

**Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2014 at the Downtown Missoula Partnership Office (218 E. Main)

Present: Tim France, Charlie Beaton, Ellen Buchanan, Dan Cederberg, Carma Gilligan, Alan Newell

Absent: Rich Huffman

Staff Present: Linda McCarthy, Julie Walsh

SET BID RATEPAYER BREAKFAST & AGENDA

McCarthy presented the proposed date of Wednesday, March 12 and the proposed agenda for the meeting. Postcard invitations will be mailed the week of February 24. Review of the proposed agenda took place with each board member presenting on specific areas they're working on. McCarthy volunteered to fill in for Buchanan should the assigned jury duty come to play. A list of items to include as handouts was presented and included Clean Team statistics, Ambassador statistics, BID Board and Staff contacts sheet, BID services rate sheet, police stats, fiscal year 2013 financials, and the business development brochure. McCarthy reported there isn't enough funds to pay for the breakfast at \$10 per person and the invitations, given there is \$504.50 allotted to spend on the breakfast. **Cederberg moved to transfer \$600 from the contingency budget into ratepayer communications to help cover the cost of the breakfast. Newell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

Following Gilligan's offer to call ratepayers about the breakfast, discussion ensued about the differences between the BID ratepayer database and the city's annual submission of an Excel spreadsheet of the current ratepayer information each year. Discussion ensued on how to best maintain and keep current the ratepayer database. Cederberg suggested continuing to rely on the City's list because it changes frequently. The ratepayer breakfast is, by far, the best tool for communicating to ratepayers, and it was decided that if attendance at this year's event was low, then the BID Board would discontinue doing the breakfast event.

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS

McCarthy gave an overview of the information Johnson has acquired on purchasing a bicycle for the Ambassador program, and France is hoping for about a 15% discount if we purchased from Missoula Bicycle Works. **Beaton moved to approve purchase of the bicycle and accessories on the wish list, including a bell.** When reviewing the budget, it was noted that the ambassador supplies line item does not have enough funds to cover the entire cost of the bicycle. **Cederberg amended the motion to transfer \$1,000.00 from contingency funds to ambassador supplies to cover the cost of the equipment. Newell seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.** When asked, McCarthy reported that the Missoula Parking Commission (MPC) has offered to provide bike parking free of charge.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES

Gilligan provided her edits on the January minutes to Walsh earlier in month. Cederberg moved to approve the minute, and Buchanan seconded the motion. The minutes for January's board meeting were unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Giblin circulated a new signature card for the BID's account at Community Bank account for all board members to sign and reported that the credit card will be reissued in Linda McCarthy's name.

Following additional research, it was determined that the BID needs to purchase its own directors and officers insurance since the BID is not covered under the city's insurance policies. Staff reported that Payne Financial, BID's current insurance provider, could provide the needed coverage for about \$1,000. **Alan Newell motioned to move \$1,500.00 from the contingency funds to administrative funds (account #62615) for the additional insurance purchase. Cederberg seconded the motion.**

Discussion ensued about Payne Financial's upcoming relocation from downtown to Palmer Street, based upon its merger with Western States Insurance, and it was recommended that staff look for other insurance providers located within the Downtown business district. Suggested referrals for consideration were Marcure Insurance on West Front and Farmers Insurance on north Higgins. Staff agreed to investigate further. **The motion to move funds and purchase D&O insurance passed unanimously.**

UPDATE ON WEST BROADWAY EXPANSION

McCarthy provided an update on the petitioning process and noted that only property owners on the north side of Broadway have submitted signed petitions, while owners on the south side of Broadway are generally not favorable towards paying into the Downtown BID. There remains one ownership group on the north side of the street still outstanding on petition submittal. McCarthy noted that while this project remains important, it will be put on the back burner for a period of time with June being the target date for completion.

DEVELOPMENT OF FISCAL YEAR BUDGET 2015

With the goal of having the Downtown BID budget approved at the April board meeting, Giblin and the Finance Committee will formulate the first draft with committee input. Given the creation of the Downtown Partnership, the budget will look different as there will no longer be a line item for administration, and the personnel expenditures will be detailed in the Partnership budget and not in the BID budget. Buchanan noted that it's best to have the city budget approved in June.

Input from the committees – including streetscapes, business development, and Downtown Master Plan – should be sought, and funding should be allocated towards projects that will accomplish the goals set forth in last fall's strategic planning session. Consideration must be given to the funding needed for year-round policing services, and France agreed to visit with Chief Brady about updating the contract. Consultation should also take place with the Missoula Parking Commission on continuing to share that expense and at what level. Discussion ensued about the marketing efforts and the need to regain the momentum with brand development, rollout and participation by downtown businesses. The downtown marketing committee is close to finalizing the 2014 Marketing Plan and conversations are happening about what, if any, business education and training services might be valuable for the downtown business community. McCarthy also noted the need to fund a market analysis for the business, retail and employment efforts, as well as potential consideration for moving the downtown property inventory into a mapping if that is a priority.

The Finance Committee will bring a draft budget to the next board meeting for analysis and modifications with the goal of having the budget final at the April meeting.

CLEAN AND SAFE REPORTS

Downtown Ambassador Laurie Johnson provided a brief overview of the monthly ambassador statistics, noting the removal of the line item 'safety audit' from the categories, given that service has not been requested for several years. Johnson also noted the graphic reports she developed as a statistical overview of 2013 and garnered attention to the summertime statistics as they relate to the activities surrounding the Rainbow Family gathering in Western Montana, noting the ambassadors oftentimes had interactions with 25 different individuals each day last summer. She also compiled three years of data into a report to show annual comparisons. Both the Ambassador Program statistics, as well as the statistics from the Downtown Clean Team, are compiled monthly, rather than weekly. Johnson pointed out that the violations for open container remain the highest and that sitting on the sidewalks all day long encourage more issues with open container violations.

Ambassador Johnson spoke of the statistical analysis work she did during the process of strengthening the solicitation and panhandling ordinances and noted that the modified distance of 10-feet from a commercial door generally indicated that 80-85% of the sidewalk in any given block is open and available for panhandling activities. Higgins Avenue sidewalks are generally 16 feet deep from the curb to the building front and the 10-foot distance modification provides essentially six feet (or three feet on each side of the sidewalk) for solicitation. France noted with frustration that the modifications from the council approved version from December 2013 still allow for solicitation activities throughout downtown. Advocacy for strengthening the ordinances continues with the next meeting to be the City Council's Public Health & Safety Committee on Wednesday, Feb. 26 (time TBA). McCarthy reported that the most previous public hearing saw only 16 individuals come and verbally support the solicitation and pedestrian interference ordinances. Board members noted the desire for council members to hear more testimony from the general resident or downtown consumer and not just downtown business interests. Cederberg shared his hopes that the downtown interests have garnered what he thinks is at least six votes from council members.

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN REPORT

McCarthy gave a brief overview of the DTMP Implementation Team's work. She noted projects that included MDT's study on the Higgins and Madison bridges, the Front & Main conversion study, the Missoula College environmental analysis, the wayfinding, parking, and the annual report of accomplishments to the Missoula City Council.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Both Buxton and Downtown Works have followed up with us on potential plans to do a market analysis and retail strategy. In conversations with Ms. McCauley, it was noted that some of the statistics included in the business development brochure are not high-performance statistics and should not necessarily be highlighted. This speaks to the need to better understand our retail environment and how to improve sales. Gilligan shared that she liked the 2013 Downtown Business Development document included in the BID Board packets and suggested it be shared with the ratepayers at the annual meeting. McCarthy noted there is probably additional business development activity occurring in downtown that is not reflected on the list.

MARKETING: Downtown Missoula will have a booth at the Western Montana Tourism Trade Show at Southgate Mall on Saturday, Feb. 22.

PERSONNEL: Both Daniel Tulk and Andy Roy were nominated for the Downtown Employee of the Year Award, and Roy won the award at the MDA Awards Banquet in January. Ambassador Johnson will be on vacation February 24-May 3.

McCarthy reported that 24 applicants were received for the community development manager's position and that Buchanan is representing the BID's interests on the hiring committee. It was also noted that all the seasonal staffing positions – facilities staff and ambassador staff – were posted, and applications are being accepted until the positions are filled.

STREETSCAPES: McCarthy reported that she and Tulk met with a variety of city staff members on projects and programs where the city and the BID intersect. Areas such as **snow removal**, **leaf removal**, and **street cleaning** are going well by all accounts. Discussion was had about the **brick pavers on the downtown street corners** and how some of those pavers need maintenance. Given neither the city nor the BID have taken responsibility for that maintenance, and given that property owners are to maintain the sidewalks outside of their buildings, it may make sense for the BID to take ownership of that maintenance. There are approximately 20 downtown street corners with brick pavers, paid for and installed by tax increment monies and only in the downtown area, there appears to be no other way in which the city can take care of and pay for maintenance without adding another special improvement district. Given the pavers were an MRA investment, it might be necessary for the BID to allocate some funds towards maintenance and leverage the city's contributions of labor to do the work. Discussion with city staff also centered around providing the accurate and appropriate information on the services provided by the Downtown BID, especially in the realm is **sidewalk power-washing**. This service can only be provides from mid-May to mid-October and it must be scheduled in advance. Additional discussion centered around the city's recent completion of the **tree inventory**, which notes the type, condition and age of every tree in the City of Missoula and the value that inventory brings to managing the canopy in downtown and across the community. Discussion with city staff also covered **garbage management** in downtown and how it has increased from about 20 cans emptied three times a week by city staff to 60+ cans emptied seven days a week by BID staff and whether or not there was need to increase the Downtown Flushing District (also funded by property owners) to cover the city's portion of those increases. City and BID staff also discussed **maintenance of the new plant beds** (or bulb-outs) on North Higgins. This is another area where the city funded the improvements and the property owners are responsible for maintenance. It was agreed that the city and the BID staff would work together to fill the water reservoirs full twice during the summer months to keep those beds in good condition. France noted it would be very helpful for property owners to know and understand what those reservoirs look like, how large they are and how long it should take to fill them. Discussions with city staff also addressed the soon-to-be-completed draft of the **sidewalk café ordinance**, the new leadership at Animal Control and how they might be more interested in working on the **problems with dogs** in downtown.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

McCarthy reported to the board that the Saturday Arts & Crafts Market is consideration relocation from East Pine Street and that market leadership would be reaching out to business owners and property owners on the 100 block of West Alder about relocation to that area in the near future.

McCarthy reported that the Missoula Art Museum (MAM) did not get the grant funds they were hoping to acquire for the Art Park and Loo on Pine & Pattee but that they would continue search for funds for the project.

It was noted that the Poverello Center has completed its capital campaign and that construction was on schedule for the proposed November 2014 opening.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.