

Minutes
Business Improvement District
May 12, 2011

Board Present: Alison Fried, Steve Alley, Tony Longin, Stacey Schaefer, Hayley Leray, Doug Lorello
Board Absent: Julie Duffy
Staff Present: Joan Redeen
Guests Present: Garry Hackett, Sheila Rice

I. **Call to order:** Alison called the meeting to order at 8:59am.

II. **Guests**

III. **Approval of minutes from 4-7-11 & 4-13-11 meetings:** Steve motioned to approve the minutes from the 4/7 & 4/13 meetings. Hayley seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

IV. **Financials:** The Board received the March & April financials via e-mail last week. There being no discussion on the financials Hayley motioned to approve the 3/31/11 & 4/30/11 financial statements which include the Balance Sheets, P&L, and the P&L/Budget comparison. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Board was presented with a draft of the Budget for the fiscal year 2011-2012. Discussion followed on the proposed budget. Steve motioned to approve the budget for fiscal year 2011-2012, as presented. Doug seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

V. **Grant Programs:** Joan noted that the following grants have been submitted, and were approved by the Board via e-mail: Public Drug at 324 Central Ave, Façade for \$5,000 and Interior for \$34,850; Hansel & Gretel in Times Square, Interior for \$1,168.50; Flowers & Frills at 319 1st Ave N, Interior for \$4,351.77; Flowers & Frills, Business Incentive for \$700; Magical Moon Sivana in Times Square, Business Incentive for \$375; Brooklyn's Snack Bar in Times Square, Business Incentive for \$450; Jennifer Brurud in Central Plaza, Business Incentive for \$225; Hansel & Gretel, Business Incentive for \$575. Steve motioned to approve all grants as previously presented. Hayley seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Joan inquired with the Board about grant procedure. The City authorized e-mail approval on grants due to the timeliness of submissions. Our grant application denotes deadlines by which applicants must submit their application and dates when approval will take place. Joan gave the example of the Public Drug building grants, they submitted their grant application on April 27th with a project begin date of May 1st and the Board not meeting until May 12th. Steve and Hayley both noted that we need to be development positive so applications should be e-mailed to the Board for approval if time is an issue. Steve added that he believes we need to change our grant criteria so that applications can be submitted even if work has begun.

Joan noted that a response has been received from Todd Stam's office in regard to the Montana Building project. They submitted an updated grant application, photos and a listing of additional anticipated expenses totaling \$335,253 to complete the project. Joan added that we have paid \$29K on the \$50K residential grant, leaving a balance remaining to be paid of \$21K. The Board instructed Joan to send a letter to Todd that we will expect an update again in March, 2012 if the project is not completed by that time.

Joan reported that two grants listed on the grant schedule are in need of an update. The \$5K for the City for the Feasibility Study program was listed as due to be paid out this month. Joan contacted Ellen at the City and has an updated timeline on the program; this grant could potentially be paid out by July, 2011 so the grant schedule will be updated to reflect that. The second grant is the interior grant for \$5K for the Dunn Brown building. Steve reported that he would like an additional six-month extension as he has not completed the project yet. The Board instructed Joan to update the grant schedule that this grant should be paid out or reviewed again in November, 2011.

Stacey inquired about the CTEP and whether or not we'd lose that funding. Alison noted that we do not; the funds are committed to the project.

VI. Old Business:

Beautification: Clean & Safe Team: Joan informed the Board that our new Community Ambassador starts work on Monday, 5/16. Justin Redeen was hired by the committee that consisted of Julie, Hayley and Steve. He will work 20 hours per week until the 3rd week of August. Joan contacted the City about the possibility of using their equipment and was informed that only City employees can utilize City-owned equipment, due to liability issues. Dave at Amazing Toys contacted Joan and provided information on a possible mode of transport, to utilize while watering flowers, etc. It is a vehicle that is pedaled so it's 'green'. Steve reported that he had checked out the vehicle option and it could work but would require a battery as the water pump is electrical. Joan added that the cost for the 'green' mode of transport would be approximately \$1,100 and that Dave was offering a large break on the cost as he'd like to add his logo to it. The Board noted that they'd prefer to spend money on something that can be utilized year-round. Steve will explore 4-wheelers with Metzger's. Joan will do some digging on Craigslist for prices on used 4-wheelers as well. Alison inquired about the need to provide shirts in the way of a uniform. Joan noted that she had inquired with Sign Pro and can get button-down shirts, polo shirts and/or T-shirts or any combination of them. Steve noted that he'd prefer Justin to wear a button down or polo shirt and any additional volunteers utilized via RSVP or Pre-Release would be wearing T-shirts. The Board instructed Joan to order shirts. Joan reported that she met with RSVP and has submitted the paperwork to be a site for their volunteers. She continues to explore other volunteer possibilities. Joan also reported that the MApril clean-up will take place this weekend. NeighborWorks noted that we could do a spring clean-up downtown and they would still count the volunteer hours. Joan has been in touch with Foothills and they are interested in providing us the same service as last year. Joan noted that she has drafted a letter that would be sent out next spring to all of the local non-profit and service organizations giving them the opportunity to do the spring cleaning for us, if they are interested, and receive a donation from the BID for their efforts. The Board discussed the amount of donation to be made for the spring cleaning. The Board authorized \$1,000 to be donated to a non-profit organization each year for our annual spring clean-up.

Traffic Signal Box Project: Joan reported that the City has sent a letter authorizing the TSB Art Project. A selection committee has been established and will be meeting on Friday, 5/20. Joan inquired with the Board about how many TSBs to complete this summer, the timeline the Board would like and the budget. She added that the budget presented to the Board had \$17,400 for this project; \$1K for nine large TSBs (\$9K total) and \$700 for 12 small TSBs (\$8,400 total). The Board noted that the budget has been approved and all other decisions about how many to complete, timeline, etc. will be left up to the selection committee. Sheila inquired about the Urban Art Project and its involvement in this project. Joan noted that Jean Price is aware of this project and the artists who have been involved in the UAP will be encouraged to participate in this project as well. Joan reported that Steve Tilleraas had inquired about planting trees in the holes on 2nd Street, by B&B. Tony noted that he talked with Steve and the vaults for the trees are smaller and need to be cut to be the appropriate size for the trees. He added that the costs will be the same as if Tilleraas had removed a tree from that location. The spots have had holes and tree grates but have never had trees. Tony added that he has no issue with Tilleraas cutting the concrete as long as the City provides their approval and also Tim Murphy as he is the adjoining property owner affected by this. Tilleraas was contacting the City for approval and Joan will contact Tim Murphy for his approval. The Board noted that the additional expense is acceptable. Joan noted that after the 30 trees are planted this spring the only remaining trees will be around the Public Drug building once the construction is complete there.

BID Board: Joan noted that she met with the new Fiscal Services Director at the City. The Budget and Work Plan need to be provided to the City by June 10th and will be presented to the City Commissioners at their work session on July 19th and at the City Commission meeting on August 2nd. She added that the City informed her that only \$1,200 remains in outstanding BID assessments for 2009, otherwise all BID assessments are current.

Joan noted that she continues to work on seeking applicants to fill the two openings on the Board. At this point the City has only received Garry Hackett's application.

Downtown Action Alliance: Joan reported that the City responded to the Board's inquiry about the Rocky Mountain building. The letter from the City was e-mailed to the Board on May 2nd. Alison reported that the DAA continues to focus on downtown safety, the master plan and the Rocky Mountain Building. Wendy with the City is providing weekly updates on the RMB project, they are being sent out via Sue. Garry inquired if the City could put updates on the City's website.

Downtown Great Falls Association: Sheila provided a letter from DGFA requesting the BID's support of DGFA's marketing plan for the upcoming fiscal year. DGFA requested \$20,000 over the BID's fiscal year, noting that was what the BID had committed through this fiscal year. Sheila noted that things have improved but we need to heighten the awareness. DGFA has budgeted \$55K with \$20K from DGFA, \$20K from BID and \$15K from other sources who have yet to be invited. She added that the marketing committee consists of Kevin, Sue, Alison and Joan. Tony noted that last year's budget initially was presented as \$70K and he inquired about how much of the BID's \$20K commitment has been spent. Joan noted that the BID has spent approximately \$11K of the \$20K committed to date. Alison reported that the marketing committee recently re-evaluated and we planned on stretching out the remaining funds until 12/31. The plan is to push the downtown logo, find us on Facebook, and the 15-second spot airing on KFBB. We will have a free display case at the airport and DGFA paid for production of the benches but are not being charged rent for them. The BID has been paying for the advertising on KFBB and Central Montana Radio. Sheila noted that from 7/1/10 to 5/12/11 DGFA has paid \$46.5K total, \$11K of that is the BID's. Hayley noted that we should provide some funding but marketing is not what the BID is for. Tony noted that the BID used to provide funding to DGFA and we had gotten away from that, he added that the dues he pays to DGFA should be used for marketing. Sheila noted that the income from dues, so far this year, is \$15K and is not enough to carry the marketing plan. She added that collectively downtown should support the marketing campaign and the BID should support advertising that raises awareness about downtown. Steve noted that it's good for property owners if we promote downtown and our job is to look after the property owners, but he noted that the BID should not be the lead. He suggested that the BID provide 1/3 matching funds to DGFA up to a maximum of \$20K. Tony inquired if the committee would remain the same. Sheila noted that DGFA wants to be sure that the BID continues to have a say and the committee is the best format. Steve motioned to approve the BID paying 1/3 matching funds to DGFA up to a maximum of \$20K. Stacey seconded. Alison abstained, noting that she would not commit the BID to spending when she would no longer be serving on the Board. Tony noted that he was not prepared to vote and would like the motion tabled.

Motion tabled.

Sheila noted that she'd like to see a committee established between the BID and DGFA to address the sound system. She suggested two board members from each Board plus Joan and Sue. Steve noted that he'd be willing to serve on this committee.

Sheila also reported that Alive @ 5 starts on June 2nd. This year they'll be holding a few more in parks as they are better attended when they are held in parks. Alison noted that after Cruisin' the Drag she had a conversation with a few other downtown merchants. She noted that what's good for downtown might not always be good for all of downtown but it is still important to have these events to continue to work on awareness of downtown. Sheila noted that DGFA should provide businesses with more ideas on how to make Alive @ 5 work for them, e.g., Dragonfly was not open but had a big basket with coupons so folks could come back and shop and receive a discount.

Sheila informed the Board that DGFA is going to start a Brown Bag lunch program at noon on Thursdays at US Bank. They are gathering \$100 sponsors and the restaurants will be selling bag lunches. They currently have six sponsors and will do as many weeks as they have sponsors for.

Downtown Master Plan: Joan reported that the Community Open House is being held on Wednesday, June 1st.

Downtown Safety: Joan informed the Board the Business Watch meeting was held on Tuesday the 10th and the topic was panhandling. There were between 25-30 people in attendance. The Safety Committee meets on Monday 5/16 at 10am. Our next step is to draft a Downtown Safety Plan.

Great Falls Development Authority: Joan reported that the branding project is moving forward; interviews were conducted yesterday of two companies. The committee had previously narrowed down the eight proposals to three, but one backed out before interviewing. The committee decided to move forward with a company out of TN who has done many branding projects nationally, but Great Falls would be their first city in Montana.

Johnson Hotel: Joan reported that we have two new tenants in the incubator. The Gladiators moved out on 5/11 and the Great Falls Americans moved in on 5/15. Joe McDaniel with New York Life has also moved into the former computer lab area.

Joan informed the Board that the EDA is doing a site visit on Wednesday, June 8th at 10am. They have informed Joan that this is not an audit, simply a site visit.

Parking Commission: Joan attended the Parking Commission meeting in April. They have shrunk the patrol area again, around the courthouse area. Wendy is presenting the Parking budget with ticket revenue going into the parking fund. The parking commission is exploring an all access parking permit. Joan inquired with the parking commission about purchasing meter bags for holidays and the commission said no to the idea. The vacancy for the parking commission has been filled.

Public Drug Building: The Board requested the City ordinance that calls for the 'sidewalk rental fee'. Joan provided the Board with copies of Title 12, Chapter 4 Boulevards, and the section that applies is 12.4.040 Boulevard Encroachment Permit – Issuance Conditions, item 3 specifically.

Website: Joan reminded the Board about the bids received for updating the website. She added that she has narrowed it down to two, Keenpath and Shortgrass as they are both reasonable and will allow the website to be maintained in-house, once it is set up. Alison commented that she'd like to see everything done on Facebook. Joan noted that there really is no way to put our grant applications on Facebook, with their current format. Doug added that his company blocks Facebook so that employees are not spending their work time at the site. Joan pointed out that Keenpath would be \$2,670 to set up and \$420 annually for web hosting and domain registration and that would bring the website maintenance in-house, and keep the business within the BID. Doug requested that Mark with Keenpath attend our next Board meeting to educate us on the possibilities of utilizing Facebook and social media more effectively. Alison motioned to approve spending \$3,000 on web design with Keenpath. Steve seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Work Plan: Joan presented the draft of the work plan for fiscal year 2011-2012. The Board requested the following items be added: Downtown Art Projects and Clean & Safe Team.

VII. **New Business:**

Downtown Speaker System: Joan inquired about who owns the system and who is responsible for it. Alison noted that the BID purchased the system for over \$30K several years ago. She added that the original agreement was that other organizations that use the system were going to be billed annually for various events, but that never happened. Steve added that we need to fix the system, update it or turn it off completely. Joan noted that she and Sue will work together to establish a committee and will set up a meeting to figure out how to move forward.

Historic Preservation: Joan informed the Board that the HPAC annual awards are this evening. Sue had inquired if the BID would have any interest in paying for flowers for Carol Place as she is receiving an award. The Board noted that they would not do that at this time, as it would set a precedent and they'd have to do it for others.

Urban Art Project: Joan informed the Board that Jean Price brought in this year's request for a donation to the UAP. They are again requesting a donation of \$2K. The Board noted that they'd prefer to invest in quality and the last set of postcards was very poor. They added that they'd like to have the BID's level of sponsorship be reflected, as we are the largest contributor to the project and

it appears as if the BID's contribution is small how it is being portrayed now. Joan was instructed to contact Jean and let her know the Board's concerns.

VIII. **Public Comment:** No public comment.

IX. **Adjournment:** Stacey motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:29am. Alison seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Alison Fried, Chair

Joan Redeen, Staff

Date: _____

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