

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid In-Person and via ZOOM
In-person meeting held at
509 1st Ave North
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
December 9, 2021

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

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:10am; 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: Board Vacancy:** Joan reported that Michelle Bebbington was appointed to the BID Board Tuesday evening during the City Commission meeting. She was not made aware of this morning's meeting until Tuesday evening, she is now on the email list and will be kept informed.
Conflict of Interest: No board members expressed a conflict of interest, at this time.
Joan reported that the Conflict Disclosure form is due to the City, these are due annually in January. It was emailed to the Board yesterday, she asked that the Board members complete the form and get it turned back into Joan.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 11-11-21 Board meeting:** Max motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 11/11/21 BID Board meeting, as presented. Neal seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:**
Monthly Financials: The Board received the August, September & October via e-mail. There being no further discussion on the financials, Neal motioned to approve the 8/31/21, 9/30/21 & 10/31/21 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 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: Jolene provided an update on their project. Their project went from \$1.6M to \$2.1M and so they are not going to proceed forward, at this time. She expressed her appreciation of the BID grant programs and acknowledged that Kellergeist will not be utilizing the grants that are currently on the grant schedule. She noted that they own the building, so they will be doing something with it but not until costs come down or they will do them incrementally, as they are able. Jason expressed dismay that the project is not going forward but appreciated Jolene letting the BID know they can release those grant funds. Neal noted that this means their grants have expired on their own terms and the applicant has withdrawn, no motion is needed from the Board. Joan will update the grant schedule to reflect this.
The Gibson: Ty reported that they are continuing to move forward with their project; they anticipate commencing construction in January. They have approval from Citizen's Alliance, they are anticipating

approval from the SBA in December. Joan noted that the updates need to be in written form, so it is in the file for our auditor. She also noted the letter that was sent in July in regard to the requirement the Board imposed on The Gibson's Façade grant. Ty noted that he met with the City on Tuesday in regard to the TIF programs. The Gibson may choose to pursue a tax abatement in lieu of the TIF programs as that may be more advantageous to their project. Discussion followed on the new TIF programs and tax abatements, as well as an exceptional TIF application above the three new TIF programs. The Board noted that the project has indicated significant progress and they were comfortable with an extension of six (6) months for all three of The Gibson's grants. Neal motioned to extend the term of The Gibson's two interior grants and one façade grant for a period of six (6) months, beginning January 1st. The one condition for the extension is that the BID receive some written correspondence about expected progress. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VII. **Old Business:**

Beautification: ArtsFest: Joan reported that she is communicating with Cameron working to get dates set for 2022 and get a bid from him with options for the Board to consider. She is already receiving some inquiries about buildings who wish to be involved.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Joan reported that the Christmas Stroll was a huge success. Kellie is on a well-deserved vacation this week. Joan added that DGFA Membership invoices will be sent out in January, if paid by March members receive a discount.

Downtown Partnership:

Wayfinding: Joan reported that Wayfinding has been put on hold until spring; MT Lines let their staff off on winter break on 11/15 so we had no choice. We have been promised that we will be the first job they tackle in the spring, so they will commence work no later than April 15th and the task will take approximately two weeks. Fabrication is underway on the signs at this time.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported Safety Alliance continues to meet on the first Tuesday of every month, this month's meeting was cancelled due to the holidays. Carol Bronson is leading a committee that will be crafting the work plan; they should be meeting before the January meeting. Joan added that the City Commission again discussed the Crime Task Force Recommendations at their Work Session this past Tuesday; the recommendations specifically asked that many be implemented by January 2022, but that won't happen as the Commission has not taken any action. Greg Doyon asked the Commissioners to review the recommendations and provide their feedback on each of them in regard to what they can see the City supporting, etc. There was discussion over defining the term, "public safety".

Expansion: Joan shared information and documents with the Board that include the timeline; all ballots must be submitted to the City by February 8, 2022. 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 Board was informed of how the addition of these twenty new parcels would impact the BID budget, the assessment income would increase by \$15,848; discussion followed on the services we would be providing to those properties. The spreadsheet that reflects each parcels footprint was shared with the Board, as ballots are received a Yes or a No is input, and the spreadsheet calculates the percentage; once 60% is achieved than expansion will have passed. Board members were assigned property owners they know to visit with, Joan will provide them with the ballots to take with them during these visits. Joan noted there are brochures in the BID office that list what a BID is and what it does, and each potential new property owner should also receive this document. Joan will mail out ballots with the letter on January 3rd with a return of January 12th; Board members need to have their visits with these potential property owners prior to January 3rd. Neal motioned to approve the expansion process and move forward with expansion on the twenty parcels, as presented. Alison seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Great Falls Development Authority: Christian provided his report to the Board, a copy of which was emailed to the Board with their meeting packet. He noted that they are currently working on 49 projects in their pipeline, no new projects were added this past month. For BRE visits, they are currently tracking

368 businesses; they've met with three 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 four targets and had meetings with two. Ignite 2022 will have some downtown projects highlighted. He mentioned IEDC online seminars that GFDA registered for; he will share when they are occurring as they have some focus on downtown. Jolene shared more detail on what Ignite; it's held in January and all focused-on projects, and this will be their 6th year. It is being held January 7th at 8am at the Meadowlark Country Club. Jolene reminded the Board that GFDA is an atypical economic development, meaning that they do more than most as they help businesses in every stage.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the Parking Commission met on December 2nd. They approved free parking for the holiday season, that will occur 12/11 to 12/26. Joan reminded the Board that the BID holds an ex-officio position on the Parking Commission as long as the Zoom option is available Joan will continue to attend but if the City no longer allows the Zoom option a BID Board member may wish to attend to keep informed. She did note that Kellie does serve on the Parking Commission, so the Downtown office is informed.

Personnel: Joan reported she took the week of Thanksgiving off for vacation and still has a great deal of vacation time to use before 12/31; she will be taking time as she continues her travels.

Work Plan – Draft FY 2022: Joan reported that the Work Plan continues to be worked.

- VIII. **New Business:** Board Training: Joan reported that the City will very likely be offering their free Board training that is required for Board members to attend. It will likely take place in January or February. Meeting Location: Joan reminded the Board that the in-person option for BID Board meetings will be held at Speaking Socially at 509 1st Ave North while the Downtown office is not occupied by BID staff. Board members were reminded to read their emails to know the location of each meeting.

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

- X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:19am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____