

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, August 18, 2015 from 3-5 pm at the DMP Office

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

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Leidy Wagener

MEETING COMMENCEMENT & INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Andy Roy, Downtown Police Officer, was present. Roy reported on some of the logistical issues that are new to this season due to the relocation of the Poverello Center, mainly that he is getting called out of Downtown more often. Late summer has been very busy with a myriad of issues but the good news is that disorderly conduct-type issues have decreased this year. He has not started comparing stats to last year, which usually takes place at the end of the year. Buchanan asked how the adjusted shifts for the Student Resource Officers (SROs) has worked this summer. Roy responded that the main issue with the SROs is that their scheduling is not consistent during the summer, but when they are here they are a great help. Discussion regarding various complaints from business owners and possible solutions ensued. Buchanan asked about the West Broadway island, Roy reported that a weekly sweep was planned by Parks & Rec and the Poverello center in early spring, but he is unaware of the result of that initiative. Cederberg asked about the demographic of people in town this summer, whether it is people that have been in Missoula for years or whether there are more new people coming through. Roy responded that there are a lot of new people coming into Missoula. France asked about the role of police officers who drive through downtown and what their involvement is in mitigating downtown issues as they drive around. Roy gave details on the role of the busier shifts, particularly after 5pm, and that they are mostly working on answering calls. Cederberg stated that one of the goals of the BID is to change the image of downtown Missoula for transients coming into town. Roy reported that he has been spending a lot of time at Caras responding to complaints about younger transients hanging out there. Gilligan wondered if those individuals' dogs could be taken away if they weren't licensed or vaccinated, Roy suggested implementing an ordinance regarding unlicensed/unvaccinated dogs last year. If he had the ability to take their dogs away, he could tell them to either leave the area or have their dog taken away. Cederberg and Newell said that they believe that the current ordinance would allow for such action to be possible, but that will be investigated further. Animal Control's response to problem animals has improved over the last year. Discussion regarding issues specific to Caras Park ensued. The Mayor and the Police Chief have suggested that three non-sworn officers should be appointed rather than one sworn officer. Roy is not in favor of that idea because of the limitations of their abilities, but said that one non-sworn and one sworn officer would be beneficial. Cederberg also said that they discussed having a reserve deputy for downtown as well. Roy believes that any extra person would help, but the most helpful would be another full time officer. Discussion regarding jurisdiction of the Court House lawn and who can enforce city ordinances in that location ensued. McCarthy asked if there was anything the Ambassadors could do to help out. The most helpful thing the ambassadors can do is stay diligent and communicate with Roy about anything they see. He also suggested getting radios for the ambassadors to communicate directly with him without having to pull out a cell phone. All agreed that that was feasible and a good idea. Roy reported that transient activity in the Northside pedestrian bridge has decreased, he hasn't written a ticket there in 8 weeks. He also said that there are several people who are interested in joining him as a downtown officer. Roy was lauded by all for his hard work and contribution to downtown.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Funding for Missoula Art Park

Cederberg emailed Bill Wickman regarding the redesign of the Art Park and Wickman said that he has not yet seen the redesign. Cederberg requested to table the funding approval until next month given the results of the petition that was signed by all the neighbors of the proposed park. Buchanan believes that Laura Millin from the MAM was intending to get in touch with Wickman, but perhaps that hasn't happened yet. McCarthy reported that the Chamber contacted her today regarding the MDA/BID opinion of the project, they are concerned about parking. She told them that the MDA endorsed the project and contributed to its funding, the BID endorsed the project and that parking concerns have been addressed. Discussion regarding the petition and the BID's endorsement of the project ensued. McCarthy suggested that she call Millin and discuss the concerns brought up about the petition at the meeting. Buchanan suggested that the MAM host a public presentation to show those who signed the petition that their concerns have been addressed. Not all parties were aware of the petition results when the BID voted to endorse the project. The approval will be deferred to the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF JULY MINUTES

Beaton moved to approve the minutes. Aasved seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

DISCUSSION ON PRIORITIES FOR MAYOR'S DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMISSION (MDAC)

Cederberg reported that a committee is being put together to study the problem of over-incarceration in Missoula. MDAC discussed possibly disbanding because other committees taking over many of their goals. They concluded that MDAC members should come up with some ideas on projects to move forward to be discussed at their next meeting. Cederberg's main idea is spear heading the hiring of a second downtown officer; all agreed that that is a good project for MDAC. They are also working on the no serve list and could also investigate the possible dog ordinance discussed earlier. Buchanan asked whether MDAC could work on more positive projects in an effort to improve retention of MDAC members. Reaching Home is going to take on the detox and wet housing project. MDAC also requested the downtown statistics from the City, but has not received them. Discussion regarding statistics from the City ensued. McCarthy asked about making Real Change a priority again, she plans to attend their meeting as a representative from the BID on Friday. Real Change has hired a marketing firm to put together an outreach plan. France stated his opinion that progress has been made regarding panhandling, but that Real Change should no longer be a priority. Once the match was no longer part of the campaign, it became less effective. Discussion regarding the effectiveness of Real Change ensued.

FINANCE REPORT

McCarthy reported that a bill was received from the City for the Downtown Police Officer's services. The BID was previously billed once a year but this year the City is billing twice. Newell said that the Parking Commission needs to be billed for their half of that amount.

PROJECT UPDATES

Missoula Bridges: Buchanan reported that the MDT study of Madison and Higgins Ave bridges was completed several months ago. A structural analysis has also been completed and it was originally concluded that the Higgins Bridge deck cannot be widened. Buchanan had a meeting in which reallocating the space on the Higgins Bridge was discussed. It was concluded at that meeting that the bridge actually can be widened with the abutments improved. MDT will investigate what the structural indications will be if the bridge is widened 5 feet

on the west side. The project will end up requiring more funding than originally planned; they discussed where the money will come from in the meeting with MDT. MDT understands that just patching the bridge is not the best option. Cederberg asked about the reasons behind having the same structural requirements for bikes and pedestrians as for cars. MDT doesn't want to limit their options for the possibility of the bridge being only for vehicles in the future. MDT's biggest concern is moving the stairs on the west side of the bridge mainly because of ADA requirements. Discussion regarding possible solutions to the stair issue ensued. The project is moving forward quickly.

MISSION REPORTS

CLEAN: McCarthy presented a letter from a tourist lauding Ambassador Dave Chrismon's service on their recent visit to Missoula. Chrismon will be working through October. McCarthy distributed the Ambassador stats.

MASTER PLAN: McCarthy reported that the wayfinding documents were put out to bid and the MDA covered the cost of the project manager. Buchanan presented a brief background of Nory Winter's experience and previous projects; he has been hired by the MRA to do a study on development of Scott Street area. She wanted to use this opportunity to bring him in to meet with Master Plan Committee to talk about Brooks Street increasing density, Russell Street rebuild, etc. He will help brainstorm and present possible design guidelines, form based codes, or zoning for planning that could be implemented in Missoula. City Council members may be interested in hearing what he has to say. A workshop in January may happen if there is enough interest. Discussion regarding possible location and interest ensued.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEW BUSINESS

McCarthy reported that the MDA is hosting the City Council candidates at the next two luncheons and that Advocacy sent out a questionnaire to the candidates. Six of the 12 seats are open, including those for the Downtown Wards. Discussion regarding the turnover ensued.

Roots Fest is next weekend and Downtown ToNight is extending two weeks into September. McCarthy would like to move Strategic Planning meeting up and proposed October 7, 8, and 9 as the dates for the meeting. Possible locations were suggested and discussed. Cederberg said that the taxable values aren't ready. Discussion regarding values, etc. ensued. All compared notes on results.

McCarthy reported that Gilligan has been doing some volunteer work at the DMP office, helping with data entry for the new membership database software.

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.