

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
November 8, 2018

Board Present: Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett, Max Grebe, Travis Neil, Jason Madill, Sheila Rice, via video conference
Board Absent: Alison Fried
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests Present: Brad Livingston, Jenn Rowell

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:02am; roll call of all present, a quorum was established.
- II. **Guests:** Brad Livingston reported that he has taken a new job as the Executive Director of the National Guard Association. He represents 3,800 guardsmen in the state. He informed the board of an opportunity to obtain well trained airman for hire. He noted that the program is called Career Skills. If an airman identifies as not wishing to re-enlist, they will be allowed to get out of the military 6 months prior to their end date; the military will cover their salary, insurance and workman's comp, etc. during that time while they are working elsewhere. Malmstrom will lose 300 airmen every year. Job Service is managing the program.
- III. **BID Board:** Discussion on Conflict of Interest; Jason Madill and Andy Ferrin noted conflicts with grant applications.
Joan reported that the Board will have two board members term out on 6/30/18 and a third board member will be eligible for another term, but may not choose to seek it. All three board members are our current officers. An email was sent to the City in regard to this; the City has noted that we can begin seeking applicants anytime and new board members can be appointed in May with an official start date in July, so there would be no gap of board members. Joan noted that she's already begun gauging interest from property owners and has some who are interested.
Sheila informed the Board that she has taken a temporary position in Washington, DC with NeighborWorks America; if she is not in town for board meetings she will teleconference in for the meetings.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 10-11-18 Board meeting:** Max motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 10/11/18 Board meeting, as presented. Sheila seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:**
Monthly Financials: The Board received the September & October financials via e-mail. Sheila noted that the Balance Sheet still reflects the ownership interest in the Johnson; Joan was instructed to ask the auditor to provide an adjustment as the sale closed on 7/6 and the Balance Sheet does not reflect the BID's current position, as it should.
Audit: Joan reported that RFP's were sent out on 11/2 to JCCS, DW and AZ; they are due back on 12/14.
The Budget vs. Actual report was provided to the Board.
- V. **Grant Programs:**
Grant Applications: The grant schedule for FY 2019 was provided to the board.
The Block: Joan reported that an Interior Grant application was received for 4 5th Street South for The Block. The Board received the application via email. Sheila motioned to approve the Interior grant for \$10,000. Garry seconded. Andy abstained. **Motion passed.**
Glacier State Electric: Joan reported that a Sidewalk Grant application was received for 112 1st Ave South for Glacier State Electric. The Board received the application via email. Sheila motioned to approve the Sidewalk grant for \$2,456.67. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion followed on grant payouts: Sora & Company's Interior Grant will be paid out today at \$4,795.33, less than the \$5,600 grant they were originally approved for; Believe's Interior Grant will also be paid out today at \$2,100.

Joan reported that an update will be needed from Schoolhouse IT; Canyonville's interior grant will be up for an update in December. The Pedlet grant for Elevation will be extended out to summer, 2019. Discussion was held in regard to labor rates when grantees are self-performing. Max recommended the Board come up with a suggested guideline; what the BID board sees as allowable, e.g., Labor rates will be in line with prevailing wage rates and/or possibly including something in regard to what percent labor should make up in relation to expenses. Max, Travis & Joan will visit and create some guidelines to be presented to the Board for consideration.

Discussion followed on creating a grant for elevators; it was recommended that a grant be created for a limited time period, similar to the Sidewalk or Pedlet grant. Discussion followed on routine maintenance versus modernization. A recommendation was also made to create a grant for re-sealing parking lots.

VI. Old Business:

Beautification: Holiday Décor: Jonas is in the process of installing the décor now; the parade is 11/24. Joan reported about her idea to Light Up Downtown; Northwestern Energy has agreed to sponsor \$500 in prize funds. The Light Up Downtown press release will go out today; building owners are being encouraged to light up the exterior of their buildings. Photographs of the buildings will be taken and public voting will take place on Facebook for prizes. The communities Joan is modeling this idea from include Leavenworth, WA and Durango, CO. The holiday décor restoration is almost complete; nine additional bows have been discovered and that will completely wrap up the entire project early next spring. The Board authorized Joan to fund \$300 in downtown gift certificates to the volunteer.

Murals: Joan reminded the board of the discussion regarding increasing the Art Grant; she'd like to keep the grant as simple as possible. Her recommendation to the Board is 50% of costs up to \$5,000 maximum for public art projects. Jason inquired about what the Board thinks about including internal works of art in private building with public spaces; large common areas that are open to the public. Discussion followed on what constitutes a public area; Times Square was provided as an example. The Board determined that the art grant will not address interior art, at this time, but that can be considered again in the future if the Art Grant remains underutilized. Joan noted that she has a list of almost a dozen buildings that wish to have murals.

Joan reported about a visit with Tourism in regard to hosting a Mural Festival in Great Falls, similar to ones that have been held in Canada; Calgary just recently wrapped up their second annual festival. Tourism would like to create a similar event in Great Falls; discussion was held on holding a festival in conjunction with the Night Market the Downtown Association currently does. The Board was supportive of pursuing the idea.

Jason reported that the Strain building was tagged with graffiti; Joan noted that the photos have been submitted to GFPD. The BID will remove what they are able, as long as the surface is not painted. Painted surfaces will need to be taken care of by the property owner.

Sound System: Joan reported that the electrician is done with the exception of one pole; the electrician is working with the City to repair the issue with this pole.

Trash Enclosures: Joan reported that she'd like to see the BID turn the trash enclosures into works of art, similar to Dragonfly's and Belles & Lace trash enclosures. The Board recommended that Joan pursue this project similar to how the traffic signal boxes were completed, tackling a few a year depending on cost.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Joan reported that Ladies Night is next week Thursday; the parade is 11/24 and the Stroll is 12/7. Ladies Night posters were delivered yesterday.

Joan reported that the Professional Services Agreement with DGFA expires on 6/30/19. Andy added that he'd like to see the BID renew the agreement for 10-years since the BID has achieved renewal.

The current agreement was set to expire in connection with BID renewal, just in case the BID did not renew. The general consensus was to continue it for the next 10 years, with an exit clause allowed for in the agreement. Joan noted that the agreement will be updated and sent to the Board for review; with the goal of having the agreement finalized and approved no later than June 2019.

Downtown Partnership: Joan reported that the Partnership will be meeting next on 11/28 at 9am at NWGF. The October meeting was the annual meeting; successes were celebrated and goals for 2019 were discussed.

Pedlet Program: Joan reported that the pedlets have been put away for the winter; dates for them to be out on the street are May 1 to November 1. The Montana Main Street Grant submission has been made for payment of the \$8,000. All of the pedlets have been funded, with the exception of Elevation. Joan recommended that, at this point in time, the pedlet grant should be tabled unless, and until, a business requests it. Jason inquired about a future MT Main Street Grant for more pedlets; Joan noted that the DDP is submitting for micro-visioning of blocks and Brett Doney is handling this year's grant application. It would include three blocks within the BID, if approved.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that the Safety Alliance meets next on 11/20 at 9am at NWGF. The Safety Alliance will be moving to once a month meetings during the winter months.

Montana Downtown Conference: Joan reported that she, Kellie and Will all attended the conference in Bozeman. Joan reported her key take-aways: Bozeman board members refer to themselves as Educated Downtown Ambassadors. Billings is drafting a public art policy; Missoula has one in place; Joan would love to see Great Falls create something similar. Missoula's funding source is 1% of all permits; Joan is not aware of what Billings is pursuing for a funding source. This would allow the Traffic Signal Box project to be done City-wide; in addition to other potential public art projects. Whitehall has established an Adopt an Alley program; the Safety Alliance has discussed doing this so this might be something we can model. Next year's Downtown Conference will be in Missoula.

National Main Street Conference: Joan reported last month that she and Kellie will be speaking at the National Main Street conference in 2019 about the Pedlet program; the conference is in Seattle and runs from March 24th to March 27th. Sunday will be Main Street 101; Craig Raymond, with the City, attended that session last year and said it was very eye opening. The Board was encouraged to consider attending.

Parking Commission: Parking Commission meets next on 11/26. Andy inquired if they are still moving forward on security upgrades and lighting. Joan noted that there are many things going before City Commission before too much longer; public meetings will be held to seek input from the community. The Board was directed to read Jenn Rowell's article in The Electric about the most recent parking commission meeting where a motion was made to increase the meter rates. Proposed rates would be higher on Central than the side streets. Joan encouraged everyone to read Jenn's article and be prepared to be present at upcoming public meetings to provide City Commissioners input on the PAC's proposals on how to fund the necessary repairs for the garages.

Personnel: Joan reported that she will be out of the office tomorrow. She added that she'll be out of the office for Thanksgiving, as usual, and will be taking one additional day off in November with family visiting.

Renewal 2019: Joan reported that renewal ballots were turned into the City with the renewal percent at 83.32%. Joan provided the Board some statistics: Without the City & the County's ballots in favor of renewal the BID would have been at 58.96% and the BID might not have renewed; actual No votes received totaled 6.15%; return rate on ballots was 72.31%; 195 parcels, 141 parcels voted yes, 12 parcels voted no and 42 parcels did not cast a vote one way or the other.

The public hearing at the City Commission meeting is scheduled for 1/15/19; 2/19/19 is when the Commission will take final action on BID renewal.

Joan reported that the Downtown office would like to host an open house in the office in April, 2019. Discussion followed on connecting the open house to another event; discussion on a pedlet parade in May, First Friday Art Walk or showcasing some completed buildings with tours.

Discussion followed on the Downtown Showcase; the Board was informed about what it is and when it's been held and that it will be held again, but a date has not been set.

Work Plan 2019: The Work Plan for FY2019 is being worked.

VII. **New Business:** Joan informed the Board that the Urban Art Project has been run by Jean Price and she needs to find someone to mentor and take over the program. It has been recommended by others that the BID take the project; the Board recommended that someone else take on the project, not the BID. Suggestions were made to look into the art departments at the colleges or the City take it in-house. Discussion followed on the budget for the program; the Square acts as the fiscal agent. Joan reported that the NEW building is going on the auction block; the bidding starts at \$400K and the auction runs from 11/13 to 11/15. The building is 81,549 square feet; it was built in 1929. Jenn noted that she has a story on her website in regard to the building/auction.

VIII. **Public Comment:** No public comment currently.

IX. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:25am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____