

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board of Directors Meeting – May 8, 2018
8:30 am – Jones House Cultural and Community Center**

Board Members present: Kendra Sink, Victoria Potter, Alex Hooker, Denise Lovin, Angela Kelly, Tucker Deal, Dave Walker, Anna Roseman, Monica Caruso, Sam Parker

Ex-Officios present: Lynne Mason, Loretta Clawson

MSD members/guests present: Megan Biddix, Marshall Ashcroft, Sandra Diaz

Staff present: Brittney Clark, Glen Kornhauser, Brian Johnson, John Ward

Handouts: Agenda, Financial Statements

GENERAL BUSINESS

Brittney called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

Agenda

Kendra made a motion to move the Promotion and Design sections to the beginning of the agenda. Denise made a motion to approve the amended agenda; Angela seconded.

Minutes

Kendra made a motion to approve the minutes; Alex seconded.

Current Financial Statements

Victoria made a motion to approve our financial statements; Kendra seconded. A vote was held to approve all three documents; all approved.

PROMOTION

Wayfinding Signage update

Brittney updated the Board on Destination by Design's Wayfinding project that they are creating for the Watauga County TDA. Shared that Matt Powell met with John Ward, Brian Johnson and herself individually to present the visual options and that we came to the same conclusion for which design to go with that the Watauga County TDA board agreed on, which was a rustic looking arch. Brittney will send out the visuals once she receives those from Matt at DBD, who is presenting to a group in Blowing Rock the same morning as the DBDA meeting. It was clarified that these signs will go all over Watauga County, and will have the same basic design but with little changes that will denote that you are in different areas. It was reiterated that once Destination by Design has settled on a design for the county wayfinding signs, the DBDA can enter into an agreement with them for a separate project to erect pedestrian-scale wayfinding signs in Downtown that will match the county-wide signage, and then we

can move forward at the same time as the County signage, and possibly not be too far behind their project.

Branding Quote and Decision

Brittney shared that she never heard back from Ben Muldrove so the branding quotes are the same that were presented at the last meeting: Destination by Design, 828Designs, and CrowdSpring. Kendra shared that she feels like going with Destination by Design, which is already invested in our community, makes more sense and that we would be better off, even though it costs more. Brittney shared that we can re-encumber the \$8,000 left in the advertising budget from the 2017-2018 and put it into the 2018-2019 advertising budget to cover Destination by Design's \$7,500 fee. Tucker questioned Destination by Design's mention of existing market research in their quote; Brittney shared about the Marketing Committee's Image Building brainstorming sessions and the outcome of the idea of "Start Here". Tucker made a motion to approve entering into an agreement with Destination by Design; Kendra seconded. All voted in favor.

DESIGN

Façade Grant Application

Brittney shared that Ransom has applied for a Façade Grant Application and that the Design committee met and is making a recommendation that the grant be approved for 50% of the project cost, up to \$5,000. Right now, their total cost is \$8,157, so the grant amount could be less than \$5,000. Kendra shared that the glass that they are applying to restore is some of the oldest glass on King Street. Alex made a motion to approve the Façade Grant application; Anna seconded and all voted in favor.

10 Year Plan for the MSD

Brittney shared the documents that she has pulled together, which will be presented at the next town council meeting, for creating a plan for fulfilling the mandate from Council that all of the assets found in the core of Downtown Boone be spread out to the entire MSD within the next 10 years. The first document was a square footage calculation of all of the sidewalks that still need to be upgraded. The second document was a budget for those sidewalks to be constructed, which shows that we can get through project number 17 with the funds that have already been transferred to Public Works for sidewalk improvements. We could get through project number 29 with the current fund balance, and can finish the rest of the sidewalk sections using the currently allocated Streetscapes budget over the next 4 years. This utilizes public works staff at a cost of \$8.00/sq ft, which is an enormous savings, because a contractor would cost about \$25/sq ft. Conversations are taking place regarding the allotment of staff for downtown sidewalks and priorities. Concerns were raised that the town needs more staff to do the work – we aren't getting any smaller – and that the current sidewalks are a liability waiting to happen. Brittney also shared about the information gathered when Matt Makdad from New River Light and Power came downtown to walk around and look at street poles with Brittney and Kendra. We were originally discussing exchanging the wooden power poles with black metal poles and the cost associated with that. The conversation transitioned into the possibility of burying the power lines instead, which can be done by burying pipes under the sidewalk when we are fixing those

sidewalks that power lines can be run at a later date, which will cost more money but have a better look in the end. The DBDA's recommendation is that burying the power lines is worth the additional investment. Exploring grants is also something else that the DBDA would like to explore.

Brittney also shared about the other research she has done regarding benches (Board wants to put the new Downtown Boone logo on the bench, rather than the Town of Boone logo, when that logo is ready), as well as information about the placement of tree wells, planter bulbs, bike racks, trash cans, etc. These options will be incorporated into a new plan for revamping downtown. Discussion also ensued about the peeling paint on the meters – Tucker suggested we look into what the contract says regarding warranty.

The Board of Directors would like the Town to look into financing options that would allow us to do the work faster and then pay it off over 10 years. They would also like to get the Community Appearance Commission involved with the plan.

ORGANIZATION

Parking Voucher System discussion

Lynne Mason shared that the council did not take any action on the agenda item at the last council meeting, and she wanted to get input from the Board regarding what that action should look like. The Board stuck with the same recommendations as before, which were: pursuing extending the grace period (currently at 5 min); exploring a merchant-funded voucher system (merchants can purchase \$2 validation stickers that they can apply one per customer per day); and exploring using all available parking lots on weekends and holidays. Lots of discussion ensued about the lack of complaints coming in these days about parking tickets. One suggestion was to look into whether our meters can send people a little note/text/something when their parking meter is about to expire. Lynne asked if anyone from the board wanted to make up a subcommittee to further discuss a parking validation program. Lynne will talk to McLaurin about the grace period.

Downtown Redistricting Presentation

Brian Johnson shared about the plan to add a historic district, a warehouse district, and an interface area that makes up the rest of the B1 district outside of the MSD. 2006 there were design guidelines adopted that are no longer consistent with our downtown area. This created a discussion about creating specific guidelines for Downtown, which both the Community Appearance Commission and the Historic Preservation Committee were working on, separately. It was then decided that the two groups needed to get together and come up with the same guidelines. Brian described the process the groups went through to come with the different districts, and how the DBDA will be brought into the discussion as things move forward over the next 4 to 5 months. Hoping for a draft document in September or October. Tucker shared it would be a good idea for the Town to reach out to property owners, outside of the traditional means that the Town uses for these notices, when major changes are going to take place.

UNC School of Government DFI Update

Brittney shared the latest guiding principles from DFI with the Board:

- *Cultivate Boone's sense of place by adaptively reusing historic buildings where possible and including sustainable design principles, features, and building materials*
- *Prioritize new development that is historically compatible and consistent in size with neighboring structures*
- *Ease development pressure on the historic core of King Street by focusing new development on other streets*
- *Serve Boone's multi-generational community*
- *Enhance the pedestrian experience by including off-street parking solutions that balance parking supply with current and future demand and creating, preserving, or enhancing public space*
- *Use public investment to attract private investment, if necessary*

Tucker asked where we were in the process – John Ward answered that DFI presented to Council and they are still in the site identification process, which is up to the Town Council. Tucker also asked about Howard Street – John answered that they are meeting with the contractors soon and will keep the DBDA updated.

Annual Meeting Notice Plan

This agenda item was tabled due to time.

Agreement with the Town of Boone for 2018-2019

The agreement with the Town of Boone is up for renewal in June – nothing changed from last year except the dates. Angela made a motion that the agreement be approved; Victoria seconded – all voted in favor to continue with the contract with the Town.

FINANCIAL

High Country Local First Sponsorship Application

Victoria shared that the funds she is requesting would be used for rentals. The price will be slightly higher than what she quoted because she has to use a different company; will request \$1,000.00. They are almost at capacity – 36 vendors signed up, with room for 38. Over 1,000 people interested on Facebook. Dave made a motion to approve the request for funding; Sam seconded. All voted in favor.

Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture Sponsorship Application

Sandra Diaz presented about their proposal of having Brie Arthur lead a food-scaping tour around Downtown Boone. They are asking for \$300 to help cover that cost. The Board thought it was a great idea and were very supportive of seeing the program grow in the future. Anna made a motion to

approve the request for funding; Monica seconded. All voted in favor; Dave Walker abstained from voting due to his role with Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture.

OTHER BUSINESS, COMMENTS, OR CONCERNS

Brittney shared that at the latest Town Council meeting, a permit was approved for PubCycle, which is a multi-seat bike that will take people around town to visit different bars, restaurants, and other businesses in downtown Boone. At that Council meeting, it was requested that feedback was gathered from the DBDA regarding how business owners feel about the idea. The only concern raised was traffic being backed up on King Street, in which Tucker shared that the PubCycle has a motorized assist to help it go faster. It was also brought up that during peak traffic, no cars are going 35 mph, so it shouldn't cause a problem. Hours will also vary seasonally. Another question was about liability – the PubCycle takes on all liability. Pick up and drop off locations were a concern of the Council, which is something the owner still needs to work out. Mostly the sentiment was that everyone was “all for it”. Brittney invited anyone to send her feedback via email.

Call for Adjournment

Tucker motioned for the meeting to adjourn at 10:17 am; Megan seconded. All approved.