

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at Boone Karlberg Office
(201 W. Main, Suite 300)

Present: With one vacant position and Kirk Bodlovic calling in by phone from his office, all other board members were present.

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Robert Giblin, Kristen Sackett & John Corwin

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Charlie Beaton at 3:06 pm. Kristen Sackett, the new Marketing & Events Director for the Downtown Missoula Partnership, was introduced, and she gave a brief overview of herself and her excitement about returning to the organization.

Approval of May Minutes: Carma Gilligan provided one minor correction, noting the word “he” instead of “we” should be used in the notation regarding Lincoln Mansch’s departure from the organization under Partner Updates. With that edit, Gilligan moved to approve the minutes, Scott Stearns seconded the motion, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Review & Approval of MOU with MEP for Payne Block Revisioning: McCarthy informed the board that the Missoula Economic Partnership was successful as acquiring \$25,000 in Big Sky Trust Funds to help fund the public planning process for the Payne Block at 301 E. Main Street. The BID Board was asked to review and approve the Assisted Business Contract between the MEP and the Downtown BID. Gilligan wondered by the BID was referred to as the Assisted Business. Stearns noted it was typical contract language, that the BID was the entity being assisted, and that he was comfortable with language overall. It was noted that Charlie Beaton would need to replace Tim France as the signatory. Cederberg suggested the dates in contract needed correction. Buchanan noted the January 2020 date should be changed to April 2020. It was noted that the planning process may not be entirely completed by the April 2021 date, but folks acknowledged an extension could be requested if necessary. Cederberg asked if Dover, Kohl & Partners (DK&P) would be okay with the materials being co-owned by a state agency. With the noted minor adjustments to the memo, Stearns moved for approval of contract, Cederberg seconded the motion, and the contract was unanimously approved.

Review & Execution of Addendum to Dover, Kohl & Partners Contract: McCarthy reminded the board members that the addendum to the original contract between the Downtown BID and DK&P was in the board packet and that it had been reviewed and approved by the BID Board at the February 2020 board meeting. She also noted the board packet included Buchanan’s overview memo to the MRA Board from last winter as well. Once we are ready to move forward, McCarthy will execute the addendum, alongside the MOU with MEP.

Buchanan noted that due to the COVID pandemic, there is no hurry to begin planning for the building at this time. The City of Missoula has agreed to hire a leasing agent to rent some flex space in the near term. Buchanan then looped the board in on the city’s desire to do some master planning in the West Broadway Corridor and the potential to do a third addendum to the Downtown Master Plan Contract for this planning process as well. She noted her desire to bring forth another proposal in the future to really look at the corridor from Russell Street to the east and along the southside of Broadway to the river. She noted the city anticipates relocating the Missoula Water division to the Scott Street area, which would open up some large space, and she also noted the Adam & Eve building is now on the market. With the city’s acquisition of the Sleepy Inn, these three large parcels could open up the opportunity to do something more significant and relevant in the area.

Financial Review: Giblin provided a summary of the BID financial reports. He noted the Balance Sheet showed the BID has \$81,224 in cash. He also noted no BID property assessments came in in May, only revenue from the city garbage removal contract at \$5,083. The only major expenses for the month were for rent and maintenance. Gilligan suggested we should be conservative with expenditures if BID revenues are slow in coming. Buchanan shared the city has not received any information yet about whether property owners are or will be late with payments. July will be the first time that information will be available. She added that taxes will likely be paid, no matter what, as Montana's late penalties are more severe than in other states. Giblin agreed there was reason to be cautious in spending, and noted the only major expenses he foresees at this point will be garbage cans for the new library.

Giblin also shared that the details regarding the Partnership's PPP loan, and the board then discussed the CARES Act and the State's \$1.25 billion source. McCarthy suggested there may be opportunities to seek COVID funding for something like widening the riverfront trail. Beaton, who served on the Governor's COVID Advisory Committee, suggested the fund categories, set 30 days ago, will now probably limit emergency use/need.

North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan: McCarthy gave a brief overview of the survey results from the digital reveal. She noted that nearly 300 surveys were completed, more than would have been done had the reveal been in person. The most popular ideas were: river access/connectivity, festivals and music events, year-round activation, and the riverfront promenade. She also noted the most popular under-bridge activities were: climbing wall, lighting & art, pump track and swing seats. Two projects that will most likely come to fruition first will be the under-bridge improvements, as part of MDT's reclamation of the worksite following the Higgins Bridge construction, as well as the potential to wrap the power substation with public art. Buchanan wondered if estimated costs have been assigned to projects, and McCarthy noted that was the next step in the process. Engagement HQ results indicate more than 2,000 people visited the site and viewed a video or two. General discussion covered various interests noted from the surveys, such as parkour, with high interest and low interest for the ice ribbon. Beaton noted the ice ribbon is a good addition to the park, but he was surprised at the low public interest.

Update on MDF's Downtown Business Support Fund: Giblin reported that a little over \$100,000 has been raised with close to 20 businesses donating and multiple individuals donating on the GoFundMe site. There remains about \$6,000 left to distribute. We have received more than 80 applications and distributed funds to 73 businesses. There are 13 applications that did not qualify. The Fund was marketed through various media outlets and the DMP's social media venues. When asked, Giblin reported the GoFundMe site brought in \$4,250. Cederberg asked about state grants to assist, and Giblin responded that he completed a State of Montana Innovation Grant (COVID funds), asking for \$25,000, but there was no word yet. McCarthy noted the Foundation received a lot of positive feedback from businesses and the general public regarding the Business Support Fund, noting it was good PR for the Foundation, and that board members felt "really good" about delivering funds to businesses who were so grateful.

Review of Business Activity Reports: McCarthy noted she shared the Business Activity report and the Ambassador report on Monday and shared that Nick Caras' Grand Opening for the Bike & Type Co-Working Space was this week. Stearns brought up the petitioning in support of legalizing recreational marijuana and suggested if it passed in November that the effect on retail spaces in downtown could be enormous. Would they take up even more locations downtown? Beaton asked if there are zoning restrictions around the number of dispensaries in an area and wondered how the changes from medicinal to recreational will impact the environment and the number of pot shops in downtown. Buchanan noted that medical dispensaries are street killers due to the required covering of clear windows and suggested recreational use eliminates that requirement. Cederberg suggested we consider visiting with Councilman Jordan Hess, chair of Land Use & Planning Committee, to discuss what zoning is there.

Updates on Police, Ambassador, Clean Team & Maintenance: McCarthy reported the Police Reports have not been received and that she has an inquiry in about the COPS grant to help fund a second downtown officer. She reported the Ambassador report indicates Dave Chrismon cleaned up almost 700 graffiti tags in March, April and May. Ambassador

Dave is going to stay at 25 hours a week for now. The Clean Team is still operating at 50% capacity (3 people instead of 6) and will not be able to make up the lost 300 hours due to COVID. The BID will not be billed for services in April. McCarthy reported that we lost our second maintenance employee, who resigned because the weight of lifting the garbage from the street cans is causing some back pain. He will not be replaced at this time, but we will use our facilities staff to help fill the gaps. Buchanan asked about other support staff and what work they are doing. McCarthy responded that all events in Caras Park have been cancelled, and most banner business has been cancelled, so the only work we have for facilities staff is primarily with flowers, and now the Downtown Pop-Ups in the park.

Staffing Update and Partner Updates: MDA, MDF: McCarthy shared that Mirtha Beccera has stepped down from the Director of Giving Position due to not having childcare because of COVID. The position will not be filled at this time. Now that the Business Support Fund is coming to the end of its campaign, the Foundation's next project won't be until the holiday season campaign. She noted that MDA has lost essentially all event business, with cancellations across the board, but the DMP is going to try Downtown Pop-Ups as an alternative program to Out to Lunch and Downtown ToNight. Giblin noted the DMP is monitoring income and expenses closely while seeking out grant opportunities.

McCarthy also reported that the Heritage Missoula Plan was adopted by both the Missoula County Commission and the Missoula City Council, which closes the multi-agency adoption process. The Heritage Trail Anchor medallions have been designed and will be sent to the fabricator soon. She also noted that Jean Belange-Nye's "Faces of Missoula" project is going forward. Unseen Missoula Tours are underway, but sales are slow due to COVID and limited marketing to date.

Old Business, New Business, Announcements: Discussion was had regarding various items related to COVID and business activity. Information was shared regarding what's happening at Missoula hospitals, how activity is slow, nurses are going home early, and volunteers are not anticipated to return until July. Normal procedures are starting to tick up, which means people are feeling a little more confident going out. Discussion of various retail markets and activities such as biking and skateboarding are being impacted by COVID and trade restrictions with China. Big box retail – think Lowe's, Home Depot, Ace Hardware, Target, WalMart – are doing very well with population staying home and making improvements to property.

With no other business, Beaton adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm, and a small celebration for Tim France commenced.