

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid - In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
December 14, 2023

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Sherrie Arey, Alison Fried, Max Grebe
Board Absent: Neal DuBois, Keith Cron, Michelle Houghton
Staff Present: Kellie Pierce
Guests Present: Joe McKenney, Jolene Schalper

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:14am; 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:** There were no Board members with a conflict of interest with any items on the agenda at this time.
- IV. **Financials:** Kellie reported that we are waiting on two reimbursements; one from the City from the TIF for the tree work and the other from the state of the Main Street Grant for the wayfinding kiosks.
Budget Amendments: Kellie reported that the holiday décor is approximately \$500 per item; she is going to look into this after the holidays. She noted that the lights need to be removed from the trees; there is no written contract with Jonas. Until the lighting study the DDP is working on, and funding sources can be identified the trees will remain unlit. She added that another piece was creating a Clean Street Team or a part-time employee. These were the main items that the Board had discussed allocating that extra funding toward.

Max Grebe arrived at 9:18am.

V. **BID Business:**

Beautification: 1st Ave N Underpass: Kellie reported that the underpass had some graffiti.

ArtsFest: Kellie reported that Cameron has sent a new contract for 2024; the contract is the same, but the workshop was not included. She will be sure we are still on track for that. This contract will be sent to the Board for approval next month. In 2023 we did Tier level III, \$50K with 5-6 artists, yielding 5-6 murals. We actually received 12 murals. She is working on getting a committee meeting soon.

Alley Lighting Project: Jolene reported that Christian has turned this project over to her, she will be working with Dan Reardan on the lighting study. Kellie has not heard back from Tony; she noted there is no deadline on the use of the TIF funds.

Banners: Kellie reported that we will need to order more holiday banners for 2024 with the expansion into the 800 block. The Voyagers have asked if they can put up Voyagers banners in May & June. Kellie noted that the banner policy was established by the Board and does not have a fee charged by the BID; the entities involved pay the fees to install and take down.

Holiday Décor: Kellie reported that she has been exploring options for holiday décor.

Sherrie Arey arrived at 9:30am.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Celeste reported that DGFA is reviewing the website; setting up meetings with new business owners; shop local campaigns are running as well as a gift certificate ad. Free parking runs from today until 12/25. In the past month, they've had Military Appreciation Days, Ladies Night with 29 businesses participating and several pop-up's, Small Business Saturday, Parade of Lights with 41 floats, and the Christmas Stroll. Kellie reported that Celeste will be leaving in March 2024; the DGFA Board will be posting an opening to hire a full-time person with the same job description. She plans to post that position next week with the goal of having someone in place by February to work with Celeste.

Downtown Partnership: Downtown Lighting: Kellie noted this will be an ongoing discussion.

Downtown TIF District: Kellie reported that the TIF district is about \$4M with no active projects she's aware of from the TIF programs.

Wayfinding - Kiosks: Kellie reported that they need a location to store extra motorist wayfinding signs.

Parking Commission: Kellie reported that she met with City staff to discuss holding a downtown roundtable with the new Mayor and Commissioners. There will be a PowerPoint that educates on the DDP and all of the partners and how it works. They will share the Safety Alliance, the TIF district and Parking. Invitations will be sent out to attend, they'd like business owners to attend to speak about all of the good things happening downtown. They are holding this on January 10, 2024, at 10am at NWGF. All DDP members, DGFA and BID Board members, all Commissioners and several business owners will be invited. Jolene recommended that a County Commissioner be invited, as well.

Discussion followed on parking, meters/kiosks, and the status of the parking commission.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Kellie reported that the DSA meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 10am at NWGF. A presentation was provided last month on the safety matrix that the DSA built around the Safety Plan that was adopted; the items were graded and items that need to be worked on were noted.

Grant Programs: Kellie reported that there are no grants at this time. She has created a brochure and provided it to the City to share with community members. Jolene requested a digital copy.

Great Falls Development Alliance: Jolene reported that the Leiland Group was chosen for the Downtown Market Assessment Transformation Strategy. They are negotiating the contract now and work should start in January. GFDA sent Christian to Bozeman for the Emerging Trends in Real Estate to meet with developers. There are new businesses downtown: Spin Studio, Bison & Beargrass, Tres 65 changed ownership, two Mexican restaurants with Fiesta en Jalisco in Times Square and another in Travel Lodge, and Kellergeist has two locations now. She thanked the Board for the renewal of the Downtown Business Development Officer. Jolene added they are prepping for Ignite, at 8am on 1/12.

Hello Lamp Post: Kellie reported that she is meeting with them tomorrow; they want to present a contract renewal. She noted that they are very easy to work with but the time frame to work with is challenging; they've lost three staff members who were working on our content.

Personnel: Kellie reported that she is going to take some time off in February.

Streetscape: Kellie reported that the City has said this will be scheduled for Fall 2024. This will be removed from the agenda until next fall.

Work Plan FY2023: Kellie reported that she continues to work on the Work Plan for FY 2024.

- VI. **Approval of minutes from 11/9/23 Board meeting & Special Board meeting:** Alison motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 11/9/23 Board meeting, as presented. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Alison motioned to approve the Special Board meeting minutes from the 11/9/23 Special Board meeting, as presented. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- VII. **Monthly Financials:** The Board received the November financials via email. There being no further discussion on the November financials, Max motioned to approve the 11/30/23 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Sherrie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- VIII. **New Business:** There was no new business at this time.
- IX. **Public Comment:** Discussion held on 514 Central Ave. Max shared that LPW's Holiday Open House is today, and everyone is invited.
- X. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:05am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Date: 1-11-24

Kellie Pierce, Staff

Date: 1/11/24