

Business Improvement District
March 9, 2017

Board Present: Andrew Ferrin, Garry Hackett, Sheila Rice, Max Grebe, Jason Madill, Alison Fried, Travis Neil
(via telephone)
Guests Present: Patrick Sullivan
Staff Present: Joan Redeen

- I. **Call to order:** Andy called the meeting to order at 9:00am.
- II. **Guests:** No guests wished to address the board at this time.
- III. **Downtown Great Falls Association:** Kellie is at Leadership Great Falls. Joan reported that DGFA, in lieu of holding quarterly meetings will be sending out a quarterly newsletter. Everyone who is a member of DGFA should have received a newsletter in February. They will be holding their 2nd Annual Soup cook-off in April, the 6th Annual Cash Mob will take place in April and Cruisin' the Drag will be in May. DGFA held their Team Trolley meeting and most of the investors were present; they reported that the trolley has lost money every year except one year; that loss included the payments on the trolley. They have budgeted to lose money this year with no further payments due as the trolley is paid off. The two issues are maintenance and lack of drivers. They still need to replace the radiator and the transmission. They are looking at holding tours three or four days a week this summer. Discussion followed in regard to the possibility of DGFA selling the trolley; investors inquired about DGFA paying back investors a portion of their investment, based on ownership percent and sale price, if a sale were to occur. Andy reported on the Music on the Mo events, there will be a kick off on 6/29 and four other Music on the Mo events.
- IV. **BID Board:** Joan reported that she attended HPAC yesterday. Sara Sexe and Lisa Kunz, with the City, presented on open meeting law. Joan thought the 30-minute presentation would be beneficial for the BID board to hear as well. Garry inquired about whether or not this is the same board training that the City has provided in the past; Joan noted that Sara mentioned a few things that were new. The Board felt it would be beneficial. Sheila recommended that the presentation be done at a DDP meeting and BID Board members attend that meeting to see the presentation. Joan will inquire if this is possible with both DDP and with City staff.
- V. **Approval of minutes from 2-9-17 meeting:** Sheila motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the 2/9/17 meeting as presented. Max seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- VI. **Financials:**

Monthly Financials: No financials were prepared for the board to review.
New signature cards were signed by all present.
Sheila reported that a draft budget will be prepared for the board to review at the next board meeting. It will need to be approved no later than the June board meeting.
Budget amendments were discussed; if any amendments are needed they will be done in June. There are no amendments needed at this time; the budget vs. actual is accurate and all items are currently in balance.
- VII. **Grant Programs:**

Joan provided the board with copies of the updated grant schedule.
Grant Applications: Joan reported that she currently has two grant applications on her desk; 511 Central Ave for the new Event Center and Mo's Sub Shop in the old Subway. The application for 511 Central is incomplete and will be provided to the board upon completion; Garry is awaiting bids for the work. Mo's Sub Shop is for a business incentive grant and will be sent to the board for their review following this meeting; it was just submitted this morning. Discussion followed on Mo's Sub Shop and the pending business incentive grant application. Joan added that the board can anticipate additional grant applications on the Oxford building. She reported that Mauri had also visited with her about the status of the Rocky Mountain building; Mauri was told that the Board would like someone present to provide an update on the project in May.

VIII. **Old Business:**

Beautification: Banner Policy: Joan reported that by the April board meeting she plans to have estimates for new hardware and new banners and a plan to move things forward; with the goal of having everything in place by May. Joan will send the draft of the proposed banner policy to the Board, for final review.

Placemaking: Joan reported that the BACI group has been holding regular meetings. They are actively working toward creating Food Truck Fridays in Davidson Circle.

Joan reported that she and Carol Bronson submitted a grant application that requires crowd funding up to \$1,500. The project would be clearing up/cleaning up the Urban Art Project. We will know by 3/22 if we have advanced with this grant.

Trees: Joan reported that she and Andy are meeting with the City next week to work on getting a tree plan moving forward.

Sound System: Joan reported that she met with the City about the power boxes in the alleys; the City has noted that the BID owns the boxes and is responsible for them. The locks need to be replaced on the boxes. It was noted that we've had a couple of complaints recently about the fact that the system is on the radio and includes ads and suggestions that the system be shut down. Joan informed the board that in 2011 an informal survey was done via DGFA's weekly eblast about the sound system – we had 32 responses and only 2 were negative, the rest were positive and in favor of having the system. Joan wants to explore the options for Pandora or XM; she added that the first step is to have a working system. She added that there was an article in the recent National Main Street news; she's going to call the company that was the resource for the article and visit about our sound system. Andy noted that the volume control is not functioning properly and the system can't handle anything more being plugged into it – no XM radio capabilities at this time. Garry reported that his new system in the 511 building is called Sonos; he recommends that we look into that system. Jason suggested that we have local downtown businesses advertise using a local radio station dedicated to downtown. Sheila requested that the Main Street article be forwarded to the entire board.

Kaboom Playground – Sheila asked those present to sign a petition to bring a Kaboom playground to Great Falls, it would be located in West Bank Park.

BID Office: Joan reminded the board that a committee has been established to explore a joint office for downtown and economic development; the committee includes the BID and a few board members, DGFA, TBID, the Chamber, and GFDA. She reported that a meeting was held with Charlie Byrne, the owner of the Chamber building, and Garry Hackett and Shane Etwiler. She noted that last month the Board had instructed that we actively pursue the old Montana Power building. Charlie realized the Chamber would vacate if we were to pursue the old Montana Power building and he'd need to fill that vacancy and would need all of the parking so the Montana Power building would come with no parking spaces available to rent from Charlie. She added that next week she and Shane are meeting with Brett Doney to find out where GFDA is at with the proposed idea of joint office. Garry inquired what the board thinks of pursuing the building we are in now; with the possibility that the BID could eventually take over ownership, possibly in partnership with the Chamber. Discussion followed on office possibilities; discussion on the Johnson building and how that project came to be. The Board recommended that the BID continue to explore all possible options; the old Montana Power building is no longer considered an option, the current Chamber building is not their preferred option but can continue to be explored, they'd prefer something on Central Ave.

Downtown Partnership: Joan reported that the DDP meets on Wednesday, 3/22.

Pedlet: Joan reported that she met with Tom Micuda, at the City, regarding the pedlet, to draft an MOU between the City and the BID. Max reported that he has a few changes to make on the project and noted that the project can be ready to move forward very soon. Joan added that the BID will be the owner of the pedlet; but we can't charge downtown businesses rent for it as those funds would need to go to the City since it is placed on public property (placed out on the public street). The BID will fund the entire project with reimbursement sought from the City utilizing the Montana Main Street grant funds; the BID is managing this project on behalf of the City and DDP.

Traffic Signal Boxes: The traffic signal box project is going public; we have approval from MDT to move forward. We are going to complete two boxes on 2nd Ave North, by 3rd Street and by 4th Street. These are the first two boxes of approximately another dozen boxes outside of the BID boundaries, within the Downtown Master Plan boundaries. The BID will fund this project with reimbursement from the DDP upon completion.

Downtown Safety Alliance: Joan reported that the next Business Watch meeting is 3/14/17. The topic will be Combating Addiction & Crime; the Chamber is the sponsor; Bob Wigdorski, from Gateway Recovery Center, is the speaker.

Joan reported that some proposed legislation was forwarded to the board via email for their review; Judge Steve Bolstad will be present at the Business Watch to discuss this proposed legislation with attendees. Alison had no update on a funding source for the downtown ambassadors and kiosk idea that was discussed last month.

Johnson Hotel: Joan reported that the mortgage release has been drafted by the EDA; it is anticipated that Andy should be able to sign it at the next board meeting in April. The draft mortgage release will be forwarded to the Board for their review. It will be sent to Denver for EDA signature and then BID signs, then it is recorded and the lien is released.

Joan added that there is one vacancy in the incubator.

Joan reported on a recent break in at the Johnson, to the basement, via the door on the alley that leads directly to the basement. Doug discovered the break in, since that is now his working hub, it occurred sometime between the 14th and 16th. Every storage facility was broken into; it didn't appear that anything was missing from the facility. Officer Adam Hunt has filed a police report. KDS Networks installed camera on 2/20, per the Johnson Association. Garry called 911 again on Saturday the 18th as the back door was left wide open.

Legislature – Liquor Licensing: Joan reported that she consulted with the City Attorney; she has said that any legislative action that is incidental to the BID's work can be weighed in on by the BID. Joan added that the legislative action has been tabled; at least eight people testified against it, while two testified in favor. Garry motioned that the BID oppose this piece of legislative action. Max seconded. Travis noted that he is neutral on the topic; he inquired about why the BID had to take a stance on this. Jason abstained. **Motion passed.** Joan was instructed to write a letter noting the BID's opposition and to hold the letter until such time as it may be needed; if needed, it will be sent to Helena making the legislators aware of the BID's opposition to the proposed legislative action.

Parking Commission: Joan reported that the next Parking Commission meeting is scheduled for 4/20; Sp+ will be presenting new technological options.

Personnel: Joan reported that she is looking to hire a new Community Ambassador II, our trash removal employee. She has one applicant and the job posting closes tomorrow.

Work Plan 2016-2017: Joan reported that a draft of the 2017-2018 Work Plan will be presented to the board next month, with approval set for June.

IX. **New Business:** Discussion was held on BID renewal, to be held in 2019. The Board inquired if the BID can renew earlier than 2019; Joan will inquire with the City about whether or not this is possible.

Joan provided the board with the Urban Art Project thank you for the BID's support of the project.

X. **Public Comment:** No public comment at this time.

XI. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 10:43am.

Andy Ferrin, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

Date: _____