

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, September 15, 2020 via Zoom

Present: All board members were present.

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Robert Giblin & John Corwin

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Charlie Beaton at 3:02pm. Introductions were given for new board member Karen Sippy.

Approval of August Minutes: Gilligan Financial Review 3rd line – reminded not reminder. 2nd page – Staffing updates-won't be taking payment from partners. Collecting dues-Membership? Discussion of DT Policing – will that be discussed today. Buchanan motioned to approve as corrected. Stearns seconded. All are in favor.

Financial Review: Giblin announced that he has not received financial from the City of Missoula and did not get a message back. Financials are therefore not ready for today. Giblin did say we have \$199,000 in the bank and that is more than last year largely because we did not make a payment to the Partnership. August was largely business as usual. It was decided we can wait till the October meeting to go over August financials.

Discussion of Downtown Policing: McCarthy explained that we have had some retailers that signed on to no additional police officers to Downtown. We had an advocacy meeting with retailers and that they do want policing but also want additional resources. A safety overview is good to have. The ones that were signed the petition were mostly wanting more services available to the public. The MPD is wanting to hire internally and have posted it internally. They want an officer that is not an enforcer but a person with more empathy. We are looking to get the program started in October. We met with Theresa Williams last week and talked about the Crisis Intervention Team. She has agreed to talk to the board next month. We have a contract and we have agreed to get a 2nd officer. McCarthy has reached out to the Police Chief and Assistant Chief to talk about what kind of training officers will get but have not heard back yet. Beaton asked if after the advocacy meeting if those that signed against the 2nd police officer if they were more open to the idea. McCarthy said they were though they would like to see the officer more directly involved with DT businesses. Buchanan thinks that once the intervention team gets going that the conversation around the policing will be different. We have approached Mountain Line to contribute 15k per year for three years to help fund the DT police officer. The Parking Commission will continue to fund a portion of the first police officer. They have helped fund since day one.

Discussion on Downtown Ambassador Program: McCarthy explained that Sippy, Beaton, Corwin and Giblin met to discuss the programs history. Sippy explained that her and Beaton has looked at similar cities and they both liked when the Ambassadors had more of welcoming role and a tour guide type of roll. The hospitality role of the Ambassador is very important for a town for Missoula. Sippy has asked some people and they very much like the hospitality role. Beaton added that we really don't need to reinvent the wheel but to keep doing what we are doing. Having a great relationship with police officer, stopping by downtown businesses more, especially ones that aren't on the street level. We probably won't act on anything until next spring. Sippy added that they also are looking forward to seeing what the survey from MDA members say. McCarthy said that many cities have their ambassador do the role that our Clean Team does. Our program is focused on what it should be focused on. McCarthy thinks there needs to be more check ins with business owners. At least once per month. We used to have two ambassadors but now have one and even cut back hours in the winter. Giblin thinks once we are going through budgets in the spring is a good time to look back at this role and to see how to fill it.

Downtown Master Plan Updates:

- A.) Planning Initiatives: NRSP&T, Payne Block, West Broadway:** We still do not have the financial component of this plan but Dover Kohl is working on this. We are looking to roll the plan out in early October. Very little has changed since the board saw it last except for some components under the Higgins Bridge. A parkour element has been added. That contract should be coming to a close in the next couple months. We are hoping to have the plan adopted by City Council by mid-November. Buchanan said we have applied for a Big Sky Trust Fund grant for the West Broadway corridor. The boundaries are Broadway to the river and Russell to California Street. Within the next couple months we will start rolling out some of those plans. Plans for the Sleepy Inn will come into fruition as well within the next couple months. This project will be done by MRA and there will be an MOU between them and BID. The City has decided to leap frog the Payne Block project with this one. The Payne Block is such a critical location in Downtown that has been gifted to the city that Buchanan wants to make sure we make a good decision and not squander the opportunity. It will be an occupied building once the new library is ready to go. In the interim, it looks like Parks and Rec will use that for in school and after school child care. There is also some tech companies that will move in as well. McCarthy said that there really needs someone to step up and start taking care of the landscaping at the block.
- B.) Alley Inventory:** McCarthy explained this will be our next project. We have found a young woman that has a unique interest in alleys. We will spend no more than 5,000 to do an inventory of every alley in the BID district. We will find what the opportunities are for each alley way. See if we can make any predominantly pedestrian based or move vehicle based. We will find out if we should invest in any of these alley ways and which ones will have the biggest impacts. Corwin reminded the group that if you look at the Master Plan that there is a very concise statement about what we want to do. We see this person as a very good person to dig deep and ask questions on the 5 miles of alley ways in Downtown for a very low cost. Sippy said she would be very interested in having her look at the materials used in alley ways as well as the lighting used in the alleys. Corwin said this will be a very in depth project and will be very interesting to see what she finds.

Business Development Updates: Beaton explained that an advisory committee started in August with home owners and business owners to see what we need Downtown. There has been talks to have something electronic in case someone wants to bring a business to downtown. Corwin explained that we can work on making sure potential business owners have what they need to move into downtown. Gilligan asked since we have done many surveys with Downtown property owners and will we use any of this information? Corwin answered that there is a lot of good information within those surveys. McCarthy added that we still do 2 to 1 businesses opening to closing and this is normal for Missoula.

Staffing Update and Partner Updates: MDA, MDF: Giblin explained that the MDA has their Swing for Downtown this Friday and will be at the Paddlehead stadium. We are still filling up teams. This is to help with the loss of events for the MDA. It won't be a huge revenue builder but something. We are still looking at collecting dues for 2020 and there are about 20 of those. There is a general marketing campaign that will lead us into our holiday campaign. We are collecting videos from business owners to see how they made it through the pandemic. We are still planning FOT and POL. Festival of Trees will be mostly virtual and POL is looking into using Caras Park. The Spirit of Place is being set up by the foundation in showing what the foundation does and what the accomplishments are. The Foundation is planning the heritage trail that will be equipped with different kiosks that tell the history of Missoula. We are also planning on where we can put our medallions for the Heritage Missoula plans. Giblin added that we are looking at expanding the holiday décor in Downtown Missoula from Hellgate High School to the XXXX's. The Foundation received a check for the license plate revenue and it was the highest check we have ever received. The Partnership has closed our office on Fridays through the end of September to save some money. We have been working on several different grants through the state. At present, we are still awaiting several grants through the State of Montana to the amount of 260K that we have not heard about.

We are still thinking to apply for the mortgage deferral for the MDA. The MDA will not be paying its mortgage for the next year. This will also change the rental portion of the BID contract will not be collected for 1 year. Beaton asked if the bridge being under construction will affect events at Caras Park. McCarthy answered that it would be but not a lot. There will be construction but it wouldn't affect us all that much. Buchanan suggested that the \$855 per month from the mortgage deferral to be ear marked for business retention.

Old Business, New Business, Announcements: McCarthy added she doesn't know how to do strategic planning for 2020 within a pandemic. She asked if anyone has thoughts to let her know. Stearns asked that we may need to start planning together in person before the weather gets bad. Specifically with the chief of police and other police officers. Stearns brought up the contract for the Stoverud Clock. We do own the clock but is maintained by the Florence Building.

With no other business, Beaton adjourned the meeting at 4:27 pm.