

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid - In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
October 13, 2022

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

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:01am; roll call of all present, a quorum was established.
- II. **Guests/Public Comment:** There was no public comment at this time.
- III. **BID Board: Conflict of Interest:** No board members expressed a conflict of interest, at this time. **Board Paq** Kellie noted that she had submitted the online request for information more than once, with no response. Jason will contact Board Paq to see what he is able to find out.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 9-8-22 Board meeting:** Neal motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 9/8/22 BID Board meeting, as presented. Michelle seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials: Audit:** Jason reported that the Board needed to approve the Audit so it could be submitted to the City. Sherrie motioned to approve the Audit, as presented. Neal seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Monthly Financials: The Board received the August & September financials via e-mail. There being no further discussion on the financials, Sherrie motioned to approve the 8/31/22 & 9/30/22 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- VI. **BID Business:**
Beautification: ArtsFest: The Board received the proposal for ArtsFest MONTANA from Cameron Moberg for 2023 last month; there are three tiers, one at \$40K for 3-4 artists with 1-2 Montana artists, \$45K for 4-5 artists with 1-2 Montana artists, and \$50K for 5-6 artists with 1-2 Montana artists, for 2023. All three tiers include a workshop, but lodging is not included in the proposal so the BID will need to provide that in addition to these costs. Meals also remain the responsibility of the BID, as we've done in the past. Joan noted that the sealant may cost property owners more in 2023, as Cameron would like to set that up on a per square foot rate. Joan added that the DDP was approved for its TIF application that included \$45K for ArtsFest, she has submitted her receipts to the DDP for this reimbursement. She added that the City may not reimburse the full \$45K, but receipts proving those expenses have been submitted to DDP. DDP will now submit to the City and once they receive the reimbursement then the BID will receive what the City deems eligible. Sherrie noted that ArtsFest stepped up to a different level this year; NeighborWorks remains committed to its \$5,000 donation and will provide one or two meals for ArtsFest 2023. She added that there is a new app that she believes can continue to be updated and promoted better. Alison motioned to approve funding ArtsFest MONTANA 2023 at the Tier 3, \$50,000 level. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Joan noted that all of

the auction items have been paid for; there is one additional piece that will be created. The Committee will proceed forward with planning for 2023.

Alley Lighting Project: Joan reported that there are development agreements between the City, BID and each individual property owner involved in the project. Jason needs to sign each document, with the exception of his own property. The TIF Application should be before the City Commission no later than the first meeting in November. Tony Houtz, with Cushing Terrell, has agreed to act as the project manager so he will draft the public bidding documents to solicit for an electrical engineer. Joan noted the key to this project is promoting safety in the areas where murals have been installed as they are more trafficked than before murals were installed. Sherrie motioned to approve Jason Kunz & Neal DuBois to sign the Development Agreements on behalf of the BID for the Alley Lighting Project. Alison seconded.

Motion passed unanimously.

Sound System: Kellie reported that the new contact for the sound system needs to analyze the system to make a recommendation for where the mobile transmitter could go; he has presented both a wireless and a wired microphone option; Kellie added her preference is for a wireless. The wired option is \$400-\$600; the mixer is \$100-\$200. Sherrie noted that the Board may wish to consider doing both.

Trash Removal: Kellie reported that she solicited for a bid from Geranios for trash service; the bid came in at three pick-ups per week, for a total of \$2,874 per week. ServiceMaster notified the BID that they will cancel their service as of 10/31/22; the Board instructed Kellie to ask if ServiceMaster can continue until a solution is found. The Board recommended that Kellie contact Republic Services and local landscaping companies; Sherrie suggested Rainbow International.

City of Great Falls – ARPA Funds: Joe reported that the City Commission has been asked to meet on November 16th or 17th for a special Work Session to decide on the applications that were submitted.

Jason Kunz left the Board meeting at 9:32am, Neal DuBois assumed the role of Chair of the meeting.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Kellie reported that they are planning the Christmas Stroll. Ghost Tours are October 27, 28, & 29; all six tours sold out. Ladies Night is Thursday November 17th; there are 25 participants. Parade of Lights is 11/26 and that is also Small Business Saturday. Christmas Stroll is 12/2. Celeste had her 90-day review and is doing great.

Downtown Partnership: Kellie reported that the DDP approved the Transformation Strategy to review possible conversion of the one-ways. She noted that Billings is our model to follow; they also implemented back-in parking and that was more controversial than removal of the one-ways.

Downtown TIF District: Kellie reported that the balance of the Downtown TIF is \$3.9M; she added that O’Haire and City Bar have applied for the new TIF programs.

Alison inquired about streetscape for the new expansion area; Joan will add Streetscape to the agenda for next month and a committee will be formed to work on advocating for this. Joan noted that previous streetscape was done using CTEP funds, this federal transportation program no longer exists. The BID did provide the match required for the previous 2009 CTEP grant for \$31,937. Joan added that the City has suggested that streetscape improvements could be done on 7th Street, but the O’Haire Motor Inn would need to be prepared to lose one row of parking spaces to get the sidewalk width necessary. Streetscape could, potentially, be funded by TIF dollars. Joan will look through her emails and share the history on this possible project.

C-PACE Program: Christian reported that he has five properties interested in pursuing energy audits: Scott Blumfield with the Wells Fargo building; Brandon Whitcomb with the Oxford building; Veronica Ronnau with Pizazz; Tim Peterson with the Newberry and the Kathryn building. Alison suggested a conversation be held with City staff about adding this program to the new TIF programs. Christian will inquire about the costs to conduct the audits and meet with City staff to figure out a way to fund the audits. Discussion was held on what property owners may actually do once an energy audit is completed.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Kellie reported that the DSA met in October. She noted they are restructuring; they are working on getting the DSA to focus on educational offerings for the community. The Library is doing a bi-monthly educational session. The DSA will continue to support the Library's efforts while also working to implement the Safety Plan that was adopted in 2021. They will be asking GFPD to join the meeting on a quarterly basis to be kept up to date on what they need from the DSA.

Expansion: Christian reported that he has reached out to Jeremy Day, the owner of the Subaru dealer; he has not been in Great Falls recently. Joan noted the deadline to choose whether or not to pursue expansion would be the November Board meeting. Without the Subaru dealership in favor of being in the BID, expansion would not be able to happen in that block, as their square footage is such a large percentage of the proposed expansion area.

Grant Programs: Grant Applications: Kellie reported that Chrysalis has submitted a Business Incentive Grant application for 112 1st Ave S. Their lease goes into effect 11/1/22 and their monthly rent is \$4,500. The rent would be made payable to Gaelic Properties, Dan Rearden is the property owner. Alison motioned to approve the Business Incentive Grant for Chrysalis for the maximum allowable of \$2,500. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** The Grant Schedule was provided to the Board.

Great Falls Development Authority: Christian's report was provided to the Board via email. He pointed out they have 50+ projects in the pipeline; this number included leads and projects. He noted that there have been no projects lost. Some new buildings have changed ownership downtown, there are people with a lot of initiative and interest in making projects happen. He added there remain opportunities as well with some properties for sale. He reported that his BRE visits have been zero as he his efforts have been focused on an online presentation he did with Grand Junction CO and Corpus Christi TX; attending the IEDC Conference; and focusing on Invest Downtown. He noted that Corpus Christi does a window light competition amongst their downtown business owners during the holiday season. He added that some targets have been added for lead generation; he has a trip to Bozeman next week. With tools to drive investment Christian reported that he has ten speakers lined up for Invest Downtown; it will be held next week. He noted that some of last year's presenters will be providing an update; Scott Blumfield will be presenting, last year when he presented on the Wells Fargo building, he had a 20% vacancy rate and now has only two spaces remaining vacant; the Wild Hare has reported they've had over 30,000 people through their doors in their first year of business. Christian shared that a new video will be presented on Downtown during Invest Downtown; it will be available on YouTube and the GFDA website following the event. Christian added there are still Brownfields funds available.

MEDA Sponsorship: Christian shared that the MEDA Conference is November 14-16 and is being held downtown. These are economic developers from around Montana. Kellie shared the sponsorship levels that are available; they anticipate about 200 people to attend. There is a \$500 level for a breakout lunch. Sherrie motioned to approve the BID sponsoring the MEDA Conference at the \$500 level. Karen seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Joan inquired about where to code this, Sherrie noted it will be Special Projects.

One-Way Conversions: Kellie reported that the DDP has approved the Transformation Strategy, and this will begin the conversations with the City. One-way conversion has been a topic of discussion for a very long time; DDP has proposed that this be led by the BID as we are the Design arm of the Main Street program. Neal inquired about what the BID needs to do; Kellie noted that conversations will begin with the City and community members. Alison added that Billings has recently done one-way conversions. Kellie reported that it took about six months for Billings to communicate with the business and property owners; she added that Billings downtown office has sent her a great deal of information on how they went about the conversion process. She noted that Billings also converted to back-in parking at the same time, the community seemed to be more vocal about the back-in parking than the one-way conversions. Alison inquired about the strategy for implementing and suggested a committee be formed. Kellie noted that she and Joan will come up with a road map for how to proceed. Christian shared that he is going to be heading to Billings in November to meet with their economic developers.

Parking Commission: Kellie reported that the PAC approached DDP about the DDP becoming the recommending body to the City. Craig, with the City, has noted that the City is not totally on board with DDP becoming the advisory board. The City would prefer that new members be recruited for the PAC before formally making the DDP the advisory entity to the City. She added that the PAC meets next week, and they will be discussing this. It was noted that there are two vacancies on the PAC plus the ex-officio position the BID holds; the ex-officio is a voting member and does count toward the quorum. Sherrie noted that one option for the BID's ex-officio position would be to nominate Kellie for that role, thereby causing her to have to resign from the Commission. The Board tabled the discussion until November.

Personnel: Joan noted that this was in regard to the Board creating a formal policy for staff in regard to who receives benefits, she added that Jason has noted he is working on this so there is nothing to present to the Board at this time. Kellie reported that she will not be in the office on Tuesday 10/25.

Work Plan FY2023: Kellie reported that she is working the Work Plan for FY 2023.

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

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

IX. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:31 am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Neal DuBois, Vice-Chair

Kellie Pierce, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____

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