

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid - In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
June 9, 2022

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Neal DuBois, Sherrie Arey, Alison Fried, Karen Reiff, Michelle Houghton, Max Grebe
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests: Christian Leinhauser, Joe McKenney, Kellie Pierce

- 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:** There were no guests present who 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.
Election of Officers: Joan noted that next month is the first month of FY 2023 and the Board will need to elect officers; the current slate is Chair, Jason Kunz; Vice Chair, Neal DuBois; Treasurer, Sherrie Arey. The current officers expressed interest in remaining in their current roles.

Sherrie Arey arrived for the meeting 9:07am.

- IV. **Approval of minutes from 5-12-22 Board meeting & 5-26-22 Special Meeting:** Alison motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 5/12/22 BID Board meeting and 5/26/22 Special Meeting, as presented. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials: Monthly Financials:** The Board received the May financials via e-mail. Joan reported that a Board member inquired about why Payroll Taxes was so high at over \$23K; Joan researched and discovered that she had an employee's entire paycheck being coded to Payroll Taxes, this has been corrected and now reflects just under \$7K. This also impacted Salaries which was reflecting at approximately \$69K and now is correct reflected at \$86,277. There being no further discussion on the financials, Alison motioned to approve the 5/31/22 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison, as amended. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Budget vs Actual was presented to the Board, through June 9.
Discussion was held on paying for Wayfinding, the final invoices total just over \$102K, and the outstanding grants that are due to be reimbursed once all invoices are paid. Dragonfly Dry Goods had offered to make a loan to the BID to cover the costs of Wayfinding. Joan inquired with the City Attorney and the Auditor if the BID is able to do this; both of these individuals agreed that the BID is able to take a loan from Dragonfly Dry Goods at zero percent interest. The goal is to have Dragonfly Dry Goods paid back within 30 days. A loan agreement will be drafted. Alison confirmed that Dragonfly Dry Goods will loan the BID \$102K at zero interest to be paid back within 30 days. Max motioned to authorize Jason Kunz, as Board Chair, to sign a loan agreement for a maximum loan of \$102K between the BID and Dragonfly Dry Goods. Michelle seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
The Board discussed establishing a line of credit for the BID and securing a credit card for staff. Joan will gather information on these two options from Stockman Bank.
Joan noted that with Stockman Bank our statements arrive via snail mail. Since she will be working remotely, she'd like to get the account set up so that we receive e-statements. The Board authorized Joan to get this set up.

Neal DuBois arrived for the meeting 9:15am.

Budget FY2023: The draft budget had been emailed to the Board. The following adjustments were made: Contract Services was increased from \$12K to \$15K, Special Projects was decreased from \$18,219 to \$15,219. Joan advised the Board that the Urban Art Project funds are being distributed to them today, so the BID will no longer be managing their funds. The Board removed the line items for Urban Art Project Income and Expense. Max motioned to approve the budget for FY 2023, as amended. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VI. **Old Business:**

Beautification: ArtsFest: Joan reported that sponsorship letters were sent out; we spent approximately \$700 doing the mailing and have not had much response, yet. NWGF, Montana Credit Union, LPW, and Heritage Inn are sponsors, so far. The Chamber is a sponsor with their in-kind donation of their mailing list. Joan noted that the Brighten Up Shop is donating the stretching of the canvas that will be used for the Artists Reception and Night Markets. Buildings are being confirmed; so far all are located within the BID boundaries. Joan reported that she has been approved for a grant from the BSCNHA for \$1,000 if we use it toward a building outside of the BID.

Sound System: Joan noted that the new part is being installed today to have the speaker at 320 working again.

Traffic Signal Box – Joan reported that the box on the corner of Central Ave and 2nd St is a new box and no longer has artwork on it. The City has informed the BID that they plan to replace the boxes on Central Ave over the next several years. This can be funded under Beautification or Special Projects in FY 2023. Max motioned to have the Board pursue installation of artwork on the traffic signal box located at the corner of Central Ave and 2nd St, up to a maximum of \$1,500. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Discussion was held on whether or not the DDP will fund a traffic signal box outside of the BID boundaries in FY 2023. The Board inquired about what the City does with the boxes when they are removed; the Board discussed creating a work of art out of discarded boxes. Joan will inquire with the City what they do with them; noting that sometimes the artists would like them. Joan reported that 60 hanging flower baskets are in place up to 8th Street. Tilleraas is set for watering; we have an invoice for this fiscal year for the flowers and June watering for \$7,400.

Max inquired if the Arctic Cat has been sold; Joan reported it has not been.

C-PACE Program: Joan reported that Seth Lutter will be attending the BID's July Board meeting to present the C-PACE Program.

City of Great Falls – ARPA Funds: Joan reported that the ARPA Committee is meeting next week; Joan noted that she doesn't want to spend a lot of time on things we believe will not be approved. There will be application(s) for the Board to approve for submission at the July board meeting, the deadline for the application is July 15, 2022. Joe reported that \$3M has been made available, but he added that \$3M in projects may, or may not, be approved. Joan reported that the state's available ARPA funds for artists totaled \$500K, they received 212 applications totaling over \$1.8M.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Kellie reported that she is in the midst of Craft Beer Week, there are tap takeovers, firkin tapping this evening; Golf Scramble is tomorrow; a parking lot party at Vintage Sellers tomorrow night; and Brew Fest is Saturday. Brothel Tours are next weekend followed by the Night Market on the 24th.

Joan reported that the draft Professional Services Agreement between the BID and the DGFA was emailed to the Board. Kellie noted that DGFA has agreed to accept \$15K toward salaries. Joan added that the BID and DGFA Boards are set to approve this agreement at the joint board meeting on June 14th. Kellie reported that DGFA has advertised the part-time Marketing & Events Coordinator position. She noted there has been good response to the job posting. Neal noted that the PSA reflects that the two boards have a joint Executive Director, and the BID will be contributing up to \$15K towards the Marketing & Events Coordinator, the BID is undertaking a lot more in salaries. He asked about the

Exhibit A listed in the PSA; Joan will email the Job Description (Exhibit A) to the Board for final review. Sherrie recommended it be cleaned up to look more like a job description; she asked if coverage of the office needs to be added, “Maintain consistent office hours at the direction of the Board.” as well as “Other duties, as assigned.” was added to the PSA. Joan informed the Board that the joint BID/DGFA Board meeting will commence at 10am and Captain Schaffer will be starting his presentation at 10:30. The Board can take action on the PSA during the meeting, that is the only item on the agenda.

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. She added that the City has reported there has been some new interest in the Downtown TIF Programs. The DDP received an application from Public Works for a storm drain project; they plan to phase the project in. The total request is \$2.5M, at \$500K annually for five years. The DDP tabled the application until there is an amendment made to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan; both items will likely be approved at the same time. Joan added that she has not submitted the TIF application for the alley lighting project as she was waiting to determine if they’d pursue ARPA funds, instead. She is going to submit the alley lighting project TIF application.

Wayfinding: Joan reported that she and Brad checked several signs and many were not level; Tony Houtz with Cushing Terrell was going to be connecting with MT Lines to get them to resolve the minor issues that were discovered. Alison reported that the only comment she’s received is that tourists have inquired where the “Historic Downtown” is located. Joan reported that the City received a comment that “Parking” should have been reflected as “Parking Garage”. Joan noted that was an intentional use of wording as there are also parking lots.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that the Downtown Safety Alliance did not meet in April or May, they’ve been invited to Captain Schaffer’s presentation. She reminded the Board that the BID was who formed the Safety Alliance and the entity that has managed the Safety Alliance for the past 12+ years. The Safety Alliance was formed to support GFPD and advocate for a downtown officer; that was the purpose of the Safety Alliance when originally created. She added that in 2012 a Safety Plan was written and adopted by the DDP and endorsed by GFPD. An update was done to the plan in 2021, also adopted by the DDP and endorsed by GFPD. Joan added that the BID Board never formally adopted or approved the new Safety Plan.

Joan informed the Board that Captain Schaffer has inquired if anyone is hearing anything about individuals who are having issues anywhere downtown, other than in the area of the First United Methodist Church.

Joan reported that First United Methodist Church has submitted to the City for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP); this CUP will be presented to NC #7 Monday 6/13, to the Planning Board Tuesday 6/14; and to City Commission Tuesday 7/19. Joan asked the BID to consider whether or not they wish to take formal action and advocate for approval of the CUP application or for denial of the application. She noted that several board members have noted that the CUP should be denied as it is against City Code. It was noted that Pastor Wakely has left Great Falls. The Board asked that the CUP Application be forwarded to them; Joan will do that once it is published on the City’s website. Max noted that he believes as the BID we advocate for businesses; we have nothing against helping the homeless and have supported the Rescue Mission over the years, but we support businesses and have to look at how the Methodist Church is going about helping those individuals. Joan noted that we know there have been issues for many businesses. Neal noted the Board can agree to support the CUP application, or not.

Expansion: Joan reported that she is keeping Expansion on the agenda so the Board can make decisions; the calendar for any potential additional expansion is the same as last year, ballots will be due

to the City in February. The Board expressed interest in expanding into the 800 block of Central. Christian noted that the new owner of Subaru has purchased all of the old Bennett Motor parcels.

Grant Programs: The draft Interior Grant and Business Incentive Grant programs were emailed to the Board. The Business Incentive Grant has a maximum of \$2,500 with a one-year lease required; new businesses to the BID; paid directly to the property owner as long as the application and lease are received in the BID office one week prior to lease commencement. The Interior Grant is for permanent improvements, up to a maximum of \$5K. These would be available at 30% for new businesses; 20% for expansion; and 10% for an existing business. Property/business owners have six months to commence significant construction. Parcels have a lifetime cap of \$250K. Discussion followed on businesses that have opened since the BID grant programs were suspended in February 2020. It was noted these programs are not reimbursement programs. Sherrie motioned to reestablish the BID Business Incentive Grant and Interior Grant programs starting July 1, 2022. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Great Falls Development Authority: Christian updated the Board on his report; a copy of which was emailed to the Board. He reported that their project pipeline has changed a bit; it fluctuates as new projects launch and some projects open, they have not lost any projects. Magpie is open in the old Machinery Row. He added that since this report he has done three BRE visits.

Joan noted that if the City Commission approves the DDP 's TIF application the TIF would be funding up to half of the salary for the Downtown Business Development Officer. The BID will need to renegotiate the PSA with GFDA if they wish to do so, the BID could fund up to ¼ of the salary based upon the approved budget and what the TIF application noted. Christian shared that Invest Downtown is October 20th; Montana Economic Development Association (MEDA) is going to be holding their annual conference in November downtown. He informed the Board that Seth did a presentation to GFDA; Christian is working on getting something set up for Seth Lutter to present on C-PACE to downtown building owners. GFDA was awarded \$2.65M in Brownfield clean-up funds from the EPA.

Sherrie Arey departed the meeting at 10:40am.

One-Way Conversions: Joan reported that the DDP is pursuing a Downtown Revitalization Plan and that plan will likely address the one-way conversion possibilities.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the Parking Commission has not met since March. The Board discussed whether or not there is a requirement that a City Commission meet.

Personnel: Joan reported that she will be attending the meeting on June 14th via Zoom; she will be attending the BID board meeting July 14th via Zoom; she will be in town to attend City Commission on July 19th to do the annual BID presentation for the City Commission.

Work Plan FY2023: Joan reported that the draft of the proposed Work Plan for FY 2023 was emailed to the Board. Joan changed the wording "Community Director" to be "Executive Director". Alison motioned to approve the Work Plan for FY 2023, as amended. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VII. **New Business:**

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

IX. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:45am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Joan Redeem, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____