

**Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, May 20, 2014**

**Present:** Tim France, Charlie Beaton, Ellen Buchanan, Dan Cederberg, Alan Newell, Carma Gilligan, Rich Huffman

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Linda McCarthy, Tom Aldrich, Noreen Humes, Robert Giblin, Brent Dobak

**Final Approval of Budget for FY2015**

Giblin reported minor adjustments to the FY2015 Budget, bringing it to \$65 in net profit. **Newel motioned to approve the FY2015 Budget with noted changes. Buchanan seconded the motion. The budget was unanimously approved.**

**Review & Potential Approval of proposal to purchase a second plow before June 30**

Staff gave an overview of a proposal to purchase a snow plow to be installed on the Toyota truck recently purchased by the Missoula Downtown Association. The MDA funded the truck, including insurance, electrical upgrades, a water tank, pump, and related equipment. The total contribution from the MDA is \$6,004.75 to date. The new plow would cost \$4,000 plus Giblin budgeted an additional \$1,000 for fuel during that season. The MDA will use the vehicle for flower watering and other projects while the BID will use it for graffiti removal, power washing, and snow plowing.

Potential revenue projections were included in the proposal with a proposed total of \$7,000 in 2015 compared to \$4,090 in 2014. The goal is to purchase the plow before June 30. Cost for maintenance of the truck including suspension and tire adjustments for snow season are already built into FY2015's budget. The truck will be used every day for streetscape programs and on or-two days per week for the BID's other services. **Beaton motioned to approve the allocation of \$5,000 from the special projects/streetscapes budget in congruence with the proposal: \$4,000 for the plow and \$1,000 for fuel/maintenance. Huffman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**Review & Potential Approval to participate in Delta Airlines Magazine Promotion**

The Missoula Economic Partnership (MEP) has invited Downtown to participate in a five-page profile piece on Missoula in the August 2014 issue of SkyWest Magazine, which will run on all domestic and international flights. The proposal, included in the packet, is for the BID to allocate \$5,000 to the project, ensuring Downtown Missoula would be highlighted along with the other partners. A decision must be made within two weeks given print deadlines. UM, Destination Missoula, the Missoula Airport Authority, and the International Heart Institute are all contributing to the project. The \$5,000 covers an ad and editorial suggestion.

A long discussion ensued regarding the project and its potential return on investment. Given the market and the partners, the spread on Missoula will be focused on building and/or relocating business to our market. Delta hires a local writer and sends their own photographer. PartersCreativewill oversee the project. The total cost of the piece is \$38,000, of which \$5,000 is being asked of the BID. Consensus was that Downtown Missoula should be spotlighted, since it is the cultural center of Montana. A contribution would ensure that. Although \$5,000 is a major commitment for the BID, the sheer volume of readers, business owners and tourists will give Montana and Missoula a significant spotlight.

**Newell motioned to allocate \$5,000 towards to spread in Delta Airlines with board members France and Buchanan overseeing the project and ensuring the Downtown website and business development brochure are the target. Cederberg seconded the motion. While Beaton objected, the motion passed 6-1.**

### **Approval of April 15 Board Minutes**

**Newell moved to approve the minutes as presented. Beaton seconded motion, which passed unanimously.**

### **Financial Report**

Gilligan inquired about the additional \$11,000 for salaries on the Profit & Loss. Gilbin noted it was the hiring of the new Community Development position. Gilligan also inquired why the check register did not have an allocation to city police, and Giblin noted it was an annual payment, not a monthly payment.

### **Overview of IDA Regional Conference in Vancouver (Noreen Humes)**

Humes gave a 40-minute presentation on her recent trip to the International Downtown Association Conference. The focus was on urban design and creating a sense of place to ensure safety and prosperity (placemaking). There is a movement among millennials to live in urban cores while sustainability is a growing priority in urban design and downtown living. The key elements of placemaking are no blank walls or ugly parking areas, encouraging outdoor dining, implementing mobility to static spaces, and finding creative uses of stagnant spaces. Such creative uses include examples such as outdoor yoga in a city plaza, the 'crime fighting piano,' and the purple couch project. The piano idea spawned great interest among the board and is being explored further for potential use in Missoula. Such a piano is generally donated and placed in an area known for crime activity. Simply placing it there creates a sense of place and dispels the crime activity. It has been embraced successfully by many other cities. Other ideas include turning alleys into art spaces. Placemaking is typically done by downtown organizations and implemented through policy, stats, programming, and promotion. Another idea for placemaking is the 'really really long table dinner': a catered meal on a very long table (more than 20 yards) on which Downtown representatives eat, discuss matters casually, and create a sense of place in the street. This idea could work well in Missoula.

### **Update on Board Vacancy**

Craig Aasved of Providence St. Patrick has applied for the open position on the BID Board. Mayor Engen has appointed Aasved, and that appointment will most likely be confirmed by the City Council within the next month.

### **Safety Report: Video at 415 N. Higgins, Real Change Program**

New Downtown Ambassador Brent Dobak reported on an incident he had with transients the on Sunday, May 18, the day after UM Commencement. Three men were passed out the entire day, and one had a sign placed on him stating "don't call 911, I'm ok." A police car did eventually arrive to check on the men but no action was taken. The transients seem to know when Officer Roy is off duty, and behave badly in his absence. Higgins Plaza employees called city police several times during the day, as the men were drinking, but there was limited response from dispatch and police. One tenant had a verbal dispute with the men, who became more belligerent as a response. Dobak's report was to relate frustration regarding the lack of response from 911 and city police.

Buchanan suggested city police should be instructed that all lying on sidewalks is prohibited in Missoula, and the officers should act accordingly. France suggested data be gathered and presented to the city with a request, and police should delegate the responsibility of managing transients in Roy's absence.

KECI requested an interview with France regarding the video he made of transients fighting. He asked for the board's opinion and related his concern about the video reaching the public's eye. Consensus was that the MDAC subcommittee on public safety should discuss the matter first, since they already are developing strategies to resolve long-standing transient issues. Positive approaches and taking ownership of spaces are being discussed among the BID and MDA, for example specially-designed benches that cannot be slept upon, the purple couch program, and the crime-fighting pianos.

### **Downtown Master Plan Report:**

The implementation committee met the previous week and also discussed the transient behavior. MDAC and the committee seem to be on the same page in that the problem needs to be addressed.

- A. Bridges-** The final report on the Madison and Higgins bridges is complete. Structural analysis of the Higgins Avenue Bridge is underway to see if it can support greater deck widths. A pedestrian crossing similar to that on the Madison Bridge is also being discussed. The best case scenario is a widened bridge with a separate pedestrian crossing.
- B. Parking-** An RFP will be drafted for the meter modernization project towards the end of the summer. The public input piece is complete. No definite decisions have been made regarding the desired technologies.
- C. Front & Main Conversion-** A public meeting took place the previous week regarding the conversion of Front and Main streets for two-way vehicle traffic. Feedback has been positive towards conversion, but all business owners have expressed concerns about potential loss of parking. MDT's Shane Stack has asked to serve on the Downtown Master Plan Committee to help connect MDT to the downtown transportation projects.
- D. Wayfinding-** Implementation strategies are being explored. The city is exploring the potential to lead the RFP process. Downtown may need to refocus its efforts on building vehicle signage first rather than information kiosks. Downtown funds may be directed first to the vehicle portion of the project rather than the kiosks as the content and maps for the kiosk still need to be developed.
- E. Art Park-** The Art Park developers hired a consultant. Public input and design details are being explored. The Portland Loo will be included in the plan and will be owned and maintained seasonally by Parks & Recreation much like the restrooms in public parks.
- F. Conference Center Feasibility Study-** The Conference Center Study is underway. The study will be in two parts over 60 days to decide whether the market is viable for a new hotel and conference center in the riverfront triangle. If so, the second piece will focus on demographics and volume use estimates. Because the MRA wants the BID to pay by invoice, the agency returned the BID check and will bill the BID for \$5,000 as work progresses.

### **Committee Reports**

- A. Housing-** Humes will host a housing task force meeting May 29.
- B. Marketing-** The Marketing Committee is working on a campaign to promote national brands carried by downtown retailers, developing a video of a typical downtown day, and looking to expand the "Connecting Our Community" brand.
- C. Streetscapes- The Downtown** Flower baskets (94) are to be installed this evening.

### **Other News**

McCarthy provided an update on BID expansion. Discussion ensued on next steps. The city, the Poverello Center, and the YWCA have signed petitions. However, there is a lack of response from some property owners, and it might be wise

if someone from the board of trustees followed up. Buchanan noted the Cedar Street Project is out to bid soon and suggested follow-up with the owners once that project is completed.

*The meeting adjourned at 5:42 pm.*