

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, August 21, 2018 from 3-5 pm at the DMP Office

PRESENT: Tim France, Dan Cederberg, Scott Stearns, Kirk Bodlovic, and Carma Gilligan, Charlie Beaton

ABSENT: Ellen Buchanan,

STAFF: Linda McCarthy, Pam Udall, Sarah Ferguson

GUESTS: Rod Austin, Missoula Parking Commission

Meeting Commencement & Introduction of Guests and Public Comment: President Tim France commenced the meeting at 3:04pm. Nick Caras knew everyone in the room. Randy Krastel introduced himself to the board.

Guest: Nick Caras with Higgins Plaza, Hammond Arcade, Radio Central, Alder Apartments: Caras started by telling the board he has three projects in downtown: Hammond Arcade, Radio Central building, and 415 Higgins. Caras bought Hammond Arcade a year and a half ago. They would like to take down the wrap around awning to bring attention to the architectural design of the building. Caras has never redone a historic building before. It is now part of the Unseen Missoula tour. The original foundation is still visible in the basement of the building. Recently he acquired the Radio Central building. Caras showed the board historical photos of the Radio Central building from the Mansfield Library. There was a “modern” façade placed on the building in the 40’s, but there is a push to restore its more original façade. The plan is coming along and the 2nd floor is almost finished. There are a couple of programs that could potentially help them get to the original façade via grants, but regardless the façade will be cleaned up, painted, and the granite pillars would still be on display. The goal is to get the space leasable at this time. Cederberg asked how many square feet per floor was available for lease. There is 8,000 sq. ft. available for each of the two floors. 415 Higgins building was built in 1912. There is newer brick on the front side of the building, but the brick on the side of the building is from 1912. The building is being renovated and much of the inside is being restored to the way it was when it was originally erected. There are 50 small offices being leased in that office now. Lawyers, therapists, and small tech businesses. The Hammond Arcade is fully occupied on the street level. The lower level was formally all storage and was renovated and is available for lease. The pop-up museum for the Basements & Back Alleys tour is now in the basement. There is currently an exhibit in the museum surrounding old signs around Missoula. The building was built right after the Great Depression after it burned down and therefore, they only built it as one floor. Caras is also on the board of the Elks Club. An agreement was just signed with the Days Inn hotel owners. The developers are from Bozeman and were behind The Lark. They will be doing a ground-up remodel. Everyone is excited to see what it does for the block and revitalization of the area. There are plans to remodel the Elks Club, but it is a large undertaking so it will likely be a multi-year project. There are 18 units available in the building and they are almost all rented at this time. Caras spoke about his family history – Nick is from the family who owns Caras Nursery which was purchased in 1912. Caras started Caras Real Estate about seven years ago after switching business models from sales to purchasing distressed buildings particularly in the downtown area. Caras also owns Access Property Management and they own Alder Apartments (he will be selling this property soon) and the Alpha East Apartments in the Rattlesnake. The Elks is looking for new members. Caras believes the BID is doing great things. Sometimes there are problems in the alley by 415 Higgins, but there are cool aspects to the alley like the gallery

that is open on First Fridays so Caras would like to see the alley cultivated. A discussion on the Uptown Diner area and demolition ensued. The board thanked Caras for his investment in downtown.

Guest: Randy Krastel, DDPO: Krastel started by saying his last four weeks on the job have been totally different than his first six to seven weeks. There is an influx of folks from out of town. He has been switching up his hours. Imagination Brewing to the parking garage is where he is seeing the most action. Krastel has been pushing people out of Caras Park. Many of the transients are going to Lions Park to use wi-fi on their phones. Krastel spoke to Western Cider who had an open wi-fi access and now it seems like it is closed. Transients also seem to be attracted to park benches and picnic tables and Krastel thinks it encourages a “hot spot” of activity. Stearns asked what the demographics are. The out of state people seem to be passing through and they are men in their 40’s. Krastel has been using 541-HOPE through the Union Gospel Mission who will come and pick them up and get the people where they need to go (sometimes even if it’s just a ride to the bus station). Earlier transients were being sent here from Kalispell, Billings and Spokane. Stearns would like a conversation at a higher level with the Mayors of the cities surrounding this issue. Cederberg asked if Krastel was documenting the demographics (where they are from, how they are getting here, etc.). It might be a good idea to track this information to bring it to the various organizations (Pov, city, PD, 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness). Krastel will start tracking this kind of information moving forward. Krastel also would like to see outside outlets turned off so phones can’t be charged there. A discussion on the article about the west side crime and the city council ensued. Cederberg asked if he is staying safe. Krastel worries about the CSS leaving because the police department is currently down nine officers. Krastel doesn’t think crime is increasing, but call load certainly is. Krastel does not want to see Missoula go to “if it’s not in progress, they can’t help right now” system. A discussion on tent cities and Missoula city ordinances ensued. Krastel spent the first couple weeks of his position just speaking with the downtown businesses owners. Krastel really doesn’t like the ordinances dealing with the RVs being able to park if they have permission in lots and on the street. A discussion on where you can camp in and around Missoula ensued. One thing he thinks is working is being out on Saturdays. Krastel would really like it communicated to the business owners to password protect their wi-fi. Krastel thinks OTL and DTTN have done really well.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes: Gilligan motioned to approve the minutes from June with changes from Gilligan. Stearns seconded, all in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

Finance Report: Giblin quickly went through finances. The fiscal year finances are not closed out yet. The city audit will not happen until November. The current financials will change. As of the 31st of July, The BID has about \$130,000 in cash. The BID has made its payment to the DMP and the garbage contract is paid. Cash position is fine. The statements from the city have a few mistakes from June and July and Giblin has put in an inquiry as to why, but hasn’t heard back at this time. The BID assessments have not been accredited to the city’s BID account which is behind 4-6 weeks according to the city. There was a deposit made to use the garages now that there are gate arms. Stearns would like to see the insurance policies that cover the vehicles. Todd Coster is the agent at Payne West.

Master Plan Consultant Selection: McCarthy reported out of five interviews, Dover, Kohl & Partners was selected as the firm to update the Master Plan. Dover Kohl has a strong reputation among the nation. Contractors tend to follow their work and go where they go. The contract will move forward in September. The references on Dover, Kohl & Partners were extremely positive. The priorities are Housing, Parking, and Business Development. The board will have a contract to review and approve likely via email before the next board meeting.

Mission Areas: No specific updates for each area. Gilligan asked when Clean Team started returning shopping carts. They have been doing it for quite some time now. Shifting out of SROs now in policing. DMP sent a letter to council to support Chief Brady in his request for additional officers.

Business Development Updates

Downtown Business Big Data Project: Working with an intern this summer and hoping to have information at the end of December to show the board. Trying to get a big picture of the business community in Missoula.

Community Events Economic Analysis: Doing surveys at the summer events and is getting closer to the end of the project. Will have analysis in the coming weeks on people attending events.

Updates from

MDA: Roots Fest is this week. OTL and DTTN has been hugely successful including the sales of Caras Cash. VIG program with UM during orientation is happening this week. Membership has grown to 520 members. Unseen Missoula guided tours have been really successful and tours have been added as have tours available to private groups. Caras Park improvements are ongoing with the canopies.

MDF: The Foundation is putting forth a grant for the Interpretive Heritage plan. Caras Park Endowment and Sustainability fund have both been set up. MDF will be the fiscal sponsor of the new Festival of the Dead event that will go by another name this year and be a month long event that focuses on education.

DMP: Foundation job description will be reposted in September. Thinking about not doing a traditional strategic plan like we usually do this year.

Old Business: Gilligan would like bicyclists to pay for licenses to supplement the trail systems and bike lanes.

New Business: West side folks will be meeting with the mayor on the 31st in response to the reports of problems in the Westside neighborhood. France and Cederberg will be in attendance.

Announcements

Executive Session (if necessary)

Trustee Comments & Meeting Adjournment: No additional comments. President Tim France adjourned the meeting at 5:04pm.

