

Business Improvement District
318 Central Avenue
Recording available via the City of Great Falls records request
May 16, 2024

Board Present: Jason Kunz, Alison Fried, Neal DuBois, Keith Cron, Max Grebe
Board Absent: Sherrie Arey, Erica Ferrin
Staff Present: Kellie Pierce
Guests Present: Ron Pollack, Joe McKenney, Nicki Dallison, Christian Leinhauser

- I. **Call to order & Roll Call:** Jason called the meeting to order at 9:05am; 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. Board Openings: Kellie reported that there are two positions that will be open on the Board on July 1; Max Grebe will no longer be serving, and Erica Ferrin's position was a term she'd filled so that is open. Discussion followed on if Erica wished to renew.
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 4/11/2024 Board meeting:** Keith motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 4/11/2024 Board meeting, as presented. Alison seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:** Budget FY 2025: Kellie shared the new draft version of the Budget for FY 2025 noting two minor adjustments after last month's discussion. She added that she was accepted into the Leadership Montana program so Travel & Education line item was increased to accommodate.

Max Grebe arrived at 9:15am.

Neil moved to approve the budget for FY 2025, as presented. Alison seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Monthly Financials: The Board received the April 2024 financials via email. There being no further discussion on the financials, Keith motioned to approve the 4/30/24 financial statements which include the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss. Alison seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Kellie requested approval to get a petty cash card for the employee to be able to get gas for the truck and supplies as he needs. The Board noted that this is within Kellie's discretion to take care of.

VI. **BID Business:**
Beautification:

1st Ave N Underpass: Kellie reported that she had a conversation with Spark Architecture, they are hoping to get renderings of lighting.

ArtsFest: Kellie reported that Alison is working to figure out locations for murals this summer. Alison reported that they have four buildings identified and confirmed for this year. Kellie noted that grant funds were approved again from Sisters United for two Indigenous artists. Keith shared information on a new local artist who might be interested in participating.

Alley Lighting Project: Kellie reported that she discussed the estimate with Cushing Terrell and is waiting to hear additional information.

Banners: Kellie reported that the new Voyagers banners are in place. She shared that she talked with CGI at the National Main Street conference who does a free banner program; they guarantee up to 25 banners free with business sponsorships. The BID would be responsible for sending out letters on BID

letterhead explaining the program; allowing them the right to use the poles; access to 25 poles. The contract would be a three-year contract. Kellie shared that she was thinking 1st Ave South would be a suitable location to start this program on. The Board requested that the information be forwarded for their review.

Holiday Décor: Kellie reported that the new décor should be shipped this week.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Harley reported that the Mimosa Showdown is Saturday; Military Appreciation days are happening now until Saturday; Night Market is June 20th with BACI activating Davidson Plaza; and Craft Beer Week is June 17-22, tickets are on sale now. The Downtown website is being updated as members join and renew. The marketing campaign is doing very well; they can track when consumers go into various stores and restaurants. She shared that the Main Street conference gave her great ideas. Alison suggested visiting the Farmer's Market to recruit vendors for the Night Markets. It was noted that the Farmer's Market starts June 1st.

Downtown Partnership: Downtown Lighting Study: Christian reported Nikki is going to head this up; the priority will be the underpass. He noted that he has a contact at MDT, and they are working to see if they have any funding to upgrade their lighting. The goal remains to have a full lighting study done; GFDA is exploring creating an RFP for the study.

Downtown TIF District: Kellie reported that a TIF request from the Elmore Roberts building was reviewed and recommended for approval by the City Commission; she shared information on their planned project. Big Dipper received a façade grant. She added that there is concern that with larger projects coming in there will be limited TIF funds available. Christian shared that the DDP's TIF request for FY 2024 and FY 2025 was approved by the City Commission; this approval includes ArtsFest funding.

Parking Commission: Kellie reported that the Parking Commission meets today. The City Commission approved free parking in the North Parking Garage, starting on June 1 through August 31st as a trial period to see how well it works. Signage designs are being presented to the City Commission for approval. The City is working on marketing and tracking to see how effective it is.

Traffic Signal Box Art: Kellie shared that two TSBs were submitted; the large one will be installed at 14th and Central, the other one will be installed in FY 2025.

Wayfinding - Kiosks: Kellie reported that she has given the contractor a deadline of June 1 to have everything installed.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Kellie reported that there was no meeting this month. A member created a flyer with resources on how to deal with and report harassment/hate crimes, these were included in the Military Appreciation handouts. The DSA meets the first Tuesday of the month at NWGF. Jason asked Kellie to have Wes come to Speaking Socially to pick up the Coins for a Cause boxes. They are ready to be installed.

BID Expansion: Kellie reported that she is doing a presentation to the City Commission during their Work Session at 5:30pm on May 21st on what the BID does she plans to include the topic of expansion. She asked that the Board join her that evening. Jason noted that the property owner of Subaru is still interested in having their property included in the BID boundaries; he suggested we pursue that individual property owner to join and then work on other areas. Discussion followed on additional areas to review.

Grant Programs: Kellie reported that there are no grants open or applications at this time.

Great Falls Development Alliance: Nikki reported that they held a talent attraction; the Livability Magazine just came out; the Housing Market Demand Assessment was released this week; an Angel Investor networking event is May 29th; GFDA Annual Meeting is June 18th from 8am to 10am. They are looking for goodie bag items for the new students arriving at Touro. She shared upcoming topics for small business training. She noted that she and Christian are in the transition phase of her taking on the Downtown Business Development Officer position. She noted that she learned a lot at the Main Street Conference. Christian did share that he will be staying on the Housing Market Demand Assessment through to completion. Kellie reported that the BID will need to approve the agreement between BID

and GFDA; there is a slight increase to \$19K per year. The Board requested a meeting with Brett and Jolene to discuss the agreement before the BID Board agrees to approve the agreement. The agreement will be provided to the Board for their final review and approval during the June board meeting.

Hello Lamp Post: Kellie reported that they are working on the mural side of information. They are creating a different sticker/poster to catch attention. They are creating Doug the Dog for the DGFA marketing side, eye-catching and gives personality to engage the public. Courteney Ferrin is working on the Dog feature. The goal is to have the mural information out by July 1st.

National Main Street Conference: Kellie reported that the attendance from Great Falls was great; she shared information about the National Main Street awards, and she believes that Great Falls is ready. She noted that she has added the process into the BID Work Plan as it is usually a two-year process. She added that the application process consists of sharing your story, so they are preparing to do that. She is going to create a committee of about five members to work on the application process. The attendees from Great Falls also discussed the BID acquiring property again to be a developer within the BID boundaries, once again. Jason noted that he also thinks that the BID owning, and re-developing property shows the other BID members that the BID is in this with them; that the BID Board knows what it takes to re-hab properties. Alison shared that they saw storage container spaces and learned how communities are using those. She recommended bringing a gentleman from Georgia to present to Great Falls what they've done. Jason shared that there will be a wrap up meeting this afternoon with those that attended the conference. They plan to keep the item on the agenda so that topics can continue to be discussed. Discussion followed on the Rocky Mountain building; Kellie shared that the City Manager has requested a meeting to discuss it. Joe recommended a discussion with the City-County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission, as they want to see the building done.

Personnel: Nothing to report at this time.

Work Plan FY2025: Kellie shared a draft of the FY 2025 Work Plan with updates including the Great American Main Street award process and working toward a goal to acquire property for re-investment opportunities. Neil motioned to accept the Work Plan for FY 2025, as presented. Max seconded. Ron Pollack commented that he is impressed with what he has heard today. He noted that it is important to express thanks to the City Commissioners for the work that they do and the support they offer to the projects presented to them. **Motion passed unanimously.**

VII. **New Business:** Neil inquired if anyone has heard anything about the Pedlet program; Kellie said she'd inquire with City staff. Neil said they made no changes from past years but getting approval took a little more time than usual. Kellie shared that Mighty Mo will be installing theirs today, but she was unaware of anyone else's plans for their Pedlets this summer.

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

IX. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:18am.

Jason Kunz, Chair

Date: 6-13-24

Kellie Pierce, Staff

Date: 6/13/24