

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Hybrid - In-Person and via ZOOM
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
January 11, 2024

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

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:07am; 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. **Approval of minutes from 12/14/23 Board meeting:** Neal motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 12/14/23 Board meeting, as presented. Keith seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials: Budget Amendments:** Kellie reminded the Board that there were three items the Board had discussed utilizing this extra funding for. 1. Holiday décor - Décor pieces are averaging about \$300 per piece. She reminded the Board that they have about \$40K. She added that the board discussed Holiday Décor. She noted that the lights need to be removed from the trees; there are 24 trees and the bid to remove them is \$6,500 from Jonas. The Board requested that a new bid be received to both remove the current lights and install new lighting. They added that an official contract should be written up with a provision for the contractor to loosen up the lights over time, so the trees are not strangled. Discussion followed on getting lights that change colors. Kellie will inquire with the City to see if TIF funds could be utilized for lighting. 2. Part-time staff member - A part-time staff member to be out cleaning the streets; she noted that her estimate is about \$12K annually. 3. Training - The Board had discussed professional training through the National Main Street program, but those programs are not available this year. Kellie was looking at the Leadership Montana program, with a tuition rate of \$5K. The Board recommended that Kellie register for the Leadership Montana program, noting that the budget would be higher than \$5K due to overnight stays in other communities. Keith motioned to approve Kellie spending up to \$10K to attend Leadership Montana; Max seconded. Neal amended the motion to include Kellie using the credit card for this purpose. **Motion passed unanimously.** Kellie would like to have all of the budget amendment completed by May to present to the City Commission for their approval. **Monthly Financials:** There were no financials at this time. Kellie reported that we are transitioning from QuickBooks Desktop to QuickBooks Online, once that transition is complete the bank rec's will be brought up to date and financials will be provided.
- VI. **BID Business:**
Beautification: 1st Ave N Underpass: Kellie noted there was nothing to report on this item at this time.
ArtsFest: Kellie reported that Cameron has provided an estimate of \$50K for up to six artists for ArtsFest MONTANA 2024, this year's bid includes a workshop to educate artists. Neal motioned to accept Cameron Moberg's proposal for ArtsFest MONTANA 2024 for \$50K. Keith seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Discussion followed on possible building locations for murals.
Alley Lighting Project: Jason will inquire with the project manager to see what the status is.
Banners: Kellie reported that she emailed the proposed updates to the BID Banner Policy for their review. She shared that the Voyagers have inquired if they can hang banners during their season. She noted that there had been discussion held on utilizing the banners as a marketing effort; an entity would

need to pay the BID a rental fee to hang their banners. Kellie shared that the current banner policy in effect allows for various non-profit entities to hang their banners at varying times of the year; United Way (October/November), the CM Russell Museum (March), Paris Gibson Month (July), the holiday banners are in place November to January and the Downtown Welcome banners are in place the other months of the year. The Board recommended that hanging banners remain free for non-profits but a for profit organization would be required to pay the rental fee, in addition to covering all of their costs to acquire the banners and install/take down the banners. It was noted that the banner policy states that the BID will not allow multiple entities to have banners in place at the same time. Kellie added that the banner policy states that all content on banners must be approved by the BID. The Board recommended \$50 per banner, for a total of \$2,150 to hang banners on the poles for one month. The Board will continue to review the policy, but Kellie was instructed to let the Voyagers know the Board will make a final determination on the proposed new policy in February.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Celeste provided copies of the 2024 marketing plan. She noted that DGFA had 120 members in 2023; they are working on increasing membership. They continue their active social media Shop Local campaign. She added that people don't understand the structure and what it is that the Downtown office does so she is increasing that awareness. She explained the marketing plan in more detail; DGFA has signed the contract to continue working with Townsquare Media. There are two tier options and two payment options, as well. She added that membership invoices have been sent out and the marketing information was included in that mailing; they had ten businesses participate last year and they are working to increase that number. Kellie noted that the Downtown website is being re-vamped. Celeste shared that she is working on the 2024 calendar of events. Kellie reported that the Marketing and Events position was posted; she has three candidates she will call back for a second round after eight initial interviews. Celeste added that Mimosa Showdown and Craft Beer Week planning will begin next week.

Downtown Partnership: Kellie reported that they hosted the roundtable yesterday with City staff and Commission members; they plan to do it again in the future.

Downtown Lighting: Kellie reported that Christian connected with Dan Rearden who has agreed to do the study pro bono, Dan has confirmed that he still plans to work on this project.

Downtown TIF District: Kellie reported that the TIF district is at about \$4.8M, with \$4M committed to projects and about \$600K comes in twice a year.

Wayfinding - Kiosks: Kellie reported that she is waiting on the proofs of the vinyl.

Parking Commission: Kellie noted that there has been no change on the Parking Commission; they need three positions and one ex-officio from the BID so Kellie would need to resign and serve in that capacity. There are only two members at this time, Kellie, and Katie Hanning.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Kellie reported that the DSA still meets monthly. One of the committee members went through the Safety Plan and reviewed what has been completed.

Grant Programs: Kellie reported that there are no grant applications at this time. There has been no feedback on the brochure that Kellie created.

Great Falls Development Alliance: Kellie reported that Ignite is this Friday and there will be downtown projects announced.

Hello Lamp Post: Kellie reported that they have sent over the proofs on the event-oriented posts.

Personnel: Kellie reported that she will be on vacation February 21-28.

Work Plan FY2023: Kellie reported that once the budget amendment is finalized, she will update the Work Plan for FY 2024 to reflect the changes.

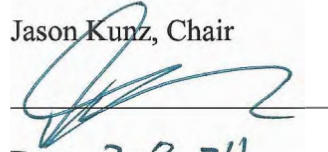
- VII. **New Business:** Kellie reported on a couple of events that are upcoming: Tuesday January 16th starting at 5:30pm entitled *Hate And Extremism In Montana: What We As A Community Need To Know To Stand Against Hate*. The GF Area Community Foundation is hosting a non-profit Board training on February 26th. Lastly, Kellie reported that the National Main Street Conference is being held May 6-9 in

Birmingham Alabama. She shared that the DDP will be deciding who they are funding to send, based upon that the DDP's decision the BID can make a determination.

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

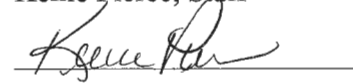
IX. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:05am.

Jason Kunz, Chair



Date: 2-8-24

Kellie Pierce, Staff



Date: 2/8/24