

Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 19, 2011
ALPS Conference Room
111 North Higgins (Second Floor)

Attendees: Charlie Beaton, Ellen Buchanan, Dan Cederberg, Tim France, Carma Gilligan, Rich Huffman, Alan Newell

Absent: N/A

Staff: Rod Austin, Patrick Ryan, Colin Hickey, Laurie Johnson

Guest: Police Chief Mark Muir

1. Meeting Commencement: 3:01 pm

2. Introduction of Guests and Public Comment: Rod introduced Colin Hickey, the MDA's new Marketing & Events Director, to discuss MDA/BID marketing. Colin said a new marketing campaign is underway. Trying to get away from the "Dine/Shop/Play" campaign and move toward a more educational "Did you know?" campaign strategy. Colin is working with Dave McKay to design the campaign. Currently there is a sense the public doesn't really know what the BID, Missoula Parking Commission (MPC) and MDA do and the new campaign would address that by pointing out specific things all these organizations do. A primary goal of this strategy would be to drive traffic to the website, which would be changed somewhat to reflect this educational aspect. Carma asked how much traffic the website currently gets and Colin reported the site received 3000 unique visitors and 15,000 page views last month. Once the new campaign is in place, Colin will carefully track visitors to see how the campaign is working. One such change would be to highlight the "Available Properties" listed on the site and to keep that list more current. Ambassadors have reported on available properties in the past, and can continue to do so, but property owners need to be more proactive in informing the BID of vacancies and occupancies. Another focus would be promotion of the MPC, guiding people to parking locations and generally getting people downtown. Colin noted next month's budget would increase somewhat because of the change, but it's already in the budget to do this. Discussion ensued with general agreement the new campaign was a great idea and it was important to keep things fresh as the old campaign has been around for months.

3. Chief Mark Muir – Downtown Police Officer: Chief Muir said the tentative date to have the Downtown Police Officer (DTPO) in place would be May. The contributions from the BID and MPC are enabling the Police Department to move forward. The DTPO will run approximately 7 months a year, although it's starting late while the department works on finding a person for the position, as the officer who had this position last year is unable to return. Muir reported the department will bring a current traffic officer in immediately to fill the position and then, pending budget approval, hire a full-time officer at the beginning of July. The traffic officer will be in the position at least through July and then might be replaced with someone else for August – October depending on circumstances. Questions arose regarding what hours the DTPO would be on duty and whether the bike police officers would still be working downtown. Muir responded that Rod would establish the schedule depending on need, probably late morning to early evening, and that bike officers would start once they were done at the schools. The bike officers will alternate between being on bikes and being on foot.

Chief Muir also reported Crime Prevention Officer Rob Scheban is working on pursuing a "smart policing grant" utilizing established best practices, modeled on a similar project done in Oakland, CA in the 1980s. The department would be teaming with the UM for a 24-month period of time, seeking approximately \$290,000 in grant money. This would provide for one full-time police officer during the period, providing all-week coverage and double coverage on weekends. This would also fund the intensive research side of the project, which the UM would be primarily responsible for conducting. Nancy Rittle of the Office of Planning and

Grants is writing the grant and doing a great job. This is a very competitive grant process; last year, thirty-six cities applied and only six received the grant. The grant would be awarded in October, 2011.

Finally, after Chief Muir departed, there was discussion about utilizing cameras to detect graffiti artists around downtown. It was determined installing such cameras on public buildings raised serious issues.

4. **Ratepayer Breakfast:** Rod reported 67 RSVPs, including 21 BID board and staff and MDA staff as well. BID information for the breakfast was distributed, including a P&L breakdown for last year. He noted there would be a rolling 3-year display. Discussion ensued about how to characterize the tax assessment, whether it should be annotated as being for only ½ year or “collected to date.” Charlie suggested doing a yearly report featuring 2008, 2009 and 2010, leaving off 2011. Dan suggested not changing anything and simply answering questions if they come up.

Discussion ensued about the agenda, with the general consensus being it needed to be tightened up to allow more time for a Q&A. It was decided Jessica Daniels’ report on the Downtown Inventory and Linda McCarthy’s Master Plan Accomplishments presentation could both be shortened. It was further agreed that, while mention of the success of the Caras Park Campaign (including the BID’s contribution) should be mentioned during Linda’s presentation, it should not be seen as a solicitation for funds from the ratepayers. Much of the discussion centered on presenting the BID accomplishments, including active involvement in the Master Plan.. General agreement of creating a more comprehensive report of these accomplishments, not just limited to streetscapes, and put it all on one page as a handout to supplement discussion. Rod mentioned Peter Goergon of Octagon Partners would be in attendance and it was agreed he should be put on the agenda for an introduction and a few comments about the Mercantile. It was also noted Drew Kliber would be there to answer questions about the Poverello Center. Discussion ensued about how to integrate the Center into the Q&A and how to avoid having questions about the Center’s relocation dominate. It was suggested the Center could be near the end, after BID questions had been fielded.

5. **Traffic Signal Box Funding:** The Public Art Commission is going to put more art on more traffic signal boxes. There is one box in Downtown on 6th and Higgins that hasn’t been done. Prints of the proposed designs were passed around and discussion ensued about which design could be used. There was general agreement about using the “quilt” design featuring Mt. Sentinel and the “M,” especially as it features a view as seen from Downtown. Charlie asked what would happen if the BID didn’t provide funding for the box and Ellen said it wouldn’t get done and the quilt design would go elsewhere. The cost would be \$1000. Such an expenditure is not part of the 2011 budget, but could come out of the contingency budget. **Ellen moved to pay for the quilt design on the signal box. Alan seconded and all approved.**

6. Director’s Report

a. Downtown Master Plan Update

- i. **Front & Pattee Parking Structure** – Ellen reported work may start on Thursday. MPC is paying for the Holiday Inn reconfiguration. The contracts with Mountain Water have been signed. Sub-bids are being accepted, with all due by April 28, and all financial numbers will be in by the beginning of May. If weather doesn’t delay the concrete pouring, the structure should be completed by May or June of 2012. Charlie asked about the property of the current First Interstate drive-thru, but no information is available yet. Ellen noted Octagon Partners haven’t retained an architect for the Mercantile yet, but an environmental assessment is on-going. Octagon may hire a local project manager. According to Peter Goergon, there may not be any residential space available in the building.
- ii. **Implementation** – The committee spent the last meeting brainstorming about how to fund the Front and Main conversion. Some realistic, some long-shot ideas were developed. It’s important to be ready to proceed on the project should funding become available. All agreed the conversion would be great for Downtown, but reconfiguring the ends at Madison Ave. and Orange St. were big challenges and would be the most expensive to change.

b. **Committees**

- i. **Mayor's Downtown Advisory Committee (MDAC)** – Rod hasn't heard back about a Poverello Center homeless outreach team regarding funding from the United Way and he's still waiting to have a discussion with the Mosleys. Rod and Dan attended a subcommittee meeting regarding national grants about downtown policing and research. Rod also reported the Poverello is considering a new location.
- ii. **Marketing Committee Update** – The committee discussed adding potential line items for projects that can be added to as they prioritize what goals they want to address first. Tim noted the addition of Colin Hickey brings a fresh and welcome perspective. Charlie added the Clean Team, Downtown Police Officer and maintenance need to be highlighted in the marketing campaign.
- iii. **Streetscape Committee** – N/A
- iv. **Recruitment & Retention** – N/A
- v. **Employee Committee** – Rick Stephens might be coming back the third week of May. Rod is waiting to hear from him to confirm this.

c. **Other**

- i. **POV Relocation** – N/A
- ii. **Downtown Police Officer** – Discussed under Item #3 above.

7. **Ambassadors Report:** There have been several questions about the status of the Steverud clock, which is currently missing hands on both sides. Rod reported the mechanism had been sent in for repair and maintenance at a cost of \$1200 for a new motor and \$600 for installation. Brad Dantic wants to discuss change the face of the clock to say "Florence Hotel." Discussion ensued.
8. **Approval of December 14th Board Minutes:** Dan moved that the minutes be accepted as amended. Carma seconded and all approved.
9. **Financial Report:** Alan reported a \$16,000 discrepancy between the City's books (\$35,000) and the BID books (\$19,000). Bookkeeper Robert Giblin reconciled the books at the end of March, which is why this discrepancy has shown up now. Alan suggested the BID reconciles its books with the City every month. Cash flow is doing pretty well and discussion ensued. There might not be a big increase in taxes in May, but this will get better in June.
10. **Trustee Comments:** N/A
11. **Meeting Adjournment:** 4:53 p.m.