Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – February 23, 2021
8:30 am – Webex Virtual Meeting

Board Members present: Michelle Novacek, Kendra Sink, Megan Biddix, Austin Northern, Wayne Miller and Wayne Randall.

Ex-Officio's present: Lindsay Miller

MSD members/guests present: Alison Neely.

Staff present: Brad Farthing, Ferin Page, Kat Eller and Lane Moody.

Call to Order

Kendra called the meeting to order at 8:33.

Request for Approval of February Agenda

Michelle made a motion to approve the February agenda. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of January Minutes

Michelle made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes. The vote was seconded by Megan and had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statements

Megan made a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.

Organizational

Approval of Updated Main Street Work Plan

Lane opened by stating that she had taken the suggestions from the Budget/Work Plan retreat and incorporated them into the work plan. She continued that due to the restrictions of COVID, 2020 served as a placeholder year for many projects, so there were only minor changes to the plan which include: working with the Historic Preservation Commission to understand the new design guidelines, updates to the website, expanding advertising and looking for opportunities to give back to the downtown community. Kendra inquired about the setting of measurable outcomes when looking at the opportunities to give back to the downtown community. Lane stated that she anticipated that there could be some hurdles and set the measurable as a date for which the committee needed to begin discussions by. However, she continued that throughout the discussion she thought that more specific measurable goals could be added. Kendra suggested possibly trying to organize a COVID vaccine event at the library. Monica informed the board that due to COVID the library was currently closed to the public. Kendra inquired about other spaces and a possible partnership to support the Health Department. Lane commented that she thought the partnership with the Health Department was an excellent idea and though that topic could be explored at the committee level. Michelle then made a motion to approve the Main Street Work plan. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of March Town Council Presentation

Lane opened by stating that in accordance with the contract with the Town Council the DBDA is required to present quarterly to the Town Council. Lane stated that due to COVID that had been paused but thought that March would be an appropriate time to request an appearance. Lane stated that she was going to pull the goals from the Main Street Work plan and asked the Board if there was anything else they would like to discuss during that time. The were no other suggestions outside of the work plan goals.

Review of Logo License Agreement

Kendra opened the discussion by directing the Board to page 10 of the agenda packet. Kendra asked if this was an update. Lane clarified that the DBDA previously had a "Permission to Use Form" but that since trademarking the logo the trademark attorney recommended a formal license agreement to protect the use. Lane suggested that it might be a good idea to add stuffed animals to the list of approved uses. After a brief discussion, Kendra made a motion to approve the agreement with the addition of stuffed animals added to the list of approved uses. The motion was seconded by Megan and had a unanimous vote.

Review of Committee Assignments

Kendra asked Lane to review the needs. Lane started by reviewing the handout in the packet and stated that she felt that the Promotions and Design Committee will need to come on board soon and are in need of volunteers. Michelle and Kendra volunteered for both committees. Wayne Randall and Monica volunteered for the promotions committee. Lindsay and Austin volunteered for the design committee. Lane also suggested that it might be efficient to utilize the already established parking appeals committee instead of creating a new parking committee. She thought that a few minutes at the end of the meeting could be dedicated to addressing any concerns that came up during the appeals process.

Design

Queen Street Stairs Update

Lane stated that this is a quick update. She continued that the survey had been completed and that Bill with Appalachian Architecture is hoping to present conceptual drawings at the March DBDA meeting.

Public Art Update

Lane opened by stating that the call for submissions for our public art will be going out soon. She continued that she had been in contact with Amber Bateman the new director of the Watauga Arts Council to get her input on the process and stated that she would like to add Amber to the Design Committee. Lane expressed her thoughts about possibly making the process more thoughtful of celebrating local culture. Kendra asked about the increase in funding for public art downtown. Lane confirmed that there had been a change which decreased the amount of façade grant money and increased the funding for public art. Kendra expressed her support for a larger spring/summer public art display, similar to what is done Hendersonville.

Promotion

Discussion of Upcoming Scavenger Hunts

Lane stated that she had been collaborating with Mark Freed and Amber Batemen to develop a new mulit-generational art based scavenger hunt in downtown. She continued that Mark had graciously offered up numerous instruments that are no longer playable for use in the scavenger hunt. Continuing that Amber would then give those instruments to local artists to turn into art pieces that are displayed throughout downtown. The Board then discussed other opportunities in downtown and some of the limitations that might need to be researched.

Financial

Approval of 2021-2022 Proposed Budget

Lane opened the discussion by stating that at the previous day's Town Budget retreat a suggestion was made to remove the Tsunami cameras as a cost savings measure. Lane inquired if there was an interest from the Board to discuss that before approving the budget. Kendra expressed her appreciation of the cameras and commented about how many crimes had been solved downtown by using the footage from those cameras. Allison Neely the property owner of 641 W. King Street chimed in that she was grateful for the cameras and she has had numerous issues with her properties solved with those cameras. Lane then reviewed the suggestions from the budget retreat regarding the professional services line, advertising line and community appearance lines. Michelle then made a motion to approve the budget. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote. Kendra then mentioned that maybe it would be good to research if there was a more cost effective camera option for downtown. Lane stated that she thought that it would be good to look into the terms of the contact before potentially shopping for new cameras.

Discussion of Total Fund Balance

Lane opened by stating that she spoke with the Town Finance Director Amy Davis and that the undesignated fund balance is right at $372,000. Lane suggested prioritizing streetscape projects when discussing the funds. There was some discussion about where sidewalk work was needed and the two design options for the sidewalks. Megan inquired about the Howard Street project. Lane stated that John had submitted the loan application in October to the USDA and they were waiting to hear back. Kendra thought that this might be the time to address the outdated trashcans as well and possibly add recycling containers as well. After some discussion, Lane stated that she would come back with more specific numbers regarding the cost of trashcans, how many are needed, and the areas of King Street that still need sidewalk replacement. With no further discussion the Board move on.

Kendra spoke briefly about the recent resolution that was adopted by Town Council regarding anti-homeless architecture.

Other business, comments, or concerns

Call for Adjournment