

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid - In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
May 12, 2022

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Neal DuBois, Sherrie Arey, Alison Fried, Karen Reiff, Michelle Houghton
Board Present via Zoom: Max Grebe
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests: Brett Doney, Carol Bronson, Cayle Halberg, Christian Leinhauser, Joe McKenney, Kellie Pierce
Guests via Zoom: Jason Nitschke, Jolene Schalper, Tony Peres

- 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:** Jason Nitschke, with Great Falls Development Authority, presented on GFDA's new initiatives Accelerate Great Falls and Peerspectives; flyers on the programs were shared via email to the Board. He asked that the Board refer people to GFDA for these new programs.
- III. **BID Board: Conflict of Interest:** No board members expressed a conflict of interest, at this time.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 4-20-22 Board meeting & Special Meeting:** Neal motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 4/20/22 BID Board meeting and Special Meeting, as presented. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials: Budget FY2023:** The draft budget had been emailed to the Board, it was presented, discussed, and edits were made. A proposed final draft will be emailed to the Board prior to the June board meeting. The Board will need to take formal action on the budget at the June board meeting. **Monthly Financials:** The Board received the April financials via e-mail. There being no further discussion on the financials, Alison motioned to approve the 4/30/22 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Neal seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Budget vs Actual was presented to the Board, through May 11.
- VI. **Grant Programs:** Joan reported that there were no changes to the Grant Schedule; the only grants remaining to be paid out are the three grants for The Gibson project. She reminded the Board that the work is being done to bring back the Interior Grant and the Business Incentive Grants effective July 1; drafts of the programs were presented to the Board via email. Key components of the grant programs were pointed out; Neal will review the programs and final draft versions will be sent to the Board prior to the June board meeting for final review and approval at the June board meeting, with the goal of making both programs effective July 1.
- VII. **Old Business:**
Beautification: ArtsFest: Joan reported that Cameron Moberg has sent a curator agreement that reflects the duties of each party involved in ArtsFest, for Cameron and for the BID. The agreement was sent to the Board for their review via email. The agreement is committing the BID to \$40,000 for ArtsFest 2022. It was noted that 50% was due up front and that deposit would be paid in FY2022 prior to 6/30 via Special Projects. Jason inquired if sealing the murals was included; he noted that \$5K is needed for the

labor and \$2K is needed for the supplies, he would like this added to the agreement. Joan reported that she has submitted a grant request to the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area for \$1,000. She is working on a grant to the State of Montana Arts Council that would be utilizing ARPA funds, the maximum on this grant is \$1,000, she noted if this grant is approved it will be put toward the expenses associated with the workshop and artists meals during the week. NeighborWorks is presenting a check today for \$5,000; Sherrie added that NWGF will fund one meal for the artists. Sponsorship letters have been mailed out. Joan added that Cameron has artists committed but he has not signed any contracts with those artists as he is awaiting the Board's approval of this agreement. Joan added that the BID will be recipients of a grant from Sisters United to cover up to three Indigenous Artists; at this time, we have two artists committed and continue to work on seeking a third. Sherrie motioned to approve the BID signing the curator agreement with Cameron Moberg with the addition of \$7K for sealing the murals. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Alley Lighting Project: Joan reported that the TIF application for the alley lighting project was emailed to the Board for their review. She requested the Board's approval for submitting the application to the City. Alison motioned to approve the TIF application for the alley lighting project. Sherrie seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

Sound System: Joan noted that she had nothing new to report at this time but the plan is to acquire and install two new speakers in the 700 block of Central Ave after July 1 and purchase the portable master with the microphone so the system can be used remotely.

BID Vehicles: Joan reported that the Board requested that this item be included to consider selling the Arctic Cat. It would be sold as is she added that she may already have a buyer for it. She noted it is a 2008 that the BID acquired in 2011 for \$7,845. The current value on the Cat is approximately \$5K. Sherrie motioned that the BID sell the Arctic Cat, with Joan authorized to negotiate. Alison seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

City of Great Falls – ARPA Funds: Joan reported that the ARPA Committee has not met yet. It was noted the deadline for the application is July 15, 2022. There may be applications presented to the Board for review before the next board meeting.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Kellie reported that they are prepping for Craft Beer Week, June 5-11. It kicks off with the Obstacle Course on Sunday Gibson Park, Trivia Night Monday at Enbar, etc. Many events will be held that week and it wraps up with the Golf Scramble Friday and Brew Fest Saturday. They continue to seek sponsorships. They already have 27 Montana breweries confirmed. They are looking for volunteers. Military Appreciation Days are May 19-21. Brothel Tours kick off this weekend; the June late tour is already sold out. They may host a tour in July.

Joan reported that the Professional Services Agreement between the BID and the DGFA is set to expire June 30, 2022, it has automatic renewals but should be reviewed for possible changes/updates that may be necessary. The current agreement was emailed to the Board for their review. Sherrie noted that the amount that is reflected in the current PSA is reflected in the budget under salaries.

Downtown Partnership:

Downtown TIF District: Joan reported that the City has reported there are no changes in the TIF since last month. It remains as follows: \$470,00 was previously approved for work on the parking garage, \$183,785 of this has not been spent. The new TIF programs has \$500K designated annually for the three programs, they have approved \$143,105 this fiscal year. The Civic Center façade project bond debt service is \$412,425 annually. The balance of the Downtown TIF is approximately \$3.5 million. The DDP is anticipating a large TIF application for a downtown storm drain project.

Wayfinding: Joan reported that the signs are installed. There may be some minor items to resolve with the contractor, but the work is mostly completed. There were 57 motorist and 20 pedestrian signs. Discussion was held on getting this entire project paid for in the current fiscal year; noting that grants from the State require that we have paid for the Wayfinding before we submit for reimbursement for those grants.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that the Downtown Safety Alliance did not meet in April or May. She had a meeting with Captain Schaffer at GFPD and discussed what the Safety Alliance was created for and what the focus should be. She is going to work on bringing the Safety Alliance back to its original purpose, supporting GFPD however they ask the Safety Alliance to. At this time, GFPD has asked that the BID provide educational opportunities; Joan noted that NWGF and the Library have been offering many educational offerings. Captain Schaffer is working to implement a new program modeled after the program in Billings. He would like the opportunity to present to the BID Board. Joan noted that she sent a Doodle poll to both the BID and the DGFA boards to find a time for a joint board meeting when Captain Schaffer can make his presentation, both the DDP and members of the Safety Alliance will also be invited to this meeting when its scheduled. She asked that Board members complete the Doodle Poll if they have not done so yet. Joan reminded the Board of the Billings study that their police department conducted that was discussed last month; if we look at the frequent users in Great Falls in the same manner there are 24 frequent users, according to GFPD, and it is costing the City over \$2M annually approximately.

Expansion: The new parcels become part of the BID as of July 1. Joan informed the Board that trash removal service will go into effect July 1; flowers will be installed in the 700 block of Central Ave; two new speakers will be acquired and installed in the 700 block of Central Ave; snow removal will be handled within the expansion area come winter 2023. Christian reported that the Lithia parcels have been sold, he met with the new owner who is out of Utah.

Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce Low-Cost Airfare Initiative: Joan reminded the Board that they expressed their interest in committing toward this initiative. The budget reflects a commitment of \$5K which is the same amount the BID committed in 2019. Sherrie motioned pending approval of the budget, as of July 1 the BID provides \$5,000 to the Low-Cost Airfare Initiative. Neal seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Great Falls Development Authority: Christian updated the Board on his report; a copy of which was emailed to the Board with their meeting packet. He reported that GFDA has been directly involved in about 50 businesses opening or expanding in the past two years since the Downtown Business Development Officer was hired in January 2020. Since the report was emailed to the Board, they have added three new projects. Hometana has re-opened in a permanent location. He's conducted four BREs. A target they've been working with for a long while has now signed a letter of intent. It was noted that economic development takes time. He added that there are many other projects that he is working with. Discussion was held on the Professional Services Agreement with GFDA, it is set to expire June 30, 2022. The BID is required to give 90-day written notice if we intend to cancel. Alison inquired about the conversation held last year when GFDA noted they would not hold the BID to the 90-day cancellation. Discussion was held amongst the Board about how to fund the position indefinitely; the Downtown TIF was the source GFDA and BID were looking to for continued funding for this position. The DDP has submitted a TIF application to the City that could, if approved, fund half of the salary with the application noting the BID and GFDA would each fund the remaining half at 1/4 for each organization. Discussion followed on who committed the BID to 1/4 of the salary for this position; Joan noted that she and Sherrie serve as officers on the DDP Board and were involved in the process of completing the TIF application. Brett noted that GFDA would not hold the BID to the 90-day notice requirement if the Board chooses to end the commitment as of June 30, GFDA would accept that. He added that either way the agreement needs to be re-visited if the BID wishes to continue with the partnership with GFDA. Sherrie motioned to notify GFDA that this current agreement expires June 30, 2022, and the BID will not be renewing it but will work to negotiate a new agreement if the BID budget allows. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Montana Downtown Conference: Joan reported that she was asked to leave this item on the agenda as each attendee would come up with three key points we gained from the Conference and would like to work toward. Alison noted that she'd like Seth Lutter to come to the BID Board meeting to speak to the Board about the C-PACE program; she believes this program could be very impactful and not utilize

BID resources, but we could act as the catalyst. Joan will invite Seth but also encouraged the Board to attend the training session that GFDA is planning to offer. Joan reminded the conference attendees that any item they may wish for the Board to address with specifics can added to the agenda; C-PACE will be added to the June agenda.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the Parking Commission did not hold an April meeting; they are due to meet next week. They currently have one opening on the Commission. The new brochure that Sp+ made were provided to those in attendance; their staff is making deliveries of the brochure to downtown retailers.

Personnel: Neal noted that the executive committee needs to make a recommendation to the Board; Sherrie added that the executive committee is recommending that they want to create an Executive Director position. Neal added that this position will be a new position that will oversee both the BID and the DGFA Boards and will be a full-time position. He added that Joan will remain in an administrative capacity and work with the director. He noted that is working on the new professional services agreement between the BID and DGFA that details the duties and responsibilities for both organizations. Joan noted that the Board can take action on this at their next Board meeting; they requested that a special meeting be held to address the topic of personnel before the June Board meeting. Neal added that the proposed budget allows for the salary of the Executive Director, continuing Joan’s employment and the BID supporting a new employee for DGFA for coordinating their events and marketing. Alison noted that her perspective is that this is not the end of any job for Joan, she will still be retained as an employee to do grant writing, coordinate ArtsFest, do meeting minutes and bookkeeping; she added that Joan can come back to the Board and ask to continue to run projects that she is not needed to be present in the office for. She added that she loves what has been done; Sherrie noted that Joan just got the BID to the point where the BID is able to do so many great things. Joan added that the BID Board needs to take into consideration the positions she serves on other boards or commissions. She serves as the secretary on the DDP Board; the officers of this board have historically been comprised of the BID, GFDA, NWGF and the DGFA. Both the BID and the DGFA have a role on that board and will need to have representation. She serves as ex-officio on the Parking Commission and Historic Preservation Advisory Commission.

Work Plan FY2023: Joan reported that the draft of the proposed Work Plan for FY 2023 was emailed to the Board. She pointed out to the Board that this Work Plan looks very different from the ones in years past; a great deal of information about BID’s and the history of the Great Falls BID was added. She noted some of the specific changes that will impact the work of the BID. Alison objected to including conversion of the one-ways as the BID Board has not held much discussion on the topic; she’d like to discuss it before it is officially added to a Work Plan. Joan noted that if a Board member has any other recommendations for edits to email Joan directly. The Work Plan will need to be formally adopted during the June board meeting.

VIII. **New Business:**

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

X. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 11:20am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____