

**Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, November 21 at 3 pm at the DMP Office (218 E. Main St.) and ZOOM.**

All Present: Scott Stearns, Charlie Beaton, Dr. Jim McKay, Dan Cederberg (via Zoom), Ellen Buchanan.

Absent: Carma Gilligan, Karen Sippy

Guests: Barb Neilan, Destination Missoula; Christine Littig, Missoula Economic Partnership

Staff: Linda McCarthy, Jack Hall, Bram Moore

The meeting was called to order by President Beaton at 3:06pm.

Welcome Guests & Meeting Commencement by President Charlie Beaton

Welcome Barb Neilan, Destination Missoula Director: Neilan presented the research that the Destination Stewardship Plan has found. They have done a visioning process with a steering committee and the research was very intensive. The process has cost around \$300,000. The top opportunities that they have found includes Visitor & Resident Education, Destination Management, Indoor Facility & Venues, Placemaking, Year-Round Experiences and Destination Access & Mobility. Neilan went over the first assessment which is a stakeholder assessment. She explained that they have faced many changes since the pandemic and they aren't exactly where they would like to be today. Neilan went over the strengths of our community and the top 2 are outdoor recreation and arts and culture. Missoula has the potential to attract more out of state visitors. Neilan went over a survey that showed how long and where visitors are staying when they come to Missoula. Most of the families that are coming to town are not with little kids but kids who are 18+. The statistics also show that families who come once regularly come back. Many people out of state think that Bozeman and Missoula are interchangeable and that there isn't much difference in the two cities. Discussion ensued about short term rentals in Missoula. Many think that Missoula is becoming over run with visitors since the pandemic but we are actually aren't seeing the numbers of visitors we saw in 2019. Many Montanans are feeling that its too expensive to come to Missoula to visit. Youth sports bring in a lot of tourism. More so than University of Montana athletics. Tourism on many Reservations are also growing. This comes with challenges because a lot of the land is sacred. There should be a first draft of the plan in the beginning of 2024.

Business Development Updates: Christine Littig, MEP: Littig gave feedback on the IDA Conference in Chicago. Littig thought it was a good conference that focused on downtown. Though she does think that we don't need to go every year but maybe every 2 or 3 years. Littig then went over restaurants in Missoula and why we are seeing several closures, why we are seeing less hours and why some owners are trying to open more restaurants. Many are seeing that in certain times of the year when they would normally break even, they now are not doing as well. One of the bigger problems is that there aren't as many middle management type candidates that they would normally see. Many are leaving to work in a field where they can make more money with less hassle. The restaurants that are being successful are training middle management. A new business, Kitchen in the Wild, will be working as a commercial kitchen as well as a café at Consumer Direct Care Network. Partnerships like this will help the food ecosystem. They will be helping many food trucks and

caterers with their kitchen as well as feeding people in an area that doesn't have a lot of options. Littig gave an update on the old library block. They have had visitors from their investors. They are still analyzing the marking and welcoming input from community members. They are also in the middle of selecting partners for the project.

Approval of Minutes: Buchanan motioned to approve and Dr. McKay seconded. The October BID Minutes passes unanimously.

Financial Review: Hall said that we are currently sitting with \$223,000 in checking accounts. This is a little higher than last year. We are sitting at -\$128,000 in expenditures but that's just a timing issue. Maintenance contracts are right where they should be. We've had some minor expenses for maintenance. Clean Team contract is pretty standard for this time of year. Looking at Cash Flow we have more cash than we projected. We are around \$60,000 more. Discussion ensued about what should be done with the surplus.

Downtown Clean Team & Maintenance: McCarthy said that they are performing well and the new supervisor is doing very well. Maintenance Team has been hanging garland for a couple weeks. Spencer Bryant is finishing up his probationary period and has been doing a great job. McCarthy has met with the two DTPO and they are both doing well and liking the job. They have been doing door to door visits and we need to track that better. We have our holiday events covered by both and are getting 7 day per week service.

DT Master Plan Updates:

- **Downtown SAM Steering Committee:** They are looking for Downtown steering committee applicants. McCarthy thinks we should find a ratepayer for that role.
- **Missoula Parking Plan:** The parking plan is on pause. They were looking to roll something out pre-Christmas.
- Old Library Redevelopment
- **Parks Heritage Interpretive Plan:** This was approved by Parks & Recreation. They will not be implementing any of that strategy.
- **PROST & Urban Forestry:** They are building and merging with Urban Forestry process. This plan may take about two years.

Partner Updates: MDF & MDA: McCarthy said that the MDF is currently in their 4th quarter campaign and looking to raise \$25,000. They are taking part in Giving Tuesday. The MDA is really working hard on holidays and all the events that come with that. We have something every weekend up until Christmas. There are several different things we could invest in. We could plant trees; we could invest into holiday décor with the new light poles. We are also raising money for Caras Park improvements.

With no additional business, President Beaton adjourned at 5:12pm.