

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
January 13, 2022

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

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:02am; roll call of all present, a quorum was established.
- II. **Guests/Public Comment:** Joe McKenney introduced himself; he is a new City Commissioner and has been appointed as the liaison between the BID Board and the Commission.
- III. **BID Board:**
Board Training: Joan reported that the City is hosting their Board training, which is mandatory for City appointed board members. It is being held January 26th or 27th from 5:30pm to 8:30pm in the Missouri Room at the Civic Center.
Conflict of Interest: No board members expressed a conflict of interest, at this time.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 12-9-21 Board meeting:** Sherrie motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 12/9/21 BID Board meeting, as presented. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:**
Monthly Financials: Budget vs Actual was presented to the Board, through January 12. Joan noted that she is inquiring with the City in regard to BID assessments and when additional funding can be expected to be received by the BID. There remain outstanding invoices for Wayfinding; the only additional invoices that will be received for Wayfinding will be for labor for installation. The BID has received the reimbursement for the tree work that was done and funded via TIF funding. We continue to pay down on the grants that are payable for the Northern Lofts with Big Sky Select. Joan reminded the Board that the BID runs their books on an accrual basis; so, our reports reflect that we have paid all of the Wayfinding invoices, even though checks have not been cut yet. Once the final invoice is paid for Wayfinding it will be submitted to the City for reimbursement.
Joan noted that Sherrie and Joan will be meeting regarding the budget for FY 2023 very soon, a draft will be prepared and presented to the Board by the March board meeting.
Joan informed the Board that her new laptop is not functioning properly, and she will be needing a new laptop, again. QuickBooks will not function on the laptop she has now, so she is running it on her personal laptop for the time being.
- VI. **Grant Programs:** Joan noted there was nothing new to report since last month; Big Sky Select has four payments remaining of \$10,000 each and their grants will be paid in full.
- VII. **Old Business:**

Beautification: ArtsFest: Joan reported that she has received a proposal from Cameron for ArtsFest 2022, she shared the document with the Board and will email it to them for their review. Joan noted that Cameron's proposal does separate out priming and clear coat as well as a community mural. He provided four tiers, starting at \$20K, \$40K, \$45K and finally \$50K. All four tiers include a one-day workshop. Sherrie inquired about the community mural; it was noted that the community mural add-on would be an additional \$5K to any tier the Board may choose to accept. Joan added that she now possibly has access to a grant if we utilize indigenous artists, she is meeting with the potential grantee to discuss this possibility further. Joan informed the Board that she has been working with the property owners where murals are currently located on trying to light the murals at night; all property owners are on board with working toward figuring out a solution. She added that Northwestern Energy is supporting this effort. Dates for 2022 are being discussed but have not been finalized.

Sound System: Joan noted that a couple of speakers are down and have not been working; Will has been volunteering to assist in trouble shooting. The sound system was purchased a few years back with AirNetix. AirNetix has requested that we ship back one part, and they will replace it; Joan is collaborating with Will to try and get that part taken down so it can be shipped back. Joan informed the Board that The Newberry has reached out to inquire about taking over the sound system. They have offered to manage it in order for The Newberry to insert some ads for their concerts, and play music for upcoming musicians who will be playing at The Newberry. Joan read the email to the Board inquiring about the possibilities. The Board discussed some of the pro and cons of doing this. Discussion held on the sound system advertising downtown events and downtown businesses and making sure whatever may be done is fair. Joan was instructed to explore if other communities have done this.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Joan reported that DGFA Membership invoices were sent out, if paid by March 1st members receive a 10% discount.

Downtown Partnership:

Wayfinding: Joan reported that Wayfinding continues to progress, fabrication of the signs is in the process – proofs will be provided very soon. They will commence work on installation no later than April 15th and the task will take approximately two weeks. We still owe MT Lines \$35,710 and that figure is included in the P&L figure that is just over \$60K. Once the City processes the tree work reimbursement then MT Lines will be paid.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported NWGF recently hosted a presentation on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design; the recording is available on their YouTube channel. The Safety Alliance is drafting the work plan to implement their Safety Plan. Joan added that Coins for a Cause collected \$417.63 in 2021; Carol Bronson and Joan are working to distribute those funds to a direct service provider. She noted that it is time to get applications in to be a seasonal volunteer with the GFDP. The next meeting of the Downtown Safety Alliance is at 9am on 2/1.

Expansion: Joan reported that letters and ballots were mailed to all of the property owners with the twenty parcels in the proposed expansion. She shared the ballot return spreadsheet reflecting that we have received four ballots back, one against and three in favor, we are at 18% approval. The letter requested that ballots be returned by 1/12. Discussion followed on board members visiting with the property owners. Discussion followed on potential streetscape within the newly proposed boundaries.

Great Falls Development Authority: Jolene provided Christian's report to the Board, a copy of which was emailed to the Board with their meeting packet. She noted that Christian is available to assist with the expansion effort if he is needed to reach out to any property owners. She reported that they have identified their BRE's for 2022, there are 368 on the list and fifty have been identified; they have put together their target list, it is continually expanding; there are forty-nine projects in the project pipeline with thirty of these active; this past month Christian has held three meetings. Jolene added that they are creating a downtown proposal that can be emailed out quickly when there is a lead; once finalized GFDA will send it to the BID Board so they can share. GFDA resources are always mentioned so the Board is aware of what tools GFDA has available. Jason inquired about soliciting businesses that are located in the mall; Jolene noted that GFDA is not able to solicit those businesses to move downtown,

they can assist any business that inquire with GFDA, and they always promote downtown, but they aren't able to solicit for those businesses already established in the mall. Joan reminded the Board of when the Westgate Mall closed and the BID went to those tenants and solicited for them to move downtown, that was when the Business Incentive Grant was created. She added that several businesses moved downtown and at least five of them were downtown for over five years.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the Parking Commission has not held a meeting since early December, there is nothing to report at this time. There should be a meeting next week Thursday.

Personnel: Joan reported she last week was her 13-year anniversary working for the BID. She added that she is not ready to leave this position. That being said, she is drafting a job description.

Work Plan – Draft FY 2022: Joan reported that the Work Plan continues to be worked. A draft work plan for FY2023 will be presented to the Board by March.

VIII. **New Business:** No new business at this time.

IX. **Public Comment:** Joe McKenney re-introduced himself and noted that he volunteered to serve as the liaison to the City Commission; he looks forward to attending our meetings and listening in to learn what we do.

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____