

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
November 11, 2021

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Karen Reiff
Board Present via Zoom: Neal DuBois, Sherrie Arey
Board Absent: Max Grebe, Alison Fried
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests: Michelle Bebbington
Guests Present via Zoom: Christian Leinhauser

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:03am; roll call of all present, a quorum was established.
- II. **Guests/Public Comment:** No guests wished to address the Board, at this time.
- III. **BID Board:** Appoint Treasurer: Neal motioned to appoint Sherrie Arey as the Treasurer. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Board Vacancy: Joan introduced Michelle Bebbington, the owner of the Living Room and the building the Living Room and Harlos Spa are located at 614 Central Ave. Michelle is in attendance exploring the possibility of serving on the BID Board.
Conflict of Interest: No board members expressed a conflict of interest, at this time.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 10-14-21 Board meeting:** Karen motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 10/14/21 BID Board meeting, as presented. Neal seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:**
Monthly Financials: There were no financials for the Board, bank rec's have not been completed since 7/31/21.
The Board was presented the Budget versus Actual year to date report.
- VI. **Grant Programs:** The grant schedule for FY 2022 was presented to the board. Current approved grants remaining to be paid out total \$145,000. It was noted that we are paying Big Sky Select \$10,000 per month for the next six months until their interior grant is paid out.
Kellergeist Grants: Discussion followed on the status of the grants for the Albrecht building and Context/Kellergeist. As the Board instructed in July, a letter was sent to the Schalpers advising them that they need to apply to the City for the new TIF Façade program or the BID would rescind their façade grant at the November Board meeting. It was noted that Jolene Schalper requested time to discuss the status of the project at this Board meeting but was not present due to a family emergency. In her absence Christian provided an update. The Board instructed Joan to write the standard update letters on the two interior grants and request that Jolene and/or Matthias be present at the December Board meeting. Next month there will be discussion held on the façade grant for The Gibson, their interior grants are up for review/discussion in January.
- VII. **Old Business:**
Beautification: Joan reported that holiday décor has been installed; banners will be in place before Thanksgiving. She added that there are issues with the sound system; she has had Good Vibrations

working on it. Joan has reached out to Cameron to set dates for August 2022; a grant of \$2,500 has been approved for ArtsFest from the Great Falls Area Community Foundation.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Kellie reported that Christmas Stroll buttons are out and available; she showed the Board the button designed by Sheree Nelson. The theme for the stroll, being held on 12/3, is All is Merry & Bright. Parade of Lights is 11/27 along with Shop Small Saturday. Ladies Night will be held on 11/18 from 5pm to 8pm with after hours at the local bars and restaurants. There are twenty-nine businesses participating in Ladies Night. Joan added that DGFA has three openings on their board, ballots were mailed out to all DGFA Members, and they are due by 11/23.

Downtown Partnership:

Wayfinding: Joan reported that Wayfinding is moving along; the contractor requested to do the work in the spring, the Board noted their preference that the work be completed this fall, as originally planned. A ride around the City is taking place next week to stake the locations for each sign.

Tree Work: Joan reported that the tree work is completed for this fiscal year and an invoice for just over \$24K has been received from Doctor Lawn.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported Safety Alliance continues to meet on the first Tuesday of every month. They are crafting their work plan to implement the new Safety Plan and following the Crime Task Force recommendations at the City level as the City Commission begins its review of the recommendations.

Expansion: Joan shared options for expansion and a timeline. There are twenty parcels that could be added in the 700 block of Central Ave, the northside of the 700 block of 1st Ave South and the southside of the 700 block of 1st Ave North. The timeline notes that ballots must be submitted to the City no later than February 8, 2022. The Board instructed Joan to continue to pursue this; they will take formal action to proceed at the December board meeting.

Great Falls Development Authority: Christian provided a verbal report to the Board, A lot of the focus was on Invest Downtown leading up to that event. Christian reports on the four main areas he focuses on: Projects underway/pipeline; Business Retention & Expansion (BRE); Lead Generation/Business Attraction; and Tools to Drive Investment. He noted that they are currently working on 44 projects in their pipeline, no new projects were added this past month. He noted that they do have some leads that came from Invest Downtown. For BRE visits, they are currently tracking 368 businesses; they've met with two in the past month. Lead Generation is also known as Business Attraction, making sure that our spaces downtown stay full; they are currently targeting 57 businesses; they've reached out to five target meetings and had a meeting with one. Christian provided a summary of Invest Downtown; over 90 in person and over 20 attended online with 20 speakers. He noted that he created an online map with a QR code that directs individuals to the buildings/businesses that were offering tours after the event. He plans to expand on this map, and it will become a tool to drive investment. He mentioned an online seminar on downtown housing that the IDA held, he will find the link and share it with the Board.

International Downtown Association Conference: Joan reported that she and Kellie attended the International Downtown Association in Tampa Florida. Joan presented on the Pedlet program at the conference. She attended presentations on public art, wayfinding, placemaking, etc. She attended a mural tour. The DDP funded the majority of Joan's attendance at this conference. She noted her favorite phrase that came from the conference, "Downtown is everybody's neighborhood." Sherrie shared her experience at the conference and added that our small community is doing great things.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the next Parking Commission meeting will be held December 2nd. The last PAC meeting was held while Joan and Kellie were in Tampa.

Personnel: Joan reported that this will be her last Board meeting in the office for a few months; she will be on Zoom. She is planning to take off the week of Thanksgiving and using vacation hours between now and the end of the year; she has 60 hours of vacation to use before 12/31/2021.

Work Plan – Draft FY 2022: Joan reported that the Work Plan will serve as the guide for creation of a new job description for the next BID employee.

VIII. **New Business:** There was no new business at this time.

IX. **Public Comment:** There was no public comment at this time.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:09am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Date: _____

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____