

**Downtown BID Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 21st, 2025 at the First Interstate Bank Building Conference Room**

**Present:** Charlie Beaton, James McKay, Dan Cederberg, Karen Sippy, Ellen Buchanan, Carma Gilligan

**Absent:** Scott Stearns

**Staff:** Linda McCarthy, Jack Hall, Kristen Sackett, Jake Treece

Charlie Beaton called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

**APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES**

Beaton called for any review or edits to the November meeting minutes. With no comments, Karen Sippy motioned to approve the minutes and James McKay seconded. All Approved.

**REAPPOINTMENT OF SCOTT STEARNS TO THE DMP BOARD**

Beaton overviewed and called for another two-year reappointment of Scott Stearns to the DMP Board of Directors. Ellen Buchanan motioned to approve the appointment, and Carma Gilligan seconded the motion. All approved.

**UPDATE ON 218 E. MAIN & REQUEST FOR \$10,000 FROM ERTC FUNDS**

Linda McCarthy provided an update on the 218 E. Main Street office renovations as well as the closing out of the purchase of the TrailWest Bank Conference Room, covered by MDA. The renovations are progressing well and the DMP team will likely relocate back to this office space at the start of March 2025. McCarthy noted the BID has received new funds from an employee retention tax credit (ERTC). McCarthy proposed the BID contribute \$10,000 of the tax credit money towards the Main Street office renovation project to purchase interior furnishings. ***Sippy moved to allocate \$10,000 to the renovations at 218 E. Main. Buchanan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.***

**REQUEST FOR \$50,000 FOR CARAS PARK CANOPY REPLACEMENT**

McCarthy provided an update on the 2025 goal to replace the aging Caras Park pavilion canopy and repaint the pavilion structure, with the need to raise \$500,000 to fund the project. This \$500,000 capital campaign will officially launch during the MDA annual banquet. Fabricon will be contracted to complete the canopy replacement beginning in October 2025. McCarthy requested that the BID contribute \$50,000 to support the campaign. ***Sippy introduced a motion to allocate the \$50,000 over two fiscal years, with \$25,000 earmarked for FY2025 and \$25,000 for FY2026. Gilligan seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor.***

**FINANCIAL REVIEW**

Jack Hall provided the financial review. Hall noted a rare negative net income for December 2024. Hall mentioned that the city conducted an audit in November and has not yet provided further information. Additionally, the December tax assessments were less than half of last year's amount, and Hall will follow up on this.

On expenses, Hall outlined costs for rent, utilities, plow repairs, and a new payment of \$37,950 for wayfinding services related to seven kiosks downtown. Hall also highlighted the ERTC as a new entry. Hall concluded by noting a tighter budget for 2025 due to BID Board commitments and a small year-end entry from the city involving additional funds and a kickback to BID.

**DMP COMMITTEE SIGN-UPS**

There was a call for Downtown Missoula Partnership committee signups, where board members can sign up for any committees they want to be on. It is not required for BID board members to serve on committees.

## **DOWNTOWN POLICING**

Officer James Caton will join the next BID meeting to discuss the officer activity. Officer Rob Castro is back on duty. Officer Amanda Hardin continues to be on duty. There will be upcoming crisis intervention training for Downtown Missoula tour guides.

## **DOWNTOWN CLEAN TEAM**

The Downtown Clean Team continues to do great work. No further discussion ensued.

## **DOWNTOWN INVESTMENTS: COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL, BUSINESS ACTIVITY**

A press release has been prepared for the new business activity report prepared by the DMP, which details investments and developments downtown. Commercial investments have reached \$7 million for permanent projects, with some still ongoing. Residential investments, however, have been slow, with limited new developments.

The report shows a steady flow of new business openings and closures. Christine Littig will be present at next month's meeting for further discussion. The press release highlighting this information will be distributed next week.

## **DOWNTOWN MAINTENANCE**

The maintenance team continues to work diligently, currently focusing on plowing. They will be taking down trees and candlestick decor this month, while the Snowflakes on Beartracks Bridge and light post garlands will remain up through February.

## **DOWNTOWN ADVOCACY: MONTANA LEGISLATURE**

A conversation took place regarding tax reform, with Buchanan recognizing that legislation would likely negatively impact TIFs. The discussion also touched on topics including homelessness as well as the importance of Medicaid for Missoula.

## **DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN UPDATES**

McCarthy noted the nature of the Master Plan project being divided into two phases. The City Council has approved the growth policy for the end of the calendar year, and they are now moving forward with code updates, specifically reviewing zoning chapters. This process is expected to take 4-5 months, with approval hoped for by July.

The updated zoning codes will impact businesses and property owners. Public engagement has been challenging, but topics such as density, building heights, and river corridor building could draw interest. Opportunities for public involvement will be available in March and April, and it's important to ensure appropriate input is provided.

Hall updated the board on the Underbridge Playspace Project, noting that the final lighting design from Cushing Terrell is expected soon, with hopes to update it for the summer. Plans are underway to begin painting the dumpsters under the bridge. Additionally, work on climbing features is in progress, but fundraising will be necessary for both climbing and skating features.

Sippy provided updates on the DRAW project, noting that all finishing materials and mural shipments are on the way. The project is progressing well. The river-facing side is ready for printing, and the goal is to complete the project by October 13th, Indigenous People's Day. Fundraising efforts are nearly complete.

## **MDA AWARDS BANQUET: THURS., JAN. 30 FROM 5:30-8:30 PM AT THE HOLIDAY INN**

McCarthy announced that the MDA annual banquet will be held next week to celebrate the organization's 50th anniversary. McCarthy encouraged board members to attend and noted that new members would also be ratified during the event.

## **PARTNER UPDATES**

Hall provided an update on the 2024 fall fundraising campaign for the DMP, noting that the goal was \$30,000, with the

result exceeding expectations with \$95,000 raised. The Festival of the Dead and Santa Flyover events met their goals as well. The year has started strong with MDA member dues collections. Winter Brewfest planning is progressing well. Event sponsorship outreach is underway by the DMP team.

Kristen Sackett presented to the board on the new branding for the DMP and BID.

With no new business or announcements, Beaton adjourned the meeting at 4:47 pm.