

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
July 8, 2021

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Max Grebe
Board Present via Zoom: Neal DuBois, Trista Besich, Karen Reiff, Alison Fried, Sherrie Arey
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests: Kellie Pierce, Brett Doney

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:04am; roll call of all present, a quorum was established.
- II. **Guests:** No guests wished to address the Board, at this time.
- III. **BID Board: Conflict of Interest:** No board members expressed a conflict of interest, at this time. Joan reported that Alison Fried was reappointed to serve on the BID Board for a four-year term at this past Tuesday evening's City Commission meeting. The Board was reminded that we are trying to hold in-person meetings again, they were encouraged to attend in person in August.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 6-10-21 Board meeting:** Max motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 6/10/21 Board meeting, as presented. Neal seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:**
Monthly Financials: There were no financials as the 6/30/21 bank statement has not arrived yet. Budget vs Actual was presented to the Board, through our recent 2021 fiscal year end dated 6/30/2021. Joan noted that at the end of the fiscal year we were over budget on Grants or Urban Art Project, as we had not budgeted for those two items. We also were over on Taxes, Licenses & Fees because we registered the BID Truck permanently. The overall net is positive. Discussion followed on BID assessment income. In December 2020 the BID received a check for \$119K, it was the November distribution of taxes. In June 2021, the BID received a check for \$56K, reflecting who paid their taxes in May. The 6/30/21 delinquency statement has not been received from the City, yet. She noted that the BID budgeted \$15K for assessments receivable for FY 20222 and Joan believes that figure may be higher.
Joan reported that the Budget for fiscal year 2022 will be formally presented to the City Commission for their approval at their July 20th meeting.
- VI. **Grant Programs:** The grant schedule for FY 2022 was presented to the board. Current approved grants remaining to be paid out total \$226,910.
The Big Sky Select project was sent a letter requesting an update by 7/7, they responded on 6/16. They are awaiting inspection of their elevator before they will receive their Certificate of Occupancy. They are going to start gathering their receipts to submit for payment of their grants. Joan informed the Board they are hosting two open house events this weekend, Friday 3pm to 7pm and Saturday 12pm to 4pm. She recommended that the Board attend one of the open house events as the discussion for payout will likely be held next month.
The Gibson project was sent a letter requesting an update by 7/7, they responded on 7/7. Ty Rollins has noted that they have financing with Citizen's Bank and are working on the final details with the SBA and GFDA, they expect to start construction this month, with an opening date sometime in April 2022. It

was noted that this update is specific to two interior grants, the façade grant is not due for an update until December 2021. Discussion followed on extension of these two grants, Joan noted that the two interior grants can be extended for a maximum of six months. Neal motioned to extend the two interior grant deadlines by six-months under the condition that major construction is seen to be eligible for further extensions, and the Board issues a letter in that regard. Max seconded. Sherrie inquired if their grants are rescinded would this entity be eligible to apply for grants again if they haven't started construction. It was noted that if the BID has grant programs available, yes, they would be eligible based on any grant criteria at that time. Joan reminded the Board that the grant program review committee recommended bringing back an interior grant program with a maximum of \$5,000, it would not have a developer component to it. Max inquired what was budgeted for grants for FY2022; it was noted we budgeted the amount remaining to be paid out for grants, less the façade grants that we hope property owners will utilize the new TIF programs for. Sherrie expressed her concerns about them possibly still being in a pre-construction phase in six months; Max noted that these grants were originally approved in November 2019. She noted her sympathy to developers working on getting their projects going. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VII. **Old Business:**

ArtsFest MONTANA 2021: Joan noted that Cameron is lining up buildings with artists; he estimates six (6) new murals will be installed this year. We have an artist coming from North Carolina and another from San Francisco; we also have two Great Falls artists and two from Bozeman. The budget remains at \$21K for this year, with sponsorships and the BID and NWGF contributions toward the project. She reported that we did not receive the AARP grant. She informed the Board that the ArtsFest committee is trying to figure out a fundraiser to be held during ArtsFest. The conversations have included selling tickets, offering beverages and hors d'oeuvres, and holding an auction of artwork prints. The event would likely be held in the Electric City ArtWalk, the alley between Dragonfly and LPW. Jason expressed the need for support to pull this event off.

Beautification: Joan noted that DGFA has decided to not tackle flowers this year. She added that she'd like the Board's assurance that the BID will budget for flowers in FY 2023, so that Tillerias can plant flowers in March 2022, so they are ready to be put in place in May 2022.

Joan informed the Board of the struggle ServiceMaster, our trash removal contractor, is having finding dumpsters to put trash in. She noted that the BID removing trash from the trash enclosures is a service we provide to our property owners, if the BID did not exist, the property owners would be responsible for emptying those trash enclosures. Some property and business owners have given ServiceMaster staff a difficult time when they are trying to put some trash bags into the dumpsters in the alley.

ServiceMaster asked if the BID would be willing to get a dumpster that is kept locked. Max recommended that we find one property owner in each block who is willing to allow ServiceMaster to put trash in their dumpsters; he added that he will get a key for the LPW trash dumpster, he believes they share the dumpster with NWGF.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Kellie reported that Craft Beer Week was a huge success. Music on the Mo is scheduled for August 18th, Letter B is coming from Missoula. The Sidewalk Sale is July 31st. Brothel Tours are being held each month; however, the Trolley needs a new transmission, so they are suspended until the trolley is repaired. She noted that the Trolley has started a Go Fund Me and encouraged folks to support it.

Downtown Partnership: TIF Programs: Joan reported that the TIF programs were officially approved during the City Commission on July 6th so they will go into effect on August 5th, 30 days after the public hearing. GFDA is offering a line-up of classes on how to use the programs; they are webinars being recorded and lasting about 15-30 minutes each. Kellie and Joan will be presenting an overview of the programs this afternoon at 4pm; the next one should be Thursday 7/22 at 4pm. She added that these programs are for any property within the Downtown Urban Renewal boundaries. Joan inquired with the Board if it is time for the BID to write letters to The Albrecht building and The Gibson in regard to their

façade grants and encourage them to apply for the TIF programs. Joan noted that The Albrecht's façade grant is \$62,500 and the maximum with the TIF programs is \$50K, she'd like to be sure the BID funds the remaining \$12,500 above the maximum with the TIF programs. Neal noted that the letter should also note that failure to attempt to get the TIF grant would offset the amount the BID is going to be responsible for. It was noted the next updates for these grants are November and December, for The Albrecht and The Gibson, respectively. Max noted that this is an alternative funding source that the BID expects them to pursue. The Board instructed Joan to write letters to the property owners advising them to apply for façade funds through the TIF programs no later than the dates these grants are due for updates.

Tree Work: Max reported that he should have a draft of the bidding document tomorrow. He recommended that we request bids for a unit price for each item we need. The items on the list include replacement of a tree, adjustment to tree grates, removal of some dirt below the tree grates, tree trimming, etc. Bidders will be asked to submit a unit price for each of the items on the list and the BID can request work based on the unit price. Joan noted that any draft bidding documents are going to be sent to the City Forester, the City Attorney and Planning & Community Development so we are sure that we have met their requirements for reimbursement of TIF funds.

Wayfinding: Joan reported that the City sent the MOU to the BID for signature; this is in regard to the \$12,500 grant from the Montana Main Street program for Wayfinding Implementation, as we have done in the past. Max motioned to approve the MOU between the City and the BID, and to authorize the Board Chair to sign the MOU. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that the draft of the new Safety Plan was provided to the Board for their review. The DDP will be reviewing and discussing it at their meeting on July 28th, the hope is they will formally adopt it at that time. The goals are listed on pages 5-9; she noted that the BID is mentioned on several goals. Joan noted the committee that drafted the document consisted of Carol Bronson, Suzie McIntyre, Sandy Rice, David Saslav and Melissa Smith. Trista noted that Alluvion is reviewing the document and she will let Joan know if Alluvion will support any specific goals. The Safety Alliance continues to meet on the 1st Tuesday of every month at 9am.

Great Falls Development Authority: Brett reported that he gave his staff the week off as they just completed their fiscal year and worked very hard over the past year. He noted there are many great projects underway and in the works; they are putting a lot of effort into getting projects to move forward and are actively going after targets, they continue to add to their target list for developers and businesses they feel will be a good fit for Downtown. They are offering workshops on the new downtown TIF projects; they are concerned about prevailing wages for some of the smaller projects. He noted that some projects that were not expected to have gaps in financing are now experiencing that. He added that they are scheduling their next Invest Downtown event in late October in The Newberry. He shared that the most recent announcement is The Wild Hare, the old Lobby Bar project. He noted that he is working on the DDP's TIF applications, they plan to submit for half of the Downtown Business Development Officer's salary, if it is approved any funding will be split between the BID and GFDA to reduce our commitment toward support of that position. Discussion was held on the TIF application asking for funding for ArtsFest MONTANA; Joan noted that any TIF funding that may be approved for ArtsFest would be utilized for the underpass project, so it would be used on public property.

Parking Commission: There was nothing new to report currently; Joan & Kellie did not attend the May Parking Commission meeting as it was the same night as the Downtown Office Open House; the June Parking Commission was cancelled and the July meeting will be, as well. Joan did let the Board know that Flowbird, the company that sells the pay stations, was in town working on the pay stations and they should now all be in working order.

Personnel: Joan reminded the Board that she is taking vacation August 1 to 8; she will be hosting a bike camp for individuals with special needs.

Work Plan – Draft FY 2022: Joan reported that the Work Plan for fiscal year 2022 will be formally presented to the City Commission for their approval at their July 20th meeting.

VIII. **New Business:** There was no new business presented to the Board.

IX. **Public Comment:** Jason asked that the Board be present in the office for the next board meeting. Sherrie reported that NWGF will be presenting on their tax credit proposal at the City Commission meeting on July 20th for the renovation of the Baatz building for their permanent supportive housing project.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:05am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

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