

Minutes
Business Improvement District
September 12, 2013

Board Present: Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett, Travis Neil, Sheila Rice, Mauri Novak, Mac Smith
Board Absent: Kris Harrison
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests Present: Alison Fried

- I. **Call to order:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:02am.
- II. **Guests:** There were no guests present at the meeting who wished to address the Board.
- III. **BID Board:** Joan noted that there is nothing to report about the Board at this time. New board member, Mauri Novak was introduced to the rest of the board.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 8-8-13 meeting:** Sheila motioned to approve the minutes from the 8/8/13 meeting as presented. Travis seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

V. **Financials:**

Monthly Financials: The Board received the July & August financials via e-mail. There being no discussion on the financials Sheila motioned to approve the 7/31/13 and 8/31/13 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Sheila inquired about grants payable in relation to what the BID budgets annually for grants. Joan informed her that grants are paid as funding is available; not all grants will be paid out in this fiscal year; the BID is in place until 2019. Sheila stated that we need to ask ourselves at what point we stop approving grants. Joan added that annually we receive a report from the City to inform the BID what the assessment income will be; for FY 2014 assessments will be \$201,000. Previously the BID had 156 properties but with the changes in the Montana building we are now at 180 properties. Garry stated that if the BID ran out of funding he would consider that a good problem to have. Sheila suggested that an informal policy be established that notes the BID only over extends itself by half of the annual assessment so that it could be said we'd balance in six months; she added that no decision needs to be made at this time. Mauri suggested that grantees be notified if the BID does come into funding problems.

New bank signature cards were presented and signed by the board members present; they are complete now and will be submitted to the bank.

Audit: Joan reported that the auditor was in this week and is almost done with his audit. All board members will be notified of the final exit interview that will take place once the audit is finalized. Sheila asked for an overview of the controls and if the auditor feels that the controls are adequate.

VI. **Grant Programs:**

CTEP: Joan reported that the City has informed the BID the CTEP is awaiting word from MDT. The City estimates the BID will need to provide the match sometime in November. Joan will adjust the grant schedule accordingly. The CTEP was explained to the new board members present.

Grant Applications: Joan reported that the Business Incentive Grant program has \$2,019 remaining in the balance of the fund available for these grants. An application has been received from Mighty Mo Brewing for \$3,900. Joan provided history of the grant; the Board initially authorized \$10K on April 7, 2011 and added an additional \$5K on July 12, 2012. A total of \$12,981 has been paid out in this grant program to date; overall it has been a successful grant program. Sheila motioned to increase the funding for the Business Incentive Grant program by \$1,881 and approve the Business Incentive Grant application for Mighty Mo Brewing Company for \$3,900. Mauri seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Sheila motioned to authorize a \$15,000 Business Incentive Grant pool with a cap of \$2,500 on the monthly rent and a minimum one-year lease. Travis seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed on creating a sign or banner that credits the BID as being involved in various projects downtown. Joan showed the Board the “It’s Full of Opportunity” sign the BID previously used in vacant spaces; Joan will explore the possibility of creating a banner.

Mighty Mo Brewing: Joan presented the Board with an interior grant application for Mighty Mo Brewing Company; copies of the application had previously been emailed to the board. Garry motioned to approve a new business interior grant for Mighty Mo Brewing for the maximum interior grant funds of \$10,000. Travis seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Tarum Law Office/United Way: Joan presented the Board with an interior grant application for Tarum Law Office/United Way; copies of the application had previously been emailed to the board. Work began in June but the application was not received until September. The application was submitted as a new business; the board determined that they are an existing business. The original estimate for the entire project is \$109,024.65; work remaining to be done is estimated at \$40,760. Garry motioned to approve an existing business interior grant for Tarum Law Office/United Way for a maximum amount of \$4,076, with all labor bills noting time periods for work done. Sheila seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Margaret Building: Joan reminded the Board that we have received an interior grant application from Garry Hackett for the Margaret Building; copies of the application had previously been emailed to the Board. Garry presented the board with his plans. Discussion was held on windows and possible façade grants. Sheila motioned to approve an existing business grant for Pam’s Knit & Stitch/Garry Hackett for a maximum amount of \$6,680. Mauri seconded. Garry abstained. **Motion passed.**

VII. Old Business:

Beautification: 1st Ave N Underpass: Joan reported that the reception for the artists, Melons & Monet, was held last Friday. There were about 50 in attendance, in spite of the rain. Sheila noted that it was a very nice touch and the artists felt honored. There have been two very minor instances of graffiti since the mural was sealed; both were easily removed.

Boys & Girls Club: Joan reported that this summer the Boys & Girls Club provided 87 youth and they provided 174 hours of volunteer labor; last year they provided 67 youth for 100.5 hours. Garry motioned to approve a \$1,000 donation to the Boys & Girls Club. Sheila seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Roberts Park Playground: Joan reported that Jolene had inquired if an in-kind contribution to the Park project would count toward their \$10K that they are required to raise in order for the BID to provide the \$10K match. The project is still sitting at \$8,839. Jolene noted that she has an in-kind donation of turf valued at \$2K. The Board agreed that an in-kind donation would count toward the \$10K; a receipt reflecting the value of the donation will be required. Joan reported that the Center for Mental Health is planning on submitting an art grant application for the mural that is tied to this project.

Trees: Joan reported that a new tree that was installed by Tracy’s Restaurant last summer was the victim of a hit and run sometime around the 4th of July weekend. Joan added that a conversation was held recently with Todd Seymanski, the City Forrester, about tree height and building clearance downtown. Todd is working on trying to find some funding from the City to cover doing building clearance on the trees. He’s had complaints from Wells Fargo and Tracy’s Restaurant about the trees obscuring their signs. Joan reminded the Board of the history with trees and the City and TIF funding since 2009.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Sheila reported that the Alive @ 5 season has ended; she informed the board that it wasn’t very profitable this year in comparison to previous years. DGFA is gearing up for Dancing with the Stars, which will be held on Thursday, September 26th. Parade of Lights is 11/30 and the Stroll is 12/6 and the theme is *Whimsical Christmas*.

Team Trolley: Sheila reported that Team Trolley is meeting monthly. The trolley is at a breakeven point for the summer and is gearing up for Luminaria tours. She noted that this year the tours will begin at Paris Gibson Square rather than the mall where they’ve begun in previous years. Joan noted that the Downtown Chicks are working on organizing Art Tours; it would be a progressive meal

moving among different galleries and offered one time a month. The Chicks are also hosting brothel tours in September and ghost tours in October. Alison noted that downtown businesses should be made aware that the trolley will be more downtown focused over the holiday season so businesses should decorate for the lighting competition and keep their lights on.

Downtown Partnership: Sheila reported that the Partnership's 501c3 application went into the mail. She noted that an application for TIF funding has been received by the partnership. The Partnership is the advisory commission to the City on use of the TIF dollars. There is only \$180 in the fund at this time. A letter is being sent to the applicant letting them know that their application has been taken under consideration and the DDP will work on creating a formal application process.

Downtown Safety Alliance: City Ordinances: Joan reported the Board's letter was mailed to the City Attorney regarding the BID supporting creation of ordinances that would assist our BRIC officer with panhandling and loitering issues. The letter was copied to the City Commission. Joan noted that Business Watch was held on Tuesday and the topic was Emergency Preparedness. The next Business Watch is Tuesday, November 12th and the topic is Security Systems Options. Joan reported that she has met with both Chief Bowen and with Samantha Huffman since the last board meeting. Chief Bowen wanted the BID to be aware that the salaries for the BRIC officer position and the Volunteer Coordinator positions are both secured; so those positions will not be disappearing. The conversation with him was that he should think about things the BID can support and we can budget accordingly next spring. The conversation with Samantha noted that the BID office is available to provide a restroom stop as well as sodas and/or waters for volunteers. Joan added that she is now attending the Citizen's Police Academy.

Insurance: Joan reported that Dean Boyle was going to have to re-run the proposal on the insurance on the Johnson Hotel building since it had been so many months.

Johnson Hotel: Joan informed Garry that the air conditioning filters have arrived in the office. Joan reported that the 30-day notice to tenants who have failed to submit their Certificate of Insurance is due to be sent out on September 20th; at this time, none of the three remaining tenants have responded.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that she is going to have Great Falls participate in PARK(ing) Day for the first time. All over the world on September 20th cities create a green space out of one parking space. The City gave the go ahead last week; Bert & Ernie's is the location for the space and Tilleraas Landscape has agreed to decorate the space. A meeting will be held at Bert & Ernie's this morning. Joan added that the Parking Commission still has one opening.

Personnel: Joan reported that she will not be in attendance at the Montana Downtown Conference in Billings as Dancing with the Stars takes place at the same time. Discussion followed on who can attend the Downtown Conference to represent Great Falls and the BID will provide funding.

Work Plan 2013-2014: Joan reported that the BID continues to work the Work Plan.

VIII. **New Business:** There is no new business at this time.

IX. **Public Comment:** Alison reported that the Downtown Chicks are holding their quarterly meeting on Tuesday, 9/17 at the Sip n Dip. They are creating welcome baskets for all of the employees of Pacific Steel and Easter Seals Goodwill; they are looking for 150 items to fill those baskets. They are working on a brochure of downtown; similar to the CVB's Guide to Great Falls. It will be 100 pages and ads will be sold.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:43am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____