

**Business Improvement District**  
**318 Central Avenue**  
**Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request**  
**August 8, 2024**

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Neal DuBois, Sherrie Arey, Erica Ferrin, Caralina Carlson  
Board Absent: Alison Fried, Keith Cron  
Staff Present: Kellie Pierce  
Guests Present: Susan Wolff, Joe McKenney, Jolene Schalper, Nicki Dallison

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:00am; roll call of all present, a quorum was established.
- II. **Guests/Public Comment:** There was no public comment at this time.
- III. **BID Board:** Introductions were made for Caralina Carlson, appointed to the BID Board by the City Commission on 8/6/24.  
Conflict of Interest: There were no Board members with a conflict of interest with any items on the agenda at this time.  
Board Election of Officers: Kellie reported that the officers of the Board currently are Jason Kunz, Chair; Neal DuBois, Vice-Chair; and Sherrie Arey, Treasurer. Sherrie motioned to approve the slate of officers for the next term, as presented. Erica seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**  
Board Openings: Kellie reported that the City Commission approved the BID Board's recommendation to extend Sherrie's and Erica's terms on the Board and appointed Caralina (Cara) to serve for four years.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 7/11/2024 Board meeting:** Sherrie motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 7/11/2024 Board meeting, as presented. Erica seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials: Budget FY 2025:** Kellie reported that the budget was approved by the City Commission on July 16.  
Monthly Financials: Kellie reported that DGFA reimbursed the BID for salaries for FY2024, the deposit fell into FY2025.

Neal DuBois arrived for the meeting at 9:04am.

The Board received the July 2024 financials via email. There being no further discussion on the financials, Sherrie motioned to approve the 7/31/24 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss. Erica seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- VI. **BID Business:**  
**Beautification:**  
1<sup>st</sup> Ave N Underpass: Kellie reported that she has not received an update from Spark Architecture. Nicki reported that she did a walk-thru with MDT and provided a list of work needed to be done and they are looking for ways to fund the needed repairs. Discussion continued about who is responsible for snow removal and they are working to get trash removal done in the summer months.  
ArtsFest: Jason reported that ArtsFest is coming up. They have 10 artists, and all buildings confirmed. Priming and pressure washing will start this weekend. Kellie reported on meal status and is working to fill some gaps. Susan inquired if the Artist Reception will be occurring again; Kellie did confirm that it will occur on Thursday 8/22, but they have not confirmed a location yet. Sherrie shared that a building

owner has painted over a mural that was installed last year; she asked that something more be added in the contract for building owners. It was noted that the contract states building owners agree to keep murals up for a minimum of three (3) years. Jason shared that they are changing the name to Great Walls.

Alley Lighting Project: Kellie reported that they are under contract with Liberty Electric, within budget. She added that the six that were prioritized are to be done; two are the O'Haire; the back of Roe Realty; the Pennington building; and the alley between Dragonfly and the Kathryn building.

Banners: Kellie reported that the free banner program that was identified for 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N, the City is reviewing sign code ordinance to confirm that this can be done on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North. In addition. This route is an MDT route.

Holiday Décor: Kellie reported that the new décor has arrived, brackets will need to be installed. This item can be removed from the agenda. Jason inquired if this was a phased in project and was there additional décor to be ordered. Kellie noted that after the holiday they can review and decide.

**Downtown Great Falls Association:** Kellie reported Harley has not been well. Kellie will be running the Night Market tomorrow evening. She noted that Harley continues to do an amazing job on social media and with the marketing campaign. Kellie added that the Call to Artists was sent out for the Christmas Stroll Button, with the theme of Luau Holiday.

**Downtown Partnership:** Downtown Lighting Study: Nicki reported that they are in the phase of putting out information on The Point, a Main Street blog resource, and has received a lot of great information in response. She has appointments scheduled next week to meet some contractors who could conduct the Study.

Downtown TIF District: Kellie reported that the new fiscal year has started so an additional disbursement to the TIF district occurred. The DDP approved an application for the Mansfield Theater.

Parking Commission: Kellie reported that the Parking Commission has been going back to the basics to educate new board members so that it is understood why things have been done the way they have been done. Parking is still free in the North parking garage. She noted that there has been more traffic in the garage. They continue to meet consistently every month.

Traffic Signal Box Art: Kellie reported that both traffic signal boxes have had their artwork installed, near Paris Gibson Square.

Wayfinding - Kiosks: Kellie reported that there will be an on-site meeting next week for all kiosk locations. The City is fine with the MOU; the hold up has been new staff members at the City. The contractor is ready to install.

**Downtown Safety Alliance:** Kellie reported that they had a conversation about public restrooms. Nicki shared a link from The Point for alternative options to the Portland Loo. Kellie shared a Container Potty. She noted that these don't require electricity or water, she is researching how the system works. She added that they have a lease option. She noted that this project may not be eligible for TIF funding if it is not a permanent option. Location and maintenance details were discussed. Joe shared that he is not certain that the root problem is being addressed, he recommended this be thought through more thoroughly. Discussion followed.

**Expansion:** Kellie reported that this has not moved forward and should be picked up again after ArtsFest MONTANA.

**Grant Programs:** There were no grant applications to review at this time.

**Great Falls Development Alliance:** Jolene reported that Invest Downtown has had specific objectives: 1. Generate high priority leads, leads that are looking at investing downtown; 2. Increase stakeholder engagement in downtown economic development. They don't think that Invest Downtown is achieving those objectives. They are looking to invite priority targets to Downtown, individually, rather than hosting an event. They've found greater success with individual visits. She added that they will be starting to host regular downtown walking tours that include local stakeholders; they will take a look at Downtown and find areas that are ripe for investment, areas that need improvement, take a walk and see what we have and what we are proud of. She noted that they will continue to celebrate successes, but

they think they can get better results by flipping their strategy. Jolene shared about the Downtown Market Assessment that has been being done. The first step was the data, and the next step was to develop an economic strategy. The consultant was not hired to provide an action plan. Nicki reported that she will send the draft Market Assessment report to the BID Board, once it is ready. There is an event being held on 9/26 to share the draft, a location and time will be confirmed. The BID, NWGF, DDP, and City staff will all be invited, and it will be open to the public. She added that she has 8 downtown projects in the pipeline now.

**Hello Lamp Post:** Kellie shared Doug the Downtown Dog, he's the guide dog for downtown. There will be images of Doug around Downtown. They won't be installing new sidewalk stickers this year as it was not cost effective; there will be a permanent sticker attached to each mural.

**Personnel:** There was nothing to report at this time.


**Work Plan FY2025:** Kellie reported that the Work Plan was approved by the City Commission on July 16.

- VII. **New Business:** Kellie reported that the audit will be held during the last week of August.
- VIII. **Public Comment:** Sherrie reported that the legislature passed HB 819 two years ago; counties can opt into a Community Reinvestment Organization (CRO) to provide downtown assistance. Cascade County has about \$3.5M if the County Commissioners have a CRO. NWGF is applying to the County to be considered to serve as the CRO for Cascade County. This will be on the County Commissioners agenda next week for consideration.
- IX. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 9:54am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

  
Date: 9-12-24

Kellie Pierce, Staff

  
Date: 9/12/24