

Minutes
Business Improvement District
March 14, 2013

Board Present: Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett, George Wheeler, Kris Harrison, Travis Neil, Rebecca Hughes, Sheila Rice (via telephone)
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests Present: Alison Fried, Brett Doney

- I. **Call to order:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:00am.
- II. **Guests:** Brett Doney informed the Board that he was attending to thank the BID for all of its efforts, the public art and similar projects are making a difference when GFDA brings clients to town.
- III. **BID Board:** Joan noted that there is nothing to report about the Board at this time.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 2-14-13 meeting:** George motioned to approve the minutes from the 2/14/13 meeting as presented. Kris seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

V. **Financials:**

Monthly Financials: The Board received the February financials via e-mail. There being no discussion on the financials Kris motioned to approve the 2/28/13 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. George seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. **Grant Programs:**

Joan reported that McMeel Insurance has finished their project. They are gathering receipts so they can submit for reimbursement within the next week.

Residential Grant Criteria: Joan reminded the Board that they all received the criteria via email. Garry provided his suggestions; changing the 'one' residential grant per year award to a dollar amount, '\$50K per year awarded in residential grants'; he'd like to see the word 'contract' taken out of 'contract labor'; he'd like to see the residential grant be allowed every 15 or 20 years rather than every 10 years. Joan noted that the previous board was concerned as the residential grants are 1/3 of our budget. Sheila commented that it is a logical use of the BID's funds; more residents downtown mean the businesses and services follow. The more residential opportunities we create the more we grow our tax base. Discussion followed on the residential grant criteria. The Board instructed Joan to email the criteria to them again with notes for Garry's suggestions. Board members will review the criteria and submit their suggestions to Joan so she can compile a list.

George asked Joan to contact Easter Seals about our façade grant program.

Alison noted that she will be connecting with the Genarios family about grants for the Thisted building.

VII. **Old Business:**

Beautification: 1st Ave N Underpass: Joan reported that the proposed new rendering of the wall was posted for the Board to look at. Garry motioned to approve the new rendering for the north side of the 1st Ave N underpass. George seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Alison suggested that the BID get banners posted on the overpass noting that the BID is responsible for the project. Joan was instructed to get prices for banners and proceed on getting them.

Holiday Décor: Brett commented that he has been to many cities and towns where the holiday décor is similar to being at Disneyland; he noted that we need to do more to brighten up Downtown during the holiday season. Alison suggested that the BID seeks sponsors for holiday lighting. Joan will check with Sheila on whether or not there is a DGFA board member interested in serving on a holiday décor committee. Andy noted that he'd like to serve on the committee.

Roberts Park Playground: Joan noted that there is nothing to report at this time.

Trees: Joan noted that she was expecting a bid from Tilleraas for the trees that could be planted around Bert & Ernie's but she has not received the bid yet.

Traffic Signal Box 2013: Joan reported that the Call to Artists went live and the deadline for submission is May 3rd.

Downtown Great Falls Association:

Team Trolley: Joan reported that DGFA has gone public with their need to hire a trolley driver. All board members received a flyer about the position. Applications will be accepted by Martin until March 20th. Team Trolley will begin meeting on a monthly basis, the first meeting is April 2nd at 4pm here in the BID office.

Downtown Partnership: Joan reported that the draft work plan has been provided to the DDP and is expected to be formally adopted at the 3/27 meeting. Once formally adopted the BID board will be given a copy of the work plan. Joan noted that the BID is not specifically listed as tasked with any one item on the work plan; the BID will wind up involved in many of the items but we are not listed as the lead on any specific items.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that there is a final draft of the Downtown Safety Plan. It is currently with the GFPD for their review. Business Watch was just held this past Tuesday; Joan encouraged the Board to attend a business watch meeting. The next Business Watch meeting is Tuesday, May 14th. The topic will be Panhandling and our BRIC Officer, Tad Kimmet, will be the speaker.

Johnson Hotel: Joan reported that a tenant has moved out of one of the incubator spaces. United Way is also looking to expand. Originally they requested two spaces in the incubator but conversations with Garry, Travis and Andy have generated an interest in creating new spaces for United Way, putting to better use the currently unused former computer lab space. Bids for putting some additional walls in start as low as \$7,400 and go up to \$8,500. Electrical bids range from \$748 to \$985. Joan added that if the Board approves the proposed construction she will contact United Way and let them know what options are available to them; Joan did note that United Way may still opt to vacate the 3rd floor. Discussion followed on options. Kris motioned to approve Travis & Garry moving forward on approval for the construction project in the Johnson Hotel, spending up to a maximum of \$10K. Becky seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the Parking App went live on Central Avenue. Joan added that Wendy Thomas has given notice to the City and her last day will be April 4th. She is re-locating to Bozeman to take over as director of their planning department.

Work Plan: Joan reported that the BID continues to work the Work Plan.

VIII. New Business:

Church Harris: Joan informed the Board that Church Harris is hosting an open house on Tuesday, March 19th from 4 to 8pm. George noted that he will be submitting a Historic Preservation award application for the Church Harris project.

Personnel: Joan informed the Board that she plans to give Gail an increase. Gail has been employed by the BID since 2003; she does our outdoor trash removal year round. The Board also suggested that the BID purchase some bus passes for her.

Website: Joan informed the Board that the BID's website allows for individuals to subscribe to it and when changes are made to the website an email is sent notifying of the update. Joan encouraged the Board to sign up for those notifications.

IX. Public Comment:

No public comment at this time.

X. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:28am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____