

**Minutes**  
**Business Improvement District**  
**June 14, 2012**

Board Present: Stacey Schaefer, Julie Duffy, Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett, Doug Lorello  
Board Absent: Steve Alley, Kris Harrison  
Staff Present: Joan Redeen  
Guests Present: Jolene Bach, Tim Petersen, Rebecca Hughes, Jean Price

I. **Call to order:** Stacey called the meeting to order at 8:59am.

II. **Guests:** Jolene Bach was present to provide the Board with an update on the Roberts Playground.

Demolition was handled by the residents and is complete. Last Friday the project took a big jump using the youth volunteer group the BID had acquired. They cleaned up the entire parking area and playground and painted the parking lot, giving it more visibility. Davidson Companies held a fundraiser; over \$600 was raised and those funds will be matched. Davidson has expressed interest in helping with construction. US Bank also has a donation for the project. Jolene had two specific things she'd like to discuss with the Board today: 1. the project is in need of a fiscal agent as they need a 501(c)3 and 2. discuss the back façade/art mural component of the project. Jolene informed the Board that Carl with the Lobby Bar will participate. Discussion followed on the BID's façade grant. The Board noted that they'd like to use some components of the façade grant program but run this as a special project as opposed to a façade grant. Garry motioned that the BID will establish a special project for the Roberts Playground where the BID will match a property owner's investment in the façade component of this project for the back of their building up to a maximum of \$1,250 per property, property owners who utilize this will not be eligible for a façade grant for the back of their property for five years. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Jolene was instructed to have property owners submit a façade grant application. Discussion followed on the BID acting as the fiscal agent. The property owner has committed \$5K cash toward the project, plus full costs of demolition that was estimated at \$5K. They have spent about \$300 on clean-up and the balance of the \$5K will come to the BID. Garry motioned that the BID will act as the fiscal agent for the Roberts Playground project. Andy seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Jolene added that other downtown businesses as well as individuals want to invest in this project. The committee wanted to explore the possibility of the BID matching those donations, up to \$15K. The first phase is \$30K which includes fencing, playground equipment, etc. A playground that is useable but nothing outside of the fence would complete the first phase. Garry inquired about other downtown residents using the playground. Jolene stated that the property owner has agreed that this playground can be used by other downtown residents; Garry requested something in writing granting permission. Andy motioned to approve the BID matching contributions for the playground component of the project up to \$10K total. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Jean Price noted that she is in attendance to discuss the BID's donation to the Urban Art Project (UAP). The UAP has again requested that the BID contribute \$2K. She reported that last summer they invested in the landscaping and had new banners installed. She inquired about the windows in the garage, noting that when there is a heavy rain or snow the windows have a great deal of condensation on the inside. She also noted that the ceiling is rotting out in two or three of the windows, the sheet rock is falling out – she continues to push it up and paint over it each time. She'd like to invest in preserving those spaces. Stacey stated that the City just completed a study on both garages and that should be an issue addressed by the City. The Board concurred that this should be the City's responsibility. Joan instructed Jean to contact Wendy Thomas at the City. Joan noted that she will address it at the parking commission next Monday as well. Jean added that she was excited to see the Adopt-a-Tree program launch and would like to see the UAP adopt some of the trees on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave South and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Doug motioned to approve a donation of \$2,000 to the Urban Art Project. Andy seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** The Board noted that if the UAP would like to adopt a tree they are free to do that.

Rebecca Hughes, as an applicant for a board position, was in attendance.

III. **Approval of minutes from 5-10-12 meeting:** Andy motioned to approve the minutes from the 5/10/12 meeting. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

IV. **Financials:** The Board received the April financials via e-mail. There being no discussion on the financials Andy motioned to approve the 4/30/12 financial statements which include the Balance Sheets, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** The Board was presented with a draft of the Budget for the fiscal year 2012-2013. Julie motioned to approve the budget for fiscal year 2012-2013, as presented. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Joan explained the process of how we get our funding from the City. The City receives the property taxes from the County and each month they send us our assessments. We are usually about four to six weeks behind so January's distribution is received about March 15<sup>th</sup>, and so on. The large distributions occur in January and July (for the previous November and May assessments, respectively).

Joan reported that Douglas Wilson has been conducting our annual audit for several years. Mike Diekhans, our auditor, asked if the BID wishes to continue working with Douglas Wilson. Doug motioned to proceed with the audit with Douglas Wilson for the fiscal year ending 6/30/12. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

V. **Grant Programs:** CTEP: Joan noted that since the Complete Streets ordinance did not pass a vote by the City Commission she contacted Andrew Finch at the City to inquire what they advise doing in regard to our CTEP project on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S. Joan read an e-mail to the Board that Andrew sent about the streetscape study that the City is currently undertaking. The City is advising that the BID wait until the streetscape study is complete. The Board instructed Joan to get a better time frame from the City for the study. The Board noted that the CTEP will likely remain on hold at least until the spring of 2013.

Mauri Novak has sent an e-mail with an update on his project. He estimated being completely done with the project by September. He expects to have four of the eight units complete by the first week of July and has requested that the BID do a partial distribution of the grant. Doug motioned to approve payment of half of the grant funds that Mauri was originally approved for upon receipt of four certificates of occupancy and all receipts of expenditures to date. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** The Board instructed Joan to advise Mauri to apply for additional funding if needed; he is eligible for a maximum of \$50K.

Joan reported that she has received a Business Incentive grant application for the Downtown Antiques Mall that is moving into 611 Central Ave for \$1,400 as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. The tenant has signed a three-year lease with Garry Hackett. Andy motioned to approve a business incentive grant for the Downtown Antiques Mall for \$1,400. Doug seconded. Garry abstained. **Motion passed.**

Rocky Mountain Building: Joan reported that she had a phone conversation with Randy Hafer. He was inquiring about the BID's grant programs. He inquired about the façade grant and based on the linear footage he provided the building could be eligible for a total of \$51,250. Calculated as follows: \$20K on Central (100 feet); \$30K on 6<sup>th</sup> (150 feet); and \$1,250 for the back of the building. He also inquired about our interior and residential grants. Joan informed him that the residential grant is not available until July, 2013. His goal is to have people moving in by that time. Joan informed the Board that she suggested he write a letter to the Board to ask them to consider the residential grant.

Façade Grant Program Criteria: Stacey tabled the Façade Grant Program Criteria until the next meeting.

VI. **Old Business:**

**Beautification: 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N Underpass:** Joan reported that since last month's board meeting she has proceeded with procuring the selected artwork and has gone public with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call to Artists for the artists to implement the artwork. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Call to Artists asks artists to submit a buffalo depicting

something of historical importance to Great Falls by Friday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The goal is to have 20 artists but there's no way to know what the response will be. T&L Painting is ready to prime and they are going to prime the bottom half of the wall the color of the prairie and the top half of the wall in the color of the sky. They should be priming within the next week or two and the goal is to have artists painting shortly after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Joan reported that TBID turned down our grant request. She added that she is working on a grant application with BNSF and is exploring other grant possibilities. Joan needs instruction from the Board regarding payment for artists participating in the project. The artwork was purchased for \$500. Thirty thousand dollars (\$30K) has been budgeted and approved to be spent on this project for the next fiscal year. Garry suggested that half of the budget be calculated based on square footage for the north side this summer and the other half for the south side in summer 2013. Artists would be paid based on the square footage that they are assigned to work on. Joan noted that she will figure out those calculations. Contracts will be put in place with all of the artists. Joan will be managing the artists and the project.

Adopt-a-Tree program: Joan reported that the program went live on a Thursday; when she came into the office Friday morning the first two trees were adopted. The response has been very positive; many folks have expressed interest in adopting trees. The Board asked Joan to forward the Adopt-a-Tree form directly to them.

Downtown Sound System: Joan reported that the City has said that we need to get an electrician to look at the issue with the two speakers in the 100 (north side) & 600 (south side) blocks of Central. The electricians that Joan has contacted have all noted that they will have to bill us for troubleshooting. The Board instructed Joan to get an electrician to trouble shoot the problems and find out how much it'll be to fix. Garry provided Joan with a name and phone number for an electrician.

Graffiti Removal: Joan reported that the volunteer youth conference group was put to work on Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. We had over 200 youth downtown assisting with many clean-up projects. Hotsy WY-Mont is a new business to downtown and is a member of DGFA and they expressed interest in assisting the BID with graffiti removal. Hotsy was downtown for over eight hours and removed 13 graffiti tags of the 27 we had on our list; they provided this service free of charge to the BID and spent over \$300 on product. They use a Hotsy product that is applied and 90-seconds later it is pressure washed off, they can also re-apply on wet surfaces immediately if necessary. Additional removal of graffiti will be done on a case-by-case basis that Hotsy will provide estimates for with a minimum rate of \$150 per site. Joan inquired if the Board will allow her to proceed with removal of the remaining tags using Hotsy. Garry motioned to approve spending up to \$3,000 on graffiti removal. Andy seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

MApril: Joan reported that MApril was held downtown on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. East Middle School provided a dozen volunteers for over six hours; Mountain View Sports Complex provided four volunteers for about three hours. Several thank you cards were signed by all board members present. Joan suggested that the Board make a donation of \$100 to East Middle School and Mountain View Sports Complex for their efforts on our behalf. She added that the Youth Conference group was not anticipating any donation but if the Board wanted to do something they could. The Board instructed Joan to write a letter of thanks for the Youth Conference and send \$100 to East Middle School and to Mountain View Sports Complex.

Pocket Park - Roberts: This item was covered under Guests above.

Trees: Joan informed the Board that there is an issue with the trees on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Street surrounding the parking lot. There are five trees that are dead or dying, three of those are new trees that are less than two years old. Both Steve Tillerias and Todd Seymanski, with the City, believe that they are receiving spray damage from some chemicals. Joan is exploring what is going on with the trees and maintenance of the parking lot. Todd suggested that we pull the trees out and plant grass. Joan added that she is just providing this information to the Board now and any decisions that might need to be made about replacing or removing trees can be made next month or later, depending on what additional information is learned. Joan also reported that someone stole mulch from around the trees on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>.

TSB Project: Joan reported that the project is scheduled to begin today.

Joan reported that all of the flowers are out on Central and on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North.

**BID Board:** Joan reported that there are three openings on the Board and four applications were received by the City. The Board received copies of the applications via e-mail. Rebecca Hughes is the owner of the Brighten Up Shop, both the building and the business located in the 600 block of Central. Sheila Rice with NeighborWorks has applied as well as Phillip Riedel who is a resident owner in the Montana Building and a physician at Benefis. The final applicant is George Wheeler who is an architect in training with CTA and would represent CTA on the Board. The City has requested a recommendation if the Board has one they'd like to give the Commission. All of the applicants were invited to join us today; Sheila is in California, George was on vacation and Phil was working. The City will be appointing our new board members at their next City Commission meeting on Tuesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. Discussion followed on making a recommendation. The Board instructed Joan that they did not wish to make a recommendation. Joan noted that next month the Board will elect the chair, vice-chair and treasurer; it will be the top item on the agenda.

**Coins for a Cause:** Joan reported that the Safety Coalition is working on establishing a program similar to Billings *Spare Change for Real Change* and Missoula's *Real Change not Spare Change* programs. With these programs retailers have collection boxes next to their registers for their customers to put any spare change in, rather than giving it to a panhandler outside the store. Those funds are then collected and distributed to local organizations that assist people. The Safety Coalition wants to create this program and distribute the funds raised to the Rescue Mission. They have asked if the BID would act as the fiscal agent for the program. It would mean that the BID receives coins and deposits them into our account and then we'll write a check to the Rescue Mission. Joan added that she will not be the individual who collects the coins, that component remains to be worked out. The goal is to educate people to not give money to the panhandler and provide those funds to the organizations that provide services to those people. Andy suggested that DGFA might be better suited to be the fiscal agent for this program. Joan noted that she believes they assumed the BID because we run the Business Watch program. She added that both of these programs fall under the BID and downtown association in both Billings and Missoula so it could fall under either one. Doug suggested that any label on the collection receptacle have the BID logo on it so folks know that the BID is a part of the program. Andy motioned that the BID act as the fiscal agent for *Coins for a Cause* for one year. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Downtown Action Alliance:** Joan noted that the DAA continues to meet. The goal remains to have the DAA evolve and become the D/T P/S.

**Downtown Partnership:** Joan reported that a formal letter is being sent to the 11 primary organizations of the D/T P/S. They are also mailing a copy of the proposed Articles of Incorporation and proposed Bylaws. They noted that the next meeting of the partnership is scheduled to take place on July 25<sup>th</sup> and by that time they'd like the primary 11 organizations to appoint one member to serve on this new board. They are also asking that the standard membership amount, that has been set at \$1,000 be submitted to their fiscal agent, Great Falls Development Authority. They've noted that all meetings of the D/T P/S will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 11am in the NW's Learning Center. Joan noted that a decision about who to appoint to represent the BID on the Partnership board can be made at the next board meeting. The Board instructed Joan to prepare the check for next month's payables run.

**Downtown Great Falls Association:** Joan noted Alive @ 5 began last week, the 2<sup>nd</sup> one occurs tonight and the Taste of Great Falls is next week. Garry inquired about the wallet cards, Joan provided them to all present.

**Downtown Safety Alliance:** Joan noted that the Safety Alliance has been working on getting a VISTA who will be focusing on downtown safety. The VISTA is due to be in town on August 1<sup>st</sup>. They will be doing some work for DGFA but the majority of their work will be on downtown safety. The VISTA will be working out of the NW's office. Joan reported that Carol Bronson is searching for housing for the VISTA and wanted to ask the BID if they would assist, if necessary. The Rice family has a property available July 15<sup>th</sup> and rent might need to be paid before the VISTA arrives.

The VISTA can only pay \$300/month and this property rents for \$600/month so the VISTA will need to find a roommate. If the VISTA is unable to find a roommate right away someone will need to supplement the \$300 difference in rent. Discussion followed on the VISTA and housing and rent. The Board noted that they are not willing to pay for the VISTA's rent expenses at this time.

Joan reported that she participated in the interviews for the new BRIC (Business, Residential Involving Community) Officer for the Great Falls Police Department. The zone is 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave South up to 9<sup>th</sup> Street with the river being the boundary on the north and west sides. It will cover downtown as well as the north side neighborhood. They've given the position to Tad Kimmett and he starts in two weeks. He will likely attend a BID Board meeting in the future.

**Great Falls Development Authority:** Joan updated the board on the status of the branding process. They've completed the first step of Phase II (written creative). They are still in need of \$11,200 in additional funding and continue to work on raising those funds.

**Johnson Hotel:** Joan noted that there is nothing new to report at this time.

**Parking Commission:** Joan reported that they still have one opening on the parking commission.

**Personnel:** Joan reported that Justin is back on the job. Joan reminded the Board that she is possibly taking a family vacation and leaving for California on August 1<sup>st</sup> for two weeks. If this vacation occurs it will affect both Joan and Justin. She noted that she already has an individual lined up to take over Justin's duties and he will come in and train with Justin for two weeks prior to Justin's last day. Joan added that if she takes vacation during the first two weeks of August it would affect the BID Board meeting. The Board noted that their meeting can be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of August.

**Urban Art Project:** This item was covered under Guests above.

**Work Plan:** Joan provided the Board with final copies of the proposed 2012-2013 Work Plan. Joan noted that a few additional changes were made. Joan removed support of the TIF, as the TIF has been created. It has been changed to read as follows: the BID wishes to support the D/T P/S in administering the TIF. She also changed dedicated downtown police officer and to BRIC Officer from the GFPD. One final change was removing marketing as the BID has not been involved in that in the past year. In addition we are supporting the D/T P/S and marketing is a component of the Downtown Master Plan. Julie motioned to approve the Work Plan for 2012-2013, as presented. Andy seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

## VII. **New Business:**

Complete Streets: Joan inquired if there was any further action that the Board wished to take on Complete Streets at this time. A letter of support for the ordinance was sent to the Commission prior to their meeting. The Board noted that nothing more should be done at this time.

Downtown Tax Valuations: Joan reminded the Board that last month she discussed the Senoran Institute and tax valuations. She sent an e-mail to the Board reflecting the difference between Wal Mart and a downtown; a copy of that e-mail was sent to the entire DAA including our City Commissioners. Joe Minicozzi is the person who does these valuations for the Senoran Institute. The Senoran Institute would like to have Joe run this information on Great Falls. Bozeman and Billings have both had this done through a grant with the Senoran Institute. In order to have Joe come to Great Falls it would cost \$5K for the study and between \$2K and \$3K for travel expenses. The Senoran suggested that we try to use the Main Street technical assistance program for this funding. Joan noted that the Main Street technical assistance has already been set for the FY 2012-2013 so it would be after 7/1/13 before we could attempt to use that program to fund something like this. Garry inquired what we would use the information for when we have it and added that the information that Joe uses to come up with his figures is public data available to anyone. He suggested that we either use the VISTA or hire a local real estate agent to find these figures for us. Joan will inquire with the Senoran about what we would use the data for. Joan noted that it'd be great to have this gentleman present at the MT Downtown Conference, but the conference is not funding any costs for speakers.

Editorial: Joan shared a letter to the editor in the Tribune on May 31 that states "...the downtown association is working hard to revitalize downtown and it is working, the shops are unique and interesting..." Martin discovered the letter and provided the BID with a copy as he felt it should be addressed more to the BID than DGFA.

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

IX. **Adjournment**: Meeting adjourned at 11:20am.

Stacey Schaefer, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_