

**Minutes**  
**Business Improvement District**  
**September 11, 2014**

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

- I. **Call to order:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:06am.
- II. **Guests:** Jason Madill was introduced; he is purchasing the building on the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North and 4<sup>th</sup> St; closing 9/22. He joined the meeting to hear what the BID is about and plans to submit grant applications.
- III. **BID Board:** Joan noted that there is nothing to report about the Board at this time.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 8-14-14 meeting:** Sheila motioned to approve the minutes from the 8/14/14 meeting as presented. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

V. **Financials:**

**Monthly Financials:** Joan reported that the bank reconciliation has not been completed for August so no financials were provided to the board.

**Audit:** Joan reminded the Board that the annual audit began on September 9<sup>th</sup>; Brett Gaare, the auditor with Douglas Wilson, was introduced to the Board. Brett noted that he was about to finish up their work in the office and should be complete in the next month.

VI. **Grant Programs:**

**CTEP:** The Board notified the City, via email on 8/27/14, the location for the CTEP project. The City is working to complete the streetscape project in the 700 & 800 blocks of Central Avenue, as well as however many side streets the funding will allow.

**Grant Applications:**

Roosters Treasure Coop, Dandelion Foundation and Over Here Computer Consulting: Joan noted that three business incentive grant applications were approved via email. Sheila motioned to approve the Business Incentive Grant applications for Roosters Treasure Coop for \$1,000; Dandelion Foundation for \$350; and Over Here Computer Consulting for \$425. All three businesses moved into Times Square. Mauri seconded.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

TIPS by Tiff: Sheila motioned to approve the Business Incentive Grant application for TIPS by Tiff for \$300, they are moving into Times Square. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Vision Matters: Garry motioned to approve the Business Incentive Grant application for Vision Matters for \$425, they are moving into Times Square. Travis seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Vaporology: Joan reported that Vaporology came into the office to inquire about the possibility of receiving a business incentive grant with their lease renewal; they are now willing to sign a one-year lease. An email was sent to the Board on 8/26. The Board noted that this business is already located within the BID and does not qualify for the grant. Joan sent a letter to them denying their request.

Discussion was held on the Business Incentive Grant criteria; Sheila motioned to approve adding “Applications must be received a minimum of one week prior to lease start date.” to the Business Incentive Grant criteria. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed on the balance of funds in the business incentive grant program; it was noted that the Board can suspend or add funds to this program at any time.

Belles & Lace: Belles & Lace submitted an Art Grant application; they want to tile their trash enclosure, similar to Dragonfly. Their estimate is \$300. Garry motioned to approve an art grant for Belles & Lace for a maximum of \$150. Sheila seconded. Andy abstained. **Motion passed.**

Arvon Building: Mac reported that they continue to progress.

Rocky Mountain Building: Mauri noted that things continue to move along.

Joan reported that a meeting was held at the Lobby Bar; there is interest in development of the upper floors. Joan provided the board with copies of the updated grant schedule for the new fiscal year.

## VII. Old Business:

### **Beautification:**

**Bike Racks:** Joan reported that the Church Harris bike rack is at Advanced Coatings to be painted. Celtic Cowboy's bike rack is being assembled. There are several other bike racks on the list to be done; NeighborWorks Great Falls, LPW, Rescue Mission and BID office.

**Parking Meter Art Project:** Joan reported that nothing more has been done on this project; it has been temporarily put on hold to focus on expansion and the audit.

**Roberts Park Playground:** Joan reported that the fundraiser was held; we are holding approximately \$2K and a couple of bills are still outstanding for the fundraiser. The Board discussed the private property sign on the Roberts Park Playground and the confusion that it is causing.

**Trees:** Joan reported that the City attorney reviewed the BID's tree policy and made one minor adjustment. She added the final sentence on the policy as, "The property owner is responsible for compliance with the City of Great Falls including, but not limited to, Titles 8, 12, & 17." Travis motioned to approve the BID's Tree Policy with the changes as noted. Mauri seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Andy reported that he watered the trees last week with Doug. Several trees downtown have leaf scorch so they were watered. Andy noted that we need to clean out the grates; discussion followed on tree grates.

**Graffiti:** Joan reported that the back of the Stockman Bank building was tagged Sunday night; graffiti was removed on Monday.

**BID Expansion:** Joan reported the current numbers on expansion; decision on the exact area for expansion doesn't have to be finalized until next spring. She added that she and Sheila met with the County Commissioners; they have inquired what other BID's in the state do for assessment purposes. Joan noted that the Great Falls BID is the second oldest in the state, established in 1989; we've never changed our assessment formula since originally created. Joan has reached out to the other BID's in the state to inquire about their assessment formulas and who is assessed; every city has its own formula. Joan added that she is currently working on those that have not submitted a ballot yet and then will begin to work on those that have already voted no. There was discussion on the board members visiting with specific property owners.

**Downtown Great Falls Association:** Sheila reported that Alive @ 5 is done for the year, and was fairly successful. She noted that DGFA is struggling with their budget; discussion followed on the history of the BID and the BID's funding of DGFA. DGFA remains in the office rent free; pays half the utilities; BID is an investor in the trolley and other than that hasn't funded DGFA since 2011; it was noted that BID hasn't budgeted this year to assist DGFA but the Board can still decide to assist if they wish.

Dancing with the Stars is Thursday, September 25.

**Team Trolley:** Sheila reported that the trolley has been running weekend tours and is planning the luminaria tour season in December.

**Downtown Partnership:** Sheila reported that the DDP is working on the master plan goals. Each organization is asking what more they can do for downtown. There was discussion on the balance of TIF funds available. The DDP determined three master plan goals to focus on in the next year: Staff (to maintain the website); Wayfinding; and Rocky Mountain Building.

**Downtown Safety Alliance:** Joan reported that Business Watch was held 9/9/14. The topic was Emergency Preparedness; the speaker is from the Malmstrom Office of Emergency Management. The next Business Watch is 11/11/14 and the topic is Shoplifting.

**Johnson Hotel:** Joan reported that KDS Networks has moved into the space formerly occupied by United Way. We now have two vacancies in the incubator.

**Montana Downtown Conference:** Joan provided the board with a draft of the schedule; she noted that Jeff Speck is one of the keynote speakers and his topic is the walkability of cities. Joan reported that she is registered as well as Andy, Garry and Sheila.

**National PARKing Day:** Joan reported that National PARKing Day is 9/19/14; it will be located on 5<sup>th</sup> Street South, in front of Big Sky Bread & Pastry. Tilleraas is on board to do the landscaping again; set up will be about 8am and take down will be about 5pm. Joan will be present in the morning to set up and meet with the press; Lee with the City will take over in the afternoon.

**Parking Commission:** Joan reported that the next Parking Commission meeting is Monday 9/15 at 3pm. There remains one opening on the Commission. Discussion followed on the proposed revenue strategies.

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

**Urban Art Project:** Joan reported that our recent record rains affected the Urban Art Project. The drywall in the window areas was soaked through. The DDP is working with the City on trying to figure out what to do about the water issue.

**Work Plan 2014-2015:** Joan noted that our Work Plan is missing Graffiti Removal. Next year's work plan needs to have that item added as it is a service that the BID provides.

VIII. **New Business:** MEDA Conference: Joan reported that Brett Doney is working on bringing the Montana Economic Developers Association Conference to Great Falls in May, 2015. There will be a downtown focus at the conference. Average attendance is 85 to 100; goal for Great Falls is 150. There was also discussion of DGFA holding their quarterly meeting in conjunction with this conference.

Tourism Assessment: Joan reported that the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC) and TBID are working together on getting a tourism assessment completed. They are trying to determine what impact tourism currently has on Great Falls and what impact it could have. They will be seeking input from residents in late winter/early spring.

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

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:53am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

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