

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 16, 2011
ALPS Conference Room
111 North Higgins (Second Floor)

Attendees: Charlie Beaton, Ellen Buchanan, Carma Gilligan, Rich Huffman, Alan Newell

Absent: Dan Cederberg, Tim France

Staff: Rod Austin, Patrick Ryan

Guest: Linda McCarthy

1. **Meeting Commencement:** 3:05 pm
2. **Introduction of Guests and Public Comment:** Charlie Beaton presided in Tim France's absence. Rod Austin introduced Matt Gibson, owner of the Missoula Independent, Travis Mateer from the Poverello Center, and Hank Deeringer from Midas. The board and staff introduced themselves.
3. **BID Expansion – S. Orange St. – Meeting with Matt Gibson and Hank Deeringer:** About two years ago, Rod Austin met with Gibson and then Deeringer to discuss a possible expansion of the BID on S. Orange St. At that point, the BID couldn't get enough businesses in that area to sign up for the expansion and the BID wasn't sure about its own renewal. Also, the Orange St. Food Farm was unwilling to join. According to Deeringer, the Food Farm didn't believe the BID could get the 60% of the businesses required to sign on for an expansion. Austin talked with the Food Farm twice and will include them in the conversation this time as well. Gibson and Deeringer had agreed to talk to local businesses. Carma Gilligan asked what the cost would be for the expansion and Austin said it would be just under \$10,000. The area would be designated as a Zone 2. The Clean Team would sweep the area a minimum of once a month and the Ambassadors would be there about twice a week. Gilligan expressed concern about the drain on current BID resources from Zone 1, e.g., the Downtown Police Officer, Clean Team, Ambassadors, and Maintenance Engineer Daniel Tulk. Austin assured everyone there wouldn't be that much of an impact on their Zone 1 services.

Alan Newell asked why Gibson and Deeringer were interested in joining the BID. Gibson indicated he used to be a part of the Hip Strip and felt it was a very well developed and vibrant area. Gibson believed S. Orange could be developed similarly, making a connection with Downtown to Stephens Ave. Discussion ensued about problems in the area, especially focusing on speeding traffic and a complete lack of pedestrian crossings. Gibson and Deeringer commented on the fact there are some good properties in the area that would benefit from BID involvement. Austin noted the BID could certainly help facilitate discussions with City Hall to address some of these issues. Austin also said adjacent areas are being developed, including the work in the Sawmill District and the MDA's desire to place banners and, perhaps, flower baskets on the Orange St. Bridge. Alan Newell said an improved streetscape would help with the traffic issues. Deeringer commented that traffic noticeably improves at Stephens Ave. Ellen Buchanan pointed out that Stephens has a landscaped median and clear pedestrian crossings, creating more of a shared space. Buchanan also noted the importance of Orange St. not being a barrier street with people being reluctant to cross it. This would be especially important as the Riverfront Triangle develops. Discussion ensued about all these issues. Buchanan asked what was needed from the board. Austin indicated nothing at this time, but he, Deeringer and Gibson would discuss the possible expansion with business owners and would report back at the next meeting.

4. **Homeless Outreach Team Update (Travis Mateer):** Travis Mateer gave a report on the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). Mateer said the HOT program started in June and initially approached businesses to let them know what HOT provides. Downtown businesses were concerned about chronic homelessness, panhandling,

and alcohol and drug addiction. Mateer indicated one of the important aspects of HOT was engaging these conversations and providing education on the issues. HOT's primary purpose is to reach out to the homeless on the street and educate them on services available to them, especially through the Poverello Center. Mateer said the social-worker aspect of HOT was more important than just dealing with addiction diseases and mental health issues. HOT has been dealing with homeless camps around town, keeping an eye on the Court House lawn, talking with the Missoula Pubic Library (since this tends to be a gathering place for homeless individuals) and working with the Missoula Housing Authority to assist in finding housing for individuals. Carma Gilligan asked if any of the local churches were involved and Mateer said they weren't directly, but could be through volunteerism. HOT has also been working with the Downtown Police Officer and explaining ordinances to transients to let them know what they can't be doing. Mateer said this increases the transients' accountability, but added there needed to be more serious consequences beyond just tickets or a night in jail. Rod Austin emphasized the need to focus on changing behaviors, since inappropriate behaviors impact an individual's ability to access services. Austin also noted the importance for ongoing conversations between HOT, the Poverello Center and other organizations since the educational part is a key factor to ongoing success. Linda McCarthy asked if HOT had received any media coverage. Mateer said there had been some, but not a lot. Mateer added one of the challenges has been getting the HOT phone number to businesses and encouraging them to call HOT for non-emergency issues and avoiding using the services of EMTs and the police. Ellen Buchanan asked if the BID and MDA could promote the number of their website. Both Austin and McCarthy said they could. Alan Newell suggested printing cards that contained the numbers for HOT, the Downtown Police Officer, and Ambassadors and distributing them to downtown businesses. Austin said he would talk to Ambassador Laurie Anderson about ideas for the card and its distribution. Mateer was thanked for attending and providing his report. Some discussion ensued afterward.

5. **Streetcar Survey Funding** – Rod Austin reported the BID was asking the board of directors for \$7,500 for an Urban Streetcar Survey, which would be part of a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) being done by Mountain Line. The BID would be one of six partners joining together to fund the total amount of \$30,000. Austin reported an urban streetcar was considered under the Downtown Master Plan and this survey would assess its feasibility. Ellen Buchanan added that the survey would help figure out how to implement the Master Plan. Austin said the UM was very interested in the streetcar since they were looking to bring something into Downtown. Alan Newell was concerned that it would take at least 10 years before a streetcar line could start being built and questioned whether a survey done now would even be valid and if it was even worth spending \$7,500 at this point. Buchanan said that having the survey completed would allow for applying for federal funding. Buchanan added the survey would provide economic input, as a fixed street car would create a fixed route that things would grow up around. There were a lot of questions and Linda McCarthy said that was exactly what the survey would be used for. McCarthy added the funding needed to be completed within a few weeks. Buchanan said four downtown organizations were being approached, as well as the UM and Saint Patrick Hospital, although she didn't know how much each would contribute. Buchanan said the MRA would be putting in \$7,500. Charlie Beaton asked if the MDA board would be approached and McCarthy said yes and the MDA would seek to put in \$5,000. Buchanan added this would be the least expensive way to get the survey done by working with Mountain Line on the COA. Buchanan and McCarthy both agreed the survey would also be important to identify whether a streetcar would be completely unfeasible and then that could be removed from the Master Plan. Discussion ensued, including the possibility of putting in less than the requested \$7,500. Several board members agreed with this proposal. **Rich Huffman moved to authorize the use of up to \$5,000 for the Urban Streetcar Survey Funding. Alan Newell seconded and all approved, with the exception of Carma Gilligan who abstained.**

6. Director's Report

a. Downtown Master Plan Update

- i. **Front & Pattee Parking Structure** – Ellen Buchanan said the structure was moving along nicely, but not all the concrete would get poured before winter set in. Rod Austin added that documents had been signed with Prudential Realty to lease the retail spaces in the structure. Charlie Beaton asked if the MDA would consider moving their offices to the structure and

Linda McCarthy said the MDA was interested and would be discussing the feasibility of such a move. Apart from the structure, Rich Huffman asked about the electronic parking meters downtown and Austin said they had all been removed.

- ii. **Implementation** – McCarthy reported Implementation was still working on wayfinding and the Front & Main conversion. The Montana Department of Transportation is repaving Main St. and there is a possibility of joining forces to work on the conversion as well.

b. Committees

- i. **Mayor's Downtown Advisory Committee (MDAC)** – Austin reported the last time the MDAC met, they discussed the HOT program.
- ii. **Marketing Committee Update** – Austin reported that due to bonding commitments on the garage, the Missoula Parking Commission was pulling its funding from the combined marketing campaign. The BID would still put in its pledged \$30,000, but overall marketing would be less. Charlie Beaton said the committee would be discussing this issue at the next meeting.
- iii. **Streetscape Committee – Can Purchase** – Austin reported the committee had not met, but added that three new cans had been purchased.
- iv. **Recruitment & Retention (R&R)** – Austin reported the committee needed to meet. Jessica Daniels had the new mapping software running and was pleased with the results. Austin and McCarthy saw a brief demonstration, but Daniels won't be ready to demonstrate it to the board until October.
- v. **Employee Committee** – Austin reported September was review time for all employees.

c. Other

- i. **POV Relocation** – Austin reported there had been a large public meeting that was well run and not divisive in nature. Several possible locations had been discussed, but the Trail's End site was still near the top of the list. Dan Cederberg was a member of the twelve person working group formed to consider all the possible sites.
- ii. **Downtown Police Officer** – Austin reported Officer Bob Franke was working out great and providing detailed tracking points about downtown crime. Austin will compile the information into an ongoing list to show how and when crime had dropped. Additionally, the officer position should be an ongoing position and would continue until October.
- iii. **Trees** – No report.
- iv. **Other** – Austin announced he would be attending the Downtown Convention in Bozeman from October 12 – 14 and invited any board member to attend as well.

7. Ambassadors Report: Austin reported nothing out of the ordinary. A lot of stickers being placed on surfaces, with some items being applied with wallpaper paste.

8. Approval of May Board Minutes: Alan Newell moved to approve the June 21st minutes. Ellen Buchanan seconded and all approved.

9. Financial Report: Alan Newell told Linda McCarthy that Robert Giblin was doing a great job for the BID and said that should be communicated to the MDA.

10. Trustee Comments: N/A

11. Meeting Adjournment: 4:56 pm