

Minutes
Business Improvement District
July 14, 2011

Board Present: Julie Duffy, Steve Alley, Stacey Schaefer, Doug Lorello, Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett
Board Absent: Hayley Leray
Staff Present: Joan Redeen, Justin Redeen

- I. **Call to order:** Joan called the meeting to order at 9:04am.
- II. **Guests:** No guests were present at the meeting.
- III. **BID Board:** Joan introduced the new board members; Garry Hackett and Andrew Ferrin. Joan informed the Board that the BID Work Plan and Budget will be presented to the City Commission on July 19th and the public hearing will be set for August 2nd. Doug moved that the BID Board consist of the following: Stacey Schaefer as Chair, Steve Alley as Vice-Chair and Julie Duffy as Treasurer. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- IV. **Approval of minutes from 6-9-11 meeting:** Steve motioned to approve the minutes from the 6/9/11 meeting. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- V. **Financials:** The Board received the May & June financials via e-mail last week. There being no discussion on the financials Garry motioned to approve the 5/31/11 & 6/30/11 financial statements which include the Balance Sheets, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Stacey seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Steve motioned to remove Alison & Tony from the signature cards at First Interstate and Stockman Bank and add Garry Hackett and Andrew Ferrin. Julie seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Joan informed the Board that the audit will take place during the week of August 29th. Mike Diekhans from Douglas Wilson will be conducting the audit for us again. Discussion followed on current CD's at Stockman. We have two CD's, \$75K that renews 7/6 and \$25K that renews 7/10. Julie motioned that we keep \$20K in checking; move the balance of approximately \$33K to the money market account; renew the \$75K and the \$25K CDs at Stockman for six (6) months at .45% and .40% respectively, as Stockman continues to have the best rates. Steve seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Joan informed the Board that the City will be billed for the portion of the lighting premium, this year it was \$791 down from \$818 last year. Joan reported to the Board the recent issues with insurance; agent now located in Missoula, agent non-responsive, and the difficulty in getting coverage for the Arctic Cat. Steve motioned that Joan get three (3) quotes for our insurance coverage from local agents within the BID boundaries. Garry seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.** Joan noted that Travelers has notified us that we might have double coverage now, with the Cat covered elsewhere. They'd like to remove the coverage they have. Joan would like to have Conn Forder with Stockman (who got the policy on the Cat for us) to review our current Travelers policy to see if we do have double coverage before we delete anything from our current policy. The Board instructed Joan to provide Conn with our current policy for review.
- VI. **Grant Programs:** Joan noted that the residential grant on the Dunn Brown building is due to have an update provided on it. Steve commented that he is on hold at least until November. He will provide a written update and Joan will adjust the grant schedule to reflect payout and/or update again in November 2011.
Joan informed the Board that she had inquired with the City regarding any funding of the CTEP program for this year, as the applications have come out on June 1st and have been due on June 30th in the past. Joan read an e-mail received from Andrew Finch with the City in response to her inquiry. His e-mail dated June 23rd noted that MDT should notify them of their allocation in a few weeks. He added that they are contemplating revisions to the program and he will keep me informed.

Steve inquired what the status was on our CTEP project that was approved in 2009. Joan reminded Steve that Andrew had attended our Board meeting in the past and the Board had decided to wait on the Master Plan. The Board instructed Joan to write a letter to the City that we are ready to proceed as there seem to be no conflicting issues with the Master Plan. Stacey motioned that we move forward and begin construction on the 2009 CTEP project on 1st Ave S. Steve seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Technical Assistance Program held its kick-off meeting where parameters for the program were established. The Rocky Mountain Building will be the first feasibility study conducted with the program and one or two additional ones will be conducted with the initial funding of the program, dependent upon the size(s) of the building chosen. The BID funded \$5,000 toward this Preserve America grant.

VII. **Old Business:**

Beautification: Downtown Sound System: Joan reported that Bing sent in an e-mail, in response to our letter, and offered several options. She is still working on getting a couple of bids from other local companies. Steve noted that he'd prefer to pull the plug on the entire system as it has never worked correctly.

Graffiti: Joan noted that we've had several instances of graffiti this summer, more than in the past two years. GF Paper had provided three cans of Carroll Vandalism Mark Remover as samples and those three cans only removed two letters of a one-foot high section of graffiti. Joan added that both Bozeman and Billings use a product called Elephant Snot. Joan has been exploring prices so the Board can decide if this is something they'd like the BID to work on. She added that she believes both Billings and Bozeman bill their property owners for graffiti removal, as it is an additional service their BID provides. Steve noted that we could pay for the materials but we'd also need a pressure washer and a trailer for the Cat to carry the equipment as the water tank would be needed to run the pressure washer. Garry added that the graffiti artists are supposed to take care of the problem but no one complains so they don't do it. He suggested creating a list of where graffiti is located and provide the list to the City so they can issue tickets to the property owners as it is their responsibility and they are supposed to take care of it within 72 hours.

Planters: Joan noted that this item was placed on the agenda as Steve had noticed that some planters are empty and he'd like to see them filled. Joan added that there are several concrete planters downtown similar to the BID's trash enclosures and those were the planters Steve was referring to. Justin did an inventory and there are 16 planters and three of them are empty. Stacey suggested that photos be taken of them. Joan noted that the BID doesn't own a camera; she uses her personal camera when taking pictures. Garry suggested that the BID acquire a camera. The topic of a camera will be addressed at next month's board meeting. The Board instructed Joan to get the planters planted and have Tillerias include these enclosures in their flower bid next spring. The property owners will still have the option to plant their own, if they wish, but we'll include them in the flower bid if they don't want to plant them.

Traffic Signal Box Project: Joan reported that there were 24 submissions and eight finalists have been chosen and will be interviewed tomorrow. Seven TSB's will be done this summer, six on Central and one in front of B&B on 2nd. It was decided to not do the one in front of Public Drug at this time due to the construction. Stacey reported that since the Rocky Mountain Building art project there have been many spectators walking around it checking out the art and the response has been great; Rachel with Rachel's Furniture directly across the street loves the art.

Joan provided the Board with two bids to put the downtown logo on the front of the Cat. Allegra bid \$55 for a 36x18 logo installed. Sign Pro bid \$67 for a 20x11 logo installed. The Board instructed Joan to have Allegra do the logo. Joan noted that we've had issues with storing the Cat, as it is so large and doesn't fit in any of the parking garages current storage areas. It is currently being stored at Dragonfly after having been moved numerous times already. Steve noted that he will talk with Dave in the parking garage to see if we can get permission to build an additional fence enclosure. Joan inquired with the Board on how they'd like waste, human and otherwise, handled when it is on

the sidewalk. She noted that Justin has come across two instances of vomiting and we've had reports of feces on the sidewalk as well. Stacey noted that the sidewalks are the property owner's responsibility. Steve added that we need to get the proper equipment and deal with it as it is our job to clean up downtown.

Joan reported that we've received our annual billing from City Forestry for \$1,192. She had anticipated approximately \$400 for wood chips and a bill for trimming the tree by the Quality Inn. The additional portion of the bill was for work that the City did on the tree grates downtown. Joan reported that there is approximately \$11K left of TIF funds to put toward the trees downtown. Of the 339 trees in the BID we have replaced over 60 in the past two years. She added that Davidson Company has called and noted that they are in need of replacing the six junipers in Davidson Plaza. Davidson reported that the City is responsible for these trees but the City Forester is not certain of that fact so he is researching it. The Board instructed Joan to get clarification on ownership and if the City is responsible the BID will take care of it with the TIF funds, this time around.

Steve inquired about the status on weed abatement as the weeds have been out of control this summer due to the weather. Joan reported that Steve Tillerias was supposed to do weed abatement for us again this year and she will check and see if it's been done. She added that Pre-Release folks have been working on it as well as the Boys & Girls Club kids, but it is too much for just our Community Ambassador. Steve noted that he'd like the BID to consider hiring some folks just to remove weeds.

Joan noted that the 1st Ave N entryway topic had been brought up previously and she is very interested in pursuing the project, if the Board is interested. The Board expressed their interest. Joan added that she'd start to focus on this after the TSB Project is complete and will start with gaining the appropriate approval from the City and MDT. Her current thinking is to put out an open call to artists in the community, asking them to submit their proposals for cost, time frame and rough draft of what they'd propose to do sometime in the early spring. Steve suggested that we look into doing some of the prep work in advance, pressure washing and priming the surface, etc. Joan will get some bids when she starts working on this project.

Downtown Action Alliance: Joan reported the DAA meets again on July 27th at 9am at NeighborWorks. The DAA is still in a holding pattern waiting on the master plan.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Marketing: Joan reported that of the \$20K that the BID approved for marketing for fiscal year 2010-2011 the BID has paid out \$12,770 as of 6/30. Julie inquired how much DGFA actually spent and who else had contributed. Joan noted that the BID contributed \$20k, GFDA contributed \$1K and DGFA budgeted for \$30K but she was not aware of what their actual expenses were. Julie noted that DGFA is tasked with marketing and should be spending more. Steve added that the BID is tasked with making sure downtown is clean and neat looking. The Board requested that Joan get a copy of DGFA's budget.

Joan reported that she sent the letter to DGFA to request that they, once again, assist with funding the holiday lighting. No response has been received yet.

Joan reported that Sue Ferrin has resigned as Marketing Director, effective August 31st. She has submitted a proposal to DGFA to continue to do their bookkeeping for them and she also submitted a proposal to the BID to work as the BID's Community Ambassador. Joan provided the Board with copies of Sue's letter. Julie noted that the Board has not decided yet if we are going to make the Ambassador a permanent position. Steve noted that we'll need to make a decision at the next board meeting. Julie added that if it is a job that we are keeping we'll have to review the job duties and we'll need to advertise, remain fair, and publish the availability. Steve noted that going into the winter months the ideal person will be flexible enough to work when needed and not work when they are not needed.

Joan reported that DGFA's general membership meeting is scheduled for July 20th at 5:30pm at the Tap House.

Downtown Master Plan: Joan reported the City is working on assigning time lines, duties and possible funding sources.

Downtown Safety: Joan informed the Board that the Business Watch meeting was held on Tuesday July 12th at 5:30pm and the topic was Cybercrime. About 25 to 30 people have been in attendance at each Business Watch meeting. The Committee is still meeting and currently working on drafting a Downtown Safety Plan. The next Business Watch meeting is Tuesday, September 13th at 5:30pm and the topic is Disaster Preparedness.

Great Falls Development Authority: Joan reported the Brand Alliance was busy answering questionnaires as the contractor is now in the process of gathering data. The contractor will be in town in September and will be conducting several focus group meetings as well as many one-on-one meetings. Joan also informed the Board that GFDA's ballot for their new board members was sent to us. The Board voted for the slate as presented.

Johnson Hotel: Joan reported that all tenants are current at this time. Joe McDaniel with New York Life had called to let us know that the A/C wasn't working and Joan called AT Klemens to get that taken care of.

Parking Commission: Joan attended the June Parking Commission meeting and will attend the July meeting as well. Joan reported that the City's budget will be on the City Commission meeting agenda Tuesday, July 19th and if it is approved the parking fines will go directly into the parking fund, as City code currently denotes that it should. She added that the parking commission plans to have a comprehensive parking study conducted during this fiscal year. Joan informed the Board that Wendy from the City had responded to the Board's letter regarding the bagged meters around the Rocky Mountain Building. The letter informed the Board that Set Free is paying for those bags but Wendy was going to ask Set Free if they'd be willing to move the bags off of Central and around the corner to 6th Street. She noted that she'd let us know once she met with them. Joan informed the Board that the Parking Commission is conducting a four-question survey online about creating a universal parking pass that would allow for parking at a meter (with the two-hour time limit), in the garages and on the surface lots. The survey is available until July 22nd. Joan noted that the Commission inquired about the BID's opinion on Missoula's 'Oops' ticket. Steve commented that it is a fantastic idea. Doug added that it allows for a little leniency. Stacey commented that we should wait and see what the comprehensive parking study shows. Joan inquired with the Board about acquiring some parking tokens so that Justin could provide some folks with parking tokens downtown, and occasionally feed someone's meter if he notes that it is nearing expiration. The Board noted that they thought that was a good idea.

Work Plan: Joan noted that she continues to follow the work plan.

VIII. **New Business:**

Chamber request: The Chamber of Commerce has sent a letter requesting financial commitments to be put toward their efforts to bring in a new low-cost airline. The Board discussed the letter, requested a copy be e-mailed to them and they would discuss and make a determination at the next board meeting.

Expansion: Joan noted that she's had a few folks suggest the BID look at expanding. This suggestion has been made several times over the years and she just wants to keep the Board informed as to how often the subject comes up.

NeighborWorks Leadership Training: Carol Bronson e-mailed Joan to inquire about the BID sending any representatives to the Community Leadership Institute in October in Kansas City. Last year's CLI had eight folks from Great Falls in attendance and they worked on the Prescription Drug take back program. This year the focus will be on Downtown and NW's is sending eight representatives from Great Falls again. Steve noted that he has submitted his application to attend. Garry expressed interest and noted that he will be submitting to attend. Joan noted that this conference takes place at the same time as the Montana Downtown Forum in Bozeman and she will be in attendance at that event.

Rocky Mountain Building: Joan provided the Board with copies of an e-mail from Ned Brandenburger, a property owner within the BID, which Ned sent to Greg Doyon regarding the Rocky Mountain Building about the reality of attempting to save the building. As a developer he

does not think that it is realistic or financially feasible. The Board discussed the fact that there is going to be a feasibility study conducted on the building and that study will be completed by October, at the latest. Joan noted that Set Free had made the comment at the Technical Assistance Program kick-off that if the study deems the project not feasible Set Free would act on that. Steve added that the TAP is going to charge each property owner 20% of the study and Set Free will also be paying their appropriate portion for their study. The Board noted that the Feasibility Study should be completed no later than October and a decision will be made about what to do after those results are in.

TIF Funds: Joan reported that she sent a letter to the City inquiring about the status of the TIF funds from 2009. No response has been received yet.

IX. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

X. Adjournment: Stacey motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:44am. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Stacey Schaefer, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

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