

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 3pm
at the DMP Office (218 E. Main) and on Zoom

Present: Carma Gilligan, Scott Stearns (via Zoom), Karen Sippy, Charlie Beaton (via Zoom), Dr. Jim McKay

Absent: Ellen Buchanan, Dan Cederberg

Guests: Donna Gaukler & Ben Carson, Missoula Urban Forestry

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Brandon Dewey

The meeting was called to order by President Charlie Beaton shortly after 3:00pm and guests were introduced. All attendees went around the room to introduce themselves.

Overview of Missoula's Urban Forest & Potential Opportunities for Improvements: Sippy introduced the topic to the board explaining that she thought it would be helpful to partner as we build out a budget and Urban Forestry plans to re-forest Downtown.

Donna Gaukler spoke about the value of partnerships in the community and introduced Ben Carson. Ben reviewed what the UF program does for the community and its staffing with programmatic goals going forward. Ben also reviewed the trees that UF manages and the areas where they are often found in the community.

Ben shared that Urban Forestry has 30,368 trees in inventory, which is estimated to be 70% complete. Ben reviewed the responsibilities of UF and the work they do specifically, evaluating risk with service requests and addressing them as needed. Ben discussed the "other" roles of Urban Forestry staff, including the installation of the holiday decorations Downtown. Ben discussed the benefits of the urban forest in Missoula, which is currently valued at \$3,295,739.48. Ben enhanced the importance of the diversification of species.

Ben reviewed the specific statistics of Downtown Trees: there are 2067 tree sites, though many sites don't have trees. Ben reviewed the "secret benefits" of urban trees including the economic impacts, public health, and lower crime rates.

Ben reviewed the plan for Downtown Trees going forward and their goal to implement strategies to maximize the tree canopy and success. Ben discussed the planning process and the expected time frames, with prioritization of this phase in the current fiscal year. Ben reviewed near-term goals for the Downtown Urban Forest. The group held a discussion about Front & Main conversion and the opportunities for urban forest improvement. Opportunity to utilize inflation reduction act funds to leverage tree replacement.

The group discussed ways for the BID board to help: participate with PlanIt Geo and their study. Investment upfront will provide the greatest long-term investment. Assist with education.

Donna noted that the City is working towards policies that help with urban forestry (permitting fees, development code, etc.)

The group held a discussion about tree watering and the associated challenges. Finally, the group discussed the process involved to replace a tree that is managed by Urban Forestry.

Request for \$20,000 for Missoula Tourism Stewardship Plan: McCarthy provided an overview of the Tourism Stewardship Plan and reviewed the ask that was presented last month of \$20,000 by Destination Missoula. At the previous meeting, the board sought to defer the decision to the next meeting to allow more thought and consideration.

Stearns noted that he appreciated the additional time allowed to consider the request.

Stearns moved to approve the request of \$20,000 for the Tourism Stewardship Plan with the expenditure split over the two fiscal years 2023-2024 and to be paid by the end of the year from the Master Plan budget. Sippy seconded the motion. Beaton called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Review & Potential Approval of FY2024 BID Budget & Narrative: McCarthy presented the first draft of the budget narrative and reviewed the budget process and what was contained within the narrative. McCarthy reviewed the areas where the budget has increased and decreased and explained the next steps if the board approves the draft as presented.

The board held a discussion about the safety category of the budget and clarified the role of the ambassador program. McCarthy reviewed the background of the program and its evolution from safety to hospitality.

Further discussion was held about the budget process and the detail of the budget. The board recommended that the definition of Common Area Maintenance and Management be included when the term is first mentioned.

Cederberg moved to approve the proposed narrative for the city budget. McKay seconded the motion. Beaton called for the vote and the motion passed. Stearns noted that he looks forward to discussing the finer details of the BID budget.

Review & Potential Approval of Clean Team Contract: McCarthy provided a review of the contract goals and discussed the challenges with the expansion of services by Opportunity Resources. McCarthy reviewed the rate increase, from \$4,063 to \$5,170 per month, and explained that it was due to regulatory requirements for wage increases. The rate increase is 23% higher than the previous rate. A 1-year vs 3-year contract was discussed amongst the group. McCarthy reviewed modifications to the contract, explaining that it is substantially the same as the old contract.

Beaton expressed the good value he thinks the program brings to the community. The board further discussed the rate and value of the services, exploring if there was any room for negotiation. Due to regulatory requirements for wages, we are not able to negotiate a lower rate. Stearns inquired about the supervision of the Clean Team and that individual's responsibilities. McCarthy provided an overview of how the Clean Team operates, noting that the supervisor is there to supervise the clients and does not perform the labor. Cederberg noted that the contract can be canceled with 30 days' notice, which allows flexibility if needs change. Beaton emphasized the challenges we have had in recruiting maintenance staff.

Sippy offered an edit to the contract to correct the term "tree suckers" instead of "tree saplings".

Sippy moved to approve the Agreement for Provision of Cleaning Services. Cederberg seconded the motion. Beaton called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

The board held further discussions about the Clean Team program and its consistency. The group discussed possible challenges with other contractors.

Approval of Minutes: Sippy and Gilligan provided written edits to the minutes. *Sippy moved to approve the minutes with the edits provided. Gilligan seconded and the March minutes were approved unanimously.*

Financial Review: McCarthy reviewed fund balances with the board, noting that there is \$185,207 in the First Security Bank account and \$159,105 with the City of Missoula. McCarthy reviewed income & expense activity with the board noting that tax assessments received for the month of March equaled \$5,325. Payments were also received from the Missoula Parking Commission for the Downtown Police Officer. The BID also received payment for the recycling containers from MRA and the City of Missoula. McCarthy reviewed expenses of note and provided the board with an opportunity to ask questions.

Update on Downtown Policing: McCarthy reported that she met with the interim chief and the DDTPO supervisor to review the program and explore all options. She shared the general sentiments from the PD which include having a challenging time with staffing. They discussed making the contract a zone instead of a person. There was a discussion about sending the officer to the Poverello.

The PD is interested in a renewal for one officer. McCarthy further elaborated on the zone concept. She reported that the PD preference is a one-year contract for one officer, with the intent to revisit in a year. We are investigating ways to make the position attractive. The program has been discussed with Mountain Line and the parking commission and neither are interested in services that they do not benefit from as the program currently stands

Stearns expressed a desire to further discuss this with the Chief. The board held a discussion about options and what it might look like. There was consensus that the police department will not stop patrolling downtown, but it is beneficial to have a more consistent officer presence.

Stearns shared that he felt inclined to terminate the contract. Gilligan expressed that she would like to see us continue. Other board members expressed uncertainty on the issue noting that the position relies on personality. Cederberg felt that if it works there is a good benefit, however, it is hard to get the right person.

The board inquired of McCarthy for her insight and preferred direction. McCarthy explained that her preference was to have a police officer over an ambassador. She affirmed that we need to find a way to make the position attractive. She felt that uniformed officers are the best option for safety. She supports the board approving a 1-year contract.

The board held a discussion about what activities or programs are safety focused that is not policing. McCarthy explained that these initiatives could include lighting, cameras, crime prevention through environmental design, and shifting funding to the mobile support team, homeless outreach team, or crisis intervention team.

Cederberg expressed concern about possible backlash from ratepayers if we did not renew the contract for policing. The BID will survey ratepayers this year to get program feedback.

Following discussion, the staff recommendation was made to drop to 1 officer for 1 year and work on improving the culture for the position.

The board was unified in liking the idea of a zone, a great backup to having the right person in the position.

McCarthy reviewed the next steps and will set another meeting with police leadership.

Update on Downtown Recycling Containers: McCarthy reported that the new recycling containers have been installed and a press release went out yesterday.

BID Annual Ratepayer Meeting: McCarthy reported that the annual ratepayer meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 20 from 8-10am at the Residence Inn by Marriott. The topics discussed will be Downtown parking and transportation.

Partner Updates:

- **MDF:** Missoula Gives is on May 4-5. We are fundraising for Downtown Flowers with a goal of 750 people giving \$20. We are hoping for 100% participation from all the boards.
- **MDA:** McCarthy provided an overview of advocacy activity, an upcoming masterplan presentation, and an events review.

Beaton adjourned the meeting shortly before 5:30.