennas that were installed in 2004 and were not designed for being outdoors. He recommends that we purchase new antennas that run \$139 each and are geared for outdoors; we'd need 11 of them. Doug suggested we acquire three of the antennas and place them at the outlying speakers to see if they make a difference. Joan will instruct Good Vibrations.

MApril: Joan provided a draft of a request that would be sent out to local non-profits giving them the opportunity to come downtown and do a one-time spring clean-up for the BID. She noted that MApril's dates this year are April 28th and May 5th. She reminded everyone that two years ago we utilized Foothills and provided them with a donation of \$1,200. Last summer we used the Boys & Girls Club every week all summer long and donated \$1K to them for their efforts on our behalf. She noted that we've utilized Pre-Release in the past but they have been non-responsive since summer 2011. Brett suggested that we hold a downtown clean-up day separate from MApril. The Board instructed Joan to work towards both, having a one-time clean-up day and utilizing the Boys & Girls Club every week all summer long. Joan will refine the request for non-profits.

Pocket Park: Joan reminded the Board of our guests last month presenting the idea of the Pocket Park behind the Roberts building. Joan informed the Board that the property owner is going to be involved in the project, but she has not been informed at what amount. Alison suggested that the property owners who have the back of their building in that alley all be informed of our façade grant program. The BID can offer a maximum of \$1,250 to each property owner who improves the back of their building. She added that she wants to be involved in the project, as a property owner on that alley. Julie noted that she'd like to see the BID involved in the park as well. Garry commented that he felt the committee working on the project was looking to us to facilitate the repair of the backs of the buildings. He added that the owners should either agree to participate or agree to allow their building to be done by the BID and sign off on the liability. The Board instructed Joan to inform the

committee to let property owners know about our façade grants when meeting with them. They also noted that they wish to know how much money is being committed to the project by the property owners.

Graffiti: Joan noted that she has received information from Bozeman on their graffiti program and has requested the same information from Billings. Once she receives that she'd like to create a draft for a program in Great Falls. She added that she wants to be sure there is no liability for the BID. Brett suggested that a release be signed by the property owners.

Downtown Action Alliance: Alison noted that the DAA is working on the master plan, how to make the goals happen. Get Fit Great Falls attended the last meeting as they are working on a complete streets policy. Alison added that there is another meeting taking place monthly now, the Downtown Development Partnership. It is potentially redundant and the DAA is discussing morphing into something different. The next 60 days will be very telling. Brett added that the sub-committee meeting on the organization/structure of the Downtown Development Partnership is meeting tomorrow.

Downtown Development Partnership: Joan informed everyone that there have been two meetings of this informal group so far. There are three things happening: 1. Creation of the TIF district - the City is in charge of this item; 2. Organization/Structure sub-committee is working on formalizing the partnership – Brett and Sheila are on this committee; 3. 100-Day Challenge, working on accomplishing three of the immediate/short term master plan goals (one in 30-days, one in 60-days and the final goal completed in 100-days) – Joan and Alison are on this committee. The goal is to have the TIF established by the April 3rd city commission meeting and the 100-day challenge complete and the partnership formalized.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Joan informed the Board that DGFA's general membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 24th at 5:30pm at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art. Greg Krueger from Billings will be the guest speaker and he'll be discussing how Billings has created their partnership and worked together toward revitalizing their downtown.

Downtown Safety: Joan informed the Board that the Business Watch meeting was held January 10th and the topic was shoplifting and identifying perpetrators. The meeting was well attended and the information provided by the speaker was very helpful. The Safety Committee meets next on the 31st and they are working on creating a Downtown Safety Plan, making sure they cover all of the safety items in the Master Plan. Alison added that the goal is to have the Safety Plan complete within the 100-day challenge timeframe. Joan commented that Weed & Seed provided funding last summer for a downtown police officer and that funding will not exist this summer.

Great Falls Development Authority: Joan provided the Board with a copy of the letter that Brett sent requesting \$10K for the next phase in the branding initiative. Brett thanked the BID for being involved in the project and noted that the project had exceeded their expectations. The next phase is the action phase and will last 10 to 15 years. Branding will allow us to coordinate marketing efforts and utilize those dollars more effectively. GFDA needs \$29K for this phase. They already have commitments from the TBID for \$5K, \$3,600 from a DOC grant and GFDA will be providing \$2K toward travel, plus all staff time involved in the project. He is planning to go before the museum consortium, the home builders, and the City and the County as well as the tavern association. He went before the Realtor Association this morning. Julie inquired when a decision needed to be made by the BID. Brett noted that mid-February would work. Joan informed the Board that the BID contributed \$1,500 to phase one and are being asked by GFDA to provide \$10K this round. Brett noted that he is working on bringing more organizations to the table.

Insurance: Joan informed the Board that the quote that Stockman Bank provided for insurance will expire on January 18th. That means if the Board doesn't make a decision today we'll have to go through the whole application process again to get another quote and the quote could change. The Board decided to wait until more board members were present to make any decision. Joan added that the business liability renews in May and the Cat's insurance policy will be renewed in June and a decision about insurance will need to be made sometime between now and then.

Johnson Hotel: Joan noted that there is nothing to report on the Johnson at this time.

Parking Commission: Joan informed the Board that she will not be able to attend the January parking commission meeting. She knows that they will be discussing the RFP on the North parking garage; the possible conversion from nickel tokens to quarter tokens; and the Shop til you Drop in bed program. They meet on Tuesday, January 17th at 3pm in the Rainbow Room at the Civic Center if anyone is able to attend on behalf of the BID.

Work Plan: Joan noted that she continues to follow the work plan.

VII. **New Business:** Joan reported that we will be hosting the Montana Downtown Conference October 24th to the 26th.

VIII. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment at this time.

IX. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 11:13am.

Stacey Schaefer, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____