

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 17, 2014

Present: Tim France, Charlie Beaton, Dan Cederberg, Alan Newell, Carma Gilligan, Craig Aasved

Absent: Ellen Buchanan

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Tom Aldrich, Noreen Humes

Welcome New BID Board Member Craig Aasvad, Providence St. Patrick Hospital

McCarthy introduced Aasvad to the board. He spoke of his experience. He has been at St. Patrick Hospital for six years, and is a Montana native hailing from Lewistown. He also spent time in Billings and Whitefish before finding his way to Missoula. He expressed enthusiasm for his new position on the board.

Approval May 20 Board Minutes

Gilligan reported some minor corrections to the May minutes. **Cederberg motioned to approve the May minutes with Gilligan's edits. Gilligan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Financial Report

McCarthy gave an overview of financials. Gilligan asked for clarity on a few items and it was given by McCarthy. July's budget will include a line item for the Downtown Missoula Partnership contract. There will be a surplus of cash at the end of the year: projected as \$4,500-\$5,500. Cash position was strong at the end of may.

Crime-Fighting Pianos & the Purple Couch / Frame

On Friday, June 20, two pianos will be placed outdoors Downtown. The first will be on the corner of Higgins Plaza at 10:30am, the second in the Bank Street Pocket Park at 11:30am. The pianos will remain outdoors in their places long term and permanent tarps will be installed to keep them protected in inclement weather. The Zootown Arts and Community Center will oversee the artistic painting of the first piano on-site by area high school students. The second will be painted on-site by a yet-to-be determined artist. The pianos were donated by University Congregational Church and Rollie Dotz of Dotz Piano. Delivery will be donated by Gary Bowman of Morgenroth Music Center. Christopher Haan, a piano professor from UM, is helping oversee the program and maintain the pianos. Humes invited the board to attend. The idea for the pianos came from Humes' attendance at the International Downtown Association (IDA) conference in May. Placing a piano in an outdoor space and covering it with art curtails crime activity in the area and creates a sense of place, hence the name and the placement at the Higgins Plaza. Property owners of the sites embraced the idea with great enthusiasm. \$500 of BID funds will be used to aid in installation, and it will come from the June special projects budget.

The Purple Couch idea also came from the IDA conference. The purple is to match the MDF logo and schema and the couch serves as another placemaking location to share stories and congregate. Adam Reel has been simultaneously developing ideas to brand the newly formed Downtown Missoula Partnership (DMP). The ideas convened with the Purple Frame project and the 'My Downtown' campaign. The couch has been put on hold and instead an old, ornate photo frame has been painted purple. It will be placed strategically in areas of Downtown to serve as a mini-photobooth complete with attached props for pedestrians to stop and snap a photo for social media. The frame campaign will kick off July 4th at Liquid Planet, since they chose the MDF for their drink-of-the-month program, which fundraises for a new non-profit each month by selling a beverage created in their name and donating a portion of the profit. The program

typically raises around \$400. The idea combines the placemaking ideas of the MDF and the branding ideas of the DMP. The pianos and the frame are simple, positive ideas that curtail crime activity and enhance a sense of place for people Downtown.

Safety Report

- 1. Ambassador Stats/Real Change-** 2014 YTD stats were circulated. Laurie Johnson spent the previous few weeks working on the Real Change program by distributing new Caraffles and Boxes, which came from the MDA budget. Marketing rolled out simultaneously. Indoor ads will change in August, and a Facebook page is in development. The ambassadors are focusing more on information service for the summer season. Dobak is acclimating well to his position and the idiosyncrasies of Downtown.
- 2. Police Stats-** Police stats were circulated. School resources officers have been doing bicycle patrols downtown now that school is out for the summer. Their shifts will be staggered. From June 11-14, sixteen warrants for arrest were issued: the highest since January. Open container citations continue to be the most prominent issue. Pedestrian interference also stands out, though it's been lower in the last four weeks.
- 3. Public Health and Safety-** A group of semi-transients have been dwelling in east Caras Park and using the outlets provided for the Clark Fork Market. Aldrich advised Franco Salazar, market manager, on strategies to curtail the use and damage of the power boxes, which seemed to be effective as the group as largely dispersed.

The Public Health and Safety Committee has been discussing city ordinances regarding transients. Judge Kathleen Jenks spoke to the committee about the court process regarding such issues. Representatives from the county jail will also come to comment on the matter. The purpose is for the committee to understand the entire cycle of an individual causing a problem on the street, from incident to arrest, and release. Jenks placed the transient known as Harley on a conditional release banning him from Downtown. He hasn't been seen in the area since his release. Others have dispersed as well and Higgins Plaza seems to have quieted down overall.

France and Warden's Market have been voluntarily limiting the sales of alcohol in the morning and to intoxicated individuals to aid in alleviating the problems, to apparently good effect. Cederberg suggested committee members to speak with the owner of Ole's on the north end of the Orange Street tunnel and those of the Town Pump on the south end of the Orange Street bridge to ask for similar voluntarily limitations. Cederberg offered to speak with the Town Pump owners and France will speak to Mark Olsen of Ole's. The board suggested drafting voluntarily recommendations and guidelines for limiting alcohol sales. McCarthy will aid in the process. Cederberg spoke about the topic with MDAC.

Downtown Master Plan Report: IPI Parking Award for Park Place

Anne Guest of MPC went to the International Parking Institute conference to accept an award for the Park Place structure. The structure was lauded for its eye-catching design that incorporated sustainable features and local contributors. Guest is working on the RFP for the meter modernization project, which is the last recommendation of the parking strategy for the Downtown Master Plan.

Silver Park had its grand opening two weeks prior and board members were encouraged by McCarthy to visit the park. A large sculpture is being commissioned for the center circle. The distillery slated to go into the Firestone building is now looking at a parcel on Woody St and will go before City Council. Their goals fit with the master plan. The firestone building will likely have a vacancy as a result. The proposed brewery on West Broadway is moving forward. Gilligan questioned if a brewery across from the Povorello center was a good idea. Because the brewery has social change and a community center in its mission, it will be positive for the area. MRA is helping with that project as it relates to the parking goals and riverfront trail system. Kevin Arnot owns the building and will be helpful to incorporate the area into the BID.

Committee Reports

- 1. Business Development-** Buchanan, Humes, Melanie Brock, and McCarthy have been working on many topics of business development. They have categorized recommendations in three ways: 1. The things they are tracking, 2. The things they can influence, and 3. The things they cannot influence. They are prioritizing the Can Influence List for Action.

Bob Gaffe joined Humes, McCarthy, Aldrich, and Alex Pichacz to assess the usefulness of the Downtown Inventory database and explore new software that incorporates that data along with membership and ratepayer databases into a powerful and relational database tool. The options are being explored with costs and benefits compared the prioritized needs of the staff and Partnership boards. The goal is to save time and streamline process by using such software.

The Downtown Missoula Business Activity Report was reviewed.

Four parties are currently interested in the Mercantile building. The Missoula Public Library is considering it as a new space. Montana Museum of Art and Culture is also considering the space. Both organizations are exploring the viability. Two development groups are also in talks with the owners.

Melanie Brock resigned from the MDA board and announced she has started her own consulting business to run from home. She expressed that she wants to stay involved with Downtown activities and MEP might contract her.

McCarthy has a meeting scheduled with David Bell to discuss the proposed childcare center in the basement of the Florence building.

- 2. Housing-** The updated Housing Taskforce document was reviewed by Humes and input from the board was encouraged. Initiatives for developers are being explored and Downtown residents will be brought into the discussion henceforth. Greg Oliver and Humes will keep the momentum of the taskforce with smaller meetings through the summer and a larger group in the fall. They will hone in on a specific goal and probably choose two sites that are feasible for housing. Mike Hoffman has been contacted and has ideas for developers interested in a few sites.

3. **Marketing-** France reported great progress from Adam Reel. Logos, social media, and the style guide are all moving along well. The Content Monkeys video is in the editing stage. The first two weeks of Out to Lunch and Downtown ToNight had exceptional attendance.

4. **Streetscapes-** A discussion about trees is needed. Parks & Recreation did not order any new trees for downtown in 2013 or 2014. They are going through a strategic plan to manage the urban forest and the trees in Missoula have been surveyed. 40% of the trees in Missoula are Norway Maples, which are at the end of their 100 year life cycles. Future trees will be diversified. In Downtown, there are 20-25 dead trees or empty tree wells. Parks & Recreation bought 200 new trees in 2014, none of which are going Downtown. There was a perception that the BID ordered 12-15 trees but Parks & Recreation had no record. Northwestern Energy has a budget of \$7,000,000 to replace trees in Montana, but Missoula was not on their list. Board members suggested that managing every single tree is beyond the scope of Parks & Recreation and it could be helpful for business owners to manage and purchase their trees, which they are not allowed to do currently. The streetscapes committee will meet with Parks & Recreation to talk about trees in late July and explore the Northwestern Energy funding.

New Business

Northwestern Energy volunteered to install American Flags on the Higgins Bridge. Kayla Spaller at the Missoulian wrote an article about the topic, which led to some volunteers calling to help and an eventual unexpected call from Northwestern Energy. The fire department lacked the staff this year and the city and MDA lacked the equipment necessary. So, Northwestern Energy was a big help and McCarthy's outreach helped to get reel them in.

Humes announced a fundraiser project between the MDF and the Missoula Osprey. July 22 will be 'Downtown Night.' The DMP office is selling tickets for \$10, and half the proceeds go to the MDF. Board members were encouraged to purchase and help sell tickets.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 pm.