Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – February 11, 2020
8:30 am – Jones House Cultural and Community Center

Board Members present: Denise Lovin, Kendra Sink, Katherine Robinson, Brandon Bettis, Sarah Long, Wayne Miller and Monica Caruso.

Ex-Officio's present: Lindsay Miller and Dustin Hicks arrived at 9:10.

MSD members/guests present: Mary Miller and Trish Miller.

Staff present: Brad Farthing, Glen Kornhauser, Ferrin Page, John Ward and Lane Moody

Call to Order

Kendra called the meeting to order at 8:34am.

Request for Approval of February Agenda

Lane apologized to the Board and stated that she forgot to add the Main Street Work Plan to the agenda. She continued that there had also been a Board member request to discuss Food Trucks. Lane asked the Board to amend the agenda to add discussion of the Main Street Work Plan and Food Trucks at the end of the organization section. Katherine made a motion to amend and approve the agenda. This motion was seconded by Sarah and had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statement

Monica made a motion to approve the financial statement. The motion was seconded by Denise and had a unanimous vote.

<u>Organization</u>

Outdoor Games Use Agreement Wording

Lane opened by stating that she had made the changes that were suggested at the last DBDA meeting. She continued that this would still need to be reviewed by the Town Attorney. Kendra made a motion to send the outdoor games use agreement to the Town Attorney for final review. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

Required Board Member Training

Lane stated that she included the section of our Main Street Assessment which pertains to the requirements of the Director and board members. She continued that one Board member would need to attend the Main Street Conference in New Bern in March. Kendra talked about how informative and beneficial the conference is. She encouraged members that had never been to go. Lane stated that the hotel costs would be covered by the DBDA. Nobody volunteered during the meeting to attend but Lane stated that she would follow up with an e-mail in the next week to see who would attend. Lane stated that there were some training class that she would like a refresher on. She finished by stating that she would keep the Board informed of the classes, in case any Board members would like to join her.

Committee Assignments

Lane opened by reviewing the committee assignments that she had. She stated that the Promotions Committee and the Design Committee were the ones that met the most. She reviewed her current committee assignments. Lane also spoke about how the Parking Appeals was a mix of Board members and DBDA members. Lane took a moment to discuss a recent situation that occurred with the parking appeals committee members. Kendra inquired about which committee's needed people. Lane answered that they all did. After some discussion, Lane stated that she would follow up with the Board by e-mail sending them the current list and they can follow up by volunteering. The Board talked for a few minutes about some of the different parking situations that frequently occur. One suggestion was looking into a sticker with monitored phone number that people could call when they are having trouble with the meters.

Main Street Work Plan

Lane opened by directing the Board to the updated plan. She continued that she had run this by Sherry Adams, so she felt good moving forward. Kendra inquired about researching how to track the sales to meet our objectives. Lane stated that she would inquire at the upcoming Main Street Conference. Lane also pointed the Board members to the notes that were highlighted. After short discussion, Lane stated that she would update the plan to have a goal of 5% for the first objective and would add the comment about valet parking to the parking committee. She finished up by stating that she anticipated a few tweaks but that she would move forward with the plan.

John took a few minutes to update the Board about an upcoming meeting between the Town Council and County Commissioners, Howard Street status review, as well as updates from the Chancellor's breakfast that he had just come from. Lane chimed in that she heard back from John Eckman at ASU and we could anticipate a meeting with ASU about parking in the near future.

Food Trucks

Lane opened by asking the Board their opinions about food trucks in downtown. Denise stated that she felt that it was unfair. However, the Board did think that there is opportunity for food trucks during special events. The Board inquired about the taxes or regulations that were incurred by food trucks. John explained that since MSD taxes are tied to property taxes, food trucks did not pay MSD taxes and stated that they should be paying in on sales tax. Lane stated that she met with Brad Farthing and Mark Freed at Cultural Resources and they felt that there was opportunity for food trucks in downtown but acknowledged the need for additional feedback. John stated that in December of this year parking regulations had been changed to bar people from operating a commercial enterprise from a parked vehicle on town property without express permission from the Town. John also reviewed a recent issue that occurred with a food truck on Howard Street. The Board discussed for a few minutes the pros and cons of food trucks in downtown. Glen suggested that it might be a good idea to add street vendors to the discussion. John thought that the start would be for the Board to bring a recommendation that he and Lane could take to Town Council. However, he urged the Board to be aware that with better weather on the way he anticipated an increase in food trucks coming to downtown. Lane stated that she thought that it would be good to get feedback from the Municipal Service District, food trucks, Planning and Inspections Town administration and Cultural Resources. Dustin chimed in that he thought it would be good to seek input from the general public. Kendra stated that she felt that the conversation had been prohibitive of food trucks and asked if there was anyone that was in favor of food trucks for downtown. Lindsay stated that she thought that there were times when there are good opportunities for food trucks and Katherine echoed that response. But neither felt it should be on a daily basis. Dustin stated that he thought food trucks were a good business opportunity for young people because there were not as expensive as opening as restaurant and was supportive of some sort of permit based rotation system for food trucks in the downtown area. The Board discussed food trucks at ASU for a moment. After a few more minutes of discussion, the Board decided to reach out and ask for more input. John encouraged the Board to continue to push for this information in anticipation of increased activity.

Financial

Recommendation from Winter Budget Retreat

Lane opened by stating that she included the Budget that was recommended at the budget retreat. Lane stated that the recommendation was a flat budget that was the same as last year. John thought that is was a good idea moving forward with a flat budget and stated that next year would be when the additional revenue from the recently added properties would begin. Denise made a motion to approve the budget as recommended. The motion was seconded by Sarah and had unanimous vote.

Review of Megan Sheppard Contract

Lane opened discussion by stating that at the last meeting there were two suggested changes to the contract which might need to be run by the Town Attorney. The first was to the have the ability to crop and edit as needed for a variety of promotional mediums. The second was the discussion about the copyright versus a perpetual use agreement. Lane inquired with the Board if they thought one option would be better than the other. After brief discussion Sarah made a motion to move forward with either option at the recommendation of the Town Attorney. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

Sponsorship of "Kid Zone" during St. Patrick's Parade

Lane asked Brad if he would like to talk about the St. Patrick's parade. Brad opened by stating that the Jones House was planning on expanding the St. Patrick's day parade to include a kid zone area on the front lawn of the Jones House. Brad continued to review the developing plan for the parade. Lane stated that from the budget retreat discussion she thought that this was an opportunity to partner for something mutually beneficial. The Board talked about different sponsorship opportunities for downtown businesses. The Board also talked about the possibility of a DBDA float in the St. Patrick's Parade. Kendra stated she had met with Mark and Brad to discuss ways to keep people downtown after the parade, and she felt that this was Cultural Resources working to fill that request. After continued discussion Kendra made a motion to sponsor the Jones House for the full amount of $1500. This motion was seconded Sarah and had a unanimous vote.

During the discussion about the St. Patrick's parade the Board talked about possibly having a float in the parade. The Board brainstormed opportunities for DBDA participation in the parade. The Board expressed their interest in staff working towards finding an opportunity for DBDA representation in the parade. The Board thought that it would be good to order a parade banner that could be used in the parade or at the Jones House, t-shirts and stickers. Tara stated that Mast General would donate the candy needed for the DBDA participants in the parade, as well as purchase the buckets. After some discussion, Kendra made a motion to spend up to $500 on parade supplies. The motion was seconded by Sarah and had a unanimous vote. The Board also asked that Lane reach out to the different businesses to see if there is anything that they would like for us to hand out.

DRABA Membership

Lane opened by stating that she talked with Davis and he had reached his goal of raising $18,000 dollar. Lane stated that to date he has raised a little over $19,000 and then she listed the downtown businesses that had signed on. After a short discussion Kendra made a motion to purchase a lifetime membership with DRABA in the amount of $500. This motion was seconded by Denise and had a unanimous vote.

Promotion

Eggstravaganza

Lane opened by stating that there were two big needs right out of the gate: volunteers and a rain plan. Lane continued that the event was scheduled for Saturday, April 4th from 2pm to 4pm. The Board reviewed past events and again highlighted the need for volunteers. Lane finished by stating that she would keep this on the agenda and bring back updates from the promotions committee.

First Friday Planning

Lane opened by stating that she included the updated list of first Friday themes. She continued that at the January Town Council meeting a request had been made for a small ceremony be held when the plaque honoring the late Stacey Eggers is installed. They also requested that his daughter, Becca Eggers-Gryder be invited to speak. Lane continued that she thought that having the ceremony during the May First Friday, which celebrates historic preservation, would be appropriate.

Wayfinding Signs Timeline

Lane stated that the discussion about wayfinding signs was happening in the design committee and she would keep the Board as things developed.

Economic Vitality

Scheduling of Training Opportunities

Lane opened by stating that she met with Denise Presnell who is a social worker at Hardin Park School. Lane continued that Mrs. Presnell is a part of the Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative and is working to reach out to the business community. Lane stated that Mrs. Presnell wanted to educate and train the community to use a "trauma lens" when working or interacting with people. Kendra stated that she thought that this was an important training but was concerned about low turnouts for past events and wanted to focus on getting people to the training. Wayne expressed his support for the program and commented about its importance in our community. Lane stated that she and Mrs. Presnell discussed possibly having a training during ASU spring break. Denise Lovin chimed in that she did not want to exclude ASU students from the training. Lane stated that this is something that could possibly be held more than once, so that students could attend. After continued discussion, the Board thought that it would be good to have the training at the Jones House in the morning during the week of ASU spring break. Moncia inquired about how invitations would be sent. Lane stated that she thought that Mrs. Presnell has a good resource list and that she would also work with Craig at White Blaze to communicate the event.

Denise inquired about the lights of the Appalachian Theater and why they aren't on more often. Lane stated that she would inquire about the lights.

Other business, comments, or concerns

Call for Adjournment

At 10:28 Denise made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.