

**Minutes**  
**Business Improvement District**  
**March 13, 2014**

Board Present: Andrew Ferrin, Travis Neil, Mauri Novak, Garry Hackett, Sheila Rice, Mac Smith  
Board Absent: Kris Harrison  
Staff Present: Joan Redeen  
Guests Present: Jolene Bach, Erin Doran, Sydney Blair

- I. **Call to order:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:03am.
- II. **Guests:** Sydney Blair, with the Center for Mental Health, was present to discuss their art grant application. She showed the Board the depiction of the potential mural showing children playing. The estimate for the work is \$4,540; they'd be eligible for a maximum grant of \$1,250. Sheila motioned to approve a Downtown Art Grant for the Center for Mental Health for a maximum payout of \$1,250. Mac seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**  
Jolene reported on the Roberts Park Playground project. The project has \$9,939; \$61 shy of reaching their goal of \$10K for the BID match. Board members contributed and the \$10K was reached. Jolene presented the design for the playground equipment; the order will be placed and the equipment should be installed in approximately two months. The goal is to have the equipment ready for installation over the MApril weekends. Discussion followed on Mac working on the agreement the property owner will sign for the park to be open to the public during daylight hours; City and an MOU; possible Deed of Restriction; naming the BID as additional insured. Jolene noted that there is discussion with the City on traffic slowing options; they are exploring fence options and additional lighting.
- III. **BID Board:** Joan noted that there is nothing to report about the Board at this time.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 2-13-14 meeting:** Sheila motioned to approve the minutes from the 2/13/14 meeting as presented. Travis seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:**  
**Monthly Financials:** Joan reported that the bank reconciliation has not been completed for February yet so no financials were provided to the board. Discussion was held on transferring funds. Sheila motioned to give Joan the authority to move money between checking and money market and vice versa, as necessary, with notification to the treasurer and board chair, as per standard deposit procedure. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- VI. **Grant Programs:**  
**CTEP:** Joan reported that the City is waiting on utility information to determine additional billing for the change in lighting districts. Discussion on what the BID does in regard to lighting downtown; the BID covers the insurance premium and the City reimburses the BID, this premium is then passed along to the property owners in the special lighting districts. The City also requested a commitment in writing from the BID, or from Parks & Rec, as to who is going to maintain the trees. Discussion followed on trees and who is responsible for maintaining. Joan reported that the City has sent a letter to the BID, following up on our recent meeting held with the City Attorney, Director of Parks & Rec and the City Forester. Sheila noted that there is no difference between new trees installed during the CTEP process than the existing trees already in place – property owners are responsible for the maintenance. Joan was instructed to inform the City that maintenance for trees will be the responsibility of the property owner.  
**Grant Applications:** Joan reported that the Board received two grant applications via email.  
**Vaporology:** This Business Incentive grant application was denied as the applicant was signing a 6-month rental agreement; the grant requires a one-year rental agreement.  
**Center for Mental Health:** Approval for this Art grant is noted above, under Guests.  
Joan reported that there have been two additional inquiries made for business incentive grants from the Murphy McClay building, the building where Vaporology is moving into. One business delivered their one-year rental agreement with no grant application; Joan emailed the grant application to the business on 3/5.

The Board noted that if the application is received prior to the end of March they would entertain the application.

Joan provided the board with copies of the updated grant schedule, with the cash flow formula.

An update on Garry Hackett's project was received. He plans to have seven apartments ready in April. He noted that he'd likely be requesting a partial payment by the end of April.

Mauri reported that the Rocky Mountain Building is not going to have a theater; instead they will have additional apartments, possibly as many as 43 total apartments. They will also have 40 parking spaces. They continue to work on securing their financing.

Alison Fried has submitted her receipts for payout of her art grant. The board approved final payout of \$725 to Alison for her art grant.

## VII. Old Business:

**Beautification: Roberts Park Playground:** Reported on above under Guests.

**Traffic Signal Box 2014:** Joan provided the Board with the draft of the Call to Artists. Joan informed the board of the Downtown Art Committee and the need for one BID board member to serve on this committee. Joan reported the timeline; the project would be completed June 13-18. The budget for the two final boxes is \$2,000. The Board instructed Joan to send out the press release and go public with the Call to Artists.

**Trees:** As noted above under Grant Programs, the BID has received a letter from the City noting that property owners are responsible for the maintenance of the trees. Property owners will not be fined for maintaining their tree but they are not permitted to remove a tree without acquiring a permit from the City first. Discussion followed on tree maintenance and the BID continuing to provide this as a service, budget permitting. It was noted that this year's budget included \$6,600 for tree work and no tree work has been done yet. Discussion followed on how to make BID property owners aware of the services the BID provides and who is ultimately responsible for the trees; BID newsletter, Eblasts, etc. The Board decided to not do a mailing at this time. Discussion on Tilleraas's tree pruning bid, \$3,265 for pruning of 35 trees; removal of branches from buildings. Travis motioned to approve the bid for tree pruning with Tilleraas for \$3,265. Sheila seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Bike Racks:** Joan reported that the bike racks are done at CMR and are with the painter; they should be back in our office within the next week or two. She added that there have been several inquiries about getting additional bike racks installed; Celtic Cowboy & Church Harris are two of the inquirers. Joan has requested the welding class at CMR to create some designs that can be presented to the property owners. She noted that the process for Crooked Tree's bike rack was soliciting approval from the City for location, creating the bike rack and then installation of the bike rack. Sheila suggested the BID provide support to property owners with soliciting approval from the City and working with the welding class to create the bike rack with the BID funding the bike rack and then turn over installation to the property owner.

**1<sup>st</sup> Ave N Underpass:** Joan reported that MDT, when doing their snow removal on the sidewalks, has scuffed up the mural with large, black tire marks. The artists are exploring options for removal of the scuff marks. The Board approved payment to the artists for their labor while working on removal of these marks or graffiti.

**BID Development:** Joan reported that the City has provided information on possible BID expansion up to 9<sup>th</sup>; this would add an additional 90 parcels to the BID. Discussion followed on proceeding forward with possible expansion. Joan informed the Board that it will require leg work on behalf of the Board and 60.1% of the properties in the possible expansion area will need to vote positively for the expansion. Joan reminded the Board that the BID is up for renewal in 2019 so this is an opportune moment as we can offer this new expansion area a five-year trial. Discussion on possible boundaries and adding additional areas. The City has noted that the process is as follows: 1. Send a letter to the City informing them of the BID's intent to work on expansion; 2. Send out letters with ballots to the property owners who are in the possible expansion area; 3. Board members and staff visit with property owners; 4. Upon acquiring 60.1% in approval of expansion we then inform the City we've received approval for expansion and begin the final process of approval with the City Commission. It was decided that Joan and Sheila will visit with some of the property owners in the possible expansion area; the Board will take a tour of the possible expansion area and look at additional areas that should be included.

**Downtown Great Falls Association:** Joan introduced Erin Doran to the Board, DGFA's new Operations Director. Joan reported that the First Friday Art Walk brochure is out and distributed. Western Art Week is being held downtown next week; the Downtown Chicks are hosting a concierge table at the Civic Center. They just finished proofing the new Downtown brochure and it is going to the printer.

**Team Trolley:** Joan reported that the trolley will be in the St. Patrick's Day parade Saturday. Immediately following the parade the trolley will be running in the first Pub Crawl, starting at the Celtic Cowboy. Folks who want to ride on the trolley will pay \$2 and the Celtic Cowboy plans to give those funds to DGFA to fund downtown flowers. The trolley is still selling advertising. It has a new garage space at the Pre-Release Center, rent-free.

**Downtown Partnership:** Joan reported that the DDP continues to meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month in the NeighborWorks Learning Center. She added that the Montana Main Street did award Great Falls with grant funding. We will be able to do six (6) storefront renderings with this grant money.

**Downtown Safety Alliance:** Joan reported that the next Business Watch meeting will be held on 5/13/14 at 5:30pm in the NeighborWorks Learning Center. The topic will be Security Systems Options.

**Johnson Hotel:** Joan reported that the United Way space is still available and one incubator space remains vacant. Garry will work with Doug to teach him how to install the a/c filters.

**Parking Commission:** Parking Commission still has two openings on the board. There have been concerns expressed that if there is no citizen interest in this commission the City Commission may choose to abolish it.

**Personnel:** Joan noted that there is nothing to report about personnel at this time.

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

VIII. **New Business:** Joan reported that the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission has two openings on their board. They are hosting their annual preservation awards on 5/22; they are currently accepting nominations. Andy reported that the Quality Inn is back on the market.

IX. **Public Comment:** No public comment at this time.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:58am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

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

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