

Business Improvement District
August 13, 2015

Board Present: Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett, Travis Neil, Jason Madill, Sheila Rice
Board Absent: Kris Harrison, Mauri Novak
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests Present: Jim Wells, Adrienne Ehrke, Brad Livingston

- I. **Call to order:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:04am.
- II. **Guests:** Jim Wells and Adrienne Ehrke, with the Great Falls Police Department, joined the board to discuss downtown safety after the board's discussion last month. It was noted that there has been an increase in issues this summer and a noted decrease in volunteer patrol downtown. Discussion followed on various issues and some possible solutions including our programs Coins for a Cause & Business Watch. Joan informed the Board that Tad is working on compiling a map of the location of all downtown security cameras. Adrienne asked that downtown folks commit to volunteer for 4 hours a week with the GFPD. Adrienne and Jim were informed that the BID wishes to partner and support, as much as we are able, both financially and with assistance from DGFA in reaching out to potential volunteers.
- I. **BID Board:** Nothing to report at this time.
- II. **Approval of minutes from 7-9-15 meeting:** Sheila motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 7/9/15 meeting as presented. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- III. **Financials:**

Audit: The Audit has been scheduled for the first week of September.

Monthly Financials: The Board received the June financials via e-mail. There being no discussion on the financials, Sheila motioned to approve the 6/30/15 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Travis seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- IV. **Grant Programs:**

CTEP: Joan provided an update on the project. Lyle emailed that when it goes to bid the BID will be notified; Andrew emailed that US Bank began their sidewalk construction project.

Grant Applications:

Big Sky Creations: Joan reported that a Business Incentive Grant application for Big Sky Creations was provided to the Board via email. Sheila motioned to approve the Business Incentive Grant application for Big Sky Creations for \$1,250. Jason seconded. Garry abstained. **Motion passed.**

Pennant Building: Joan reported that an Interior Grant application for the Pennant Building was provided to the Board via email. Travis motioned to approve the Pennant Building's Interior Grant as a Developer Grant for \$10,000. Sheila seconded. Jason abstained. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Joan provided the Board with status updates on the following grants:

Rocky Mountain Building: Updated estimate of completion is that construction is expected to start within 12 months with a 9-month construction phase. They've requested a one-year extension on their grant at this time (the maximum extension we allow). Both their façade and their residential grants have been extended to July, 2016.

Hotel Arvon: Updated that they hoped to open within the next 2-4 weeks so payout should be expected within the next two months.

Joan reported that Andy inspected Lace Pistol and upon receipt of Garry's proof of expense payout can be made on that grant.

Joan reported that Mauri inspected Sutton DuBois and Jason has submitted all necessary proof of expenses, payout will be made on that grant.

Joan provided the board with copies of the updated grant schedule with the cash flow formula updated.
- V. **Old Business:**

Beautification:

Graffiti Removal: Joan reported that Hotsy will be working with Garry to remove the graffiti on his building.

Parking Meter Art Project: Joan reported that a permanent location has been picked out for a garden with Parking Meter Art 'planted'. A Scout is working on this as his Eagle project on behalf of the City and BID.

Sound System: Joan reported that Good Vibrations has been contacted; Andy will contact them directly. Travis mentioned Hannah Sound; Joan thinks that we received bids from them a couple of years ago when we went to work with Good Vibrations. Garry suggested that the BID budget to upgrade the system next year.

Vehicle: Joan and Andy test drove two trucks; one at Bennett and one at Taylor's. The vehicle at Bennett was a stick shift and the decision was made that an automatic is necessary. The vehicle at Taylor's was more truck than the BID needs. The decision was made to hold off until the right vehicle comes along.

Bike Rack: Joan showed the Board a photo of NeighborWorks' new bike rack it is at Advanced Coatings being painted.

Trees: Joan reported that some trees are scheduled to be replaced. Discussion followed on how to water the trees. Steve Alley had reported to the BID that he removed his grates, dug down 6 inches and removed the dirt, watered the trees and replaced the grates. Discussion followed on how best to accomplish this task with our downtown trees. This is a project Joan would like to see completed once the BID has a vehicle that has a larger water tank and volunteers from Pre-Release can be used. Items need to accomplish are a trailer with sides so the dirt can be placed in the trailer and a place to dump the dirt.

BID Office: Andy is looking for new chairs for the office.

BID Expansion: Joan reported that she is going to reach out to Judy at the City to begin our steps toward possible expansion.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Joan reported that Alison was approached by a fellow Downtown Chick who is our tenant, KDS Networks, with a PowerPoint presentation in regard to placing free Wi-Fi downtown for the public to access. The Board asked Joan to get a bid from the company to compare it to the previous bid received several years ago. Discussion followed on the fact that it would be an unsecured network so it would not be a benefit to a new retailer setting up a shop.

Barbara Wold is scheduled to come to Great Falls on Friday, 10/2. She'll be providing a business seminar at 8am and visiting with 5-6 businesses during the day.

First Friday Art Walk: Nothing new to report on this topic at this time.

Team Trolley: Joan reported that Team Trolley will be meeting on 9/2 at 10:30am. July numbers have not been reported yet but ridership is up from last year; maintenance issues are down.

Joan thanked Kellie for holding down the fort while she was out of the office on vacation; for the first time in over 3 years Joan was able to take a vacation and didn't have to work too much while away.

Downtown Partnership: Sheila reported that the Partnership met on 7/22. Sheila reported that \$37K of TIF funds will be put toward the streetscape project so the 700 block of Central will be completed; the City approved the use.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that the next Business Watch meeting is 9/8 and the topic is emergency preparedness; Brad Livingston, retired National Guard and emergency preparedness expert, is going to be asked to be the speaker. Sheila reported that NWGF has instituted a pretty comprehensive safety plan in their office; she recommended a tour of their office during Business Watch.

Johnson Hotel: Joan reported that the lease between the BID and North Data Center has been signed with a 4% increase annually with the lease expiring on 6/30/20.

We still have three vacancies in the incubator but Joan has yielded two recent inquiries and will be showing it tomorrow.

Montana Downtown Conference: Joan reported that registration is open and early registration closes on 9/4. Joan reported that she and Kellie will be attending.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the next Parking Commission meeting has been cancelled as they won't have a quorum. Jason commented on the memo from Lee Nellis. He recommended that lights be turned off during the day to lower their electrical costs; Joan noted that it is very dark in the garage, even during the days, when lights are out and it is a safety issue.

Personnel: Joan reported that she is planning on hiring an employee to take care of trash removal downtown. Working with volunteers from the Pre-Release Center has not worked well due to availability. Joan added that she'll also be acquiring a new cart for the employee.

Visitor's Information Center: Joan reported that there is nothing to report at this time.

Work Plan 2014-2015: Joan reported that the work plan is being worked.

New Business:

Rocky Mountain building: Garry recommended that the BID look into buying a space in the Rocky Mountain building and relocating the BID office to that location. Garry asked that this be on a future agenda to discuss further.

VI. Public Comment: No public comment at this time.

VII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 10:38am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Date: _____

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____