Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – May 30, 2023
8:30 am – Appalachian Theater Community Room

Board Members present: Denise Lovin, Sarah Long, Megan Kevorkian, Suzanne Livesay, Wayne Miller Austin Northern, and Lisa Flanigan (virtually)

Ex-Officio's present: Edie Tugman and Lindsay Miller

MSD members/guests present: Vanessa White, Patricia Parish, and Bob Meier.

Staff present: Lane Moody, Laney Pilkington, Mark Freed, Brad Farthing, Geoff Hayes, and Jon Houck (virtually)

Call to Order
Denise called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

Request for Approval of May Agenda
Kendra made a motion to approve the agenda. Suzanne seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of April Regular Board Meeting Minutes, 5/9/23 Special Meeting Minutes, 5/16/23 Special Meeting Minutes, and 5/23/23 Special Meeting Minutes
Sarah made a motion to approve all minutes. Megan seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statements
Lane stated that she included two financial reports for the Board's review. The first was a report that had all of the DBDA budget lines with their balances and the second shows a transaction detail showing what has been spent from each line. She added that the telephone budget line needed to be addressed because neither of those phone lines is accessible or being used. Lane took a moment and reviewed the individual lines. After a short discussion, Suzanne made a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.

<u>Organizational</u>

Discussion of Resignation of Board Chair
Lane opened by inquiring how the Board would like to move forward in the absence of the Board Chair. She stated that officer elections would be coming up soon and didn't know if the Board wanted to let Denise, if she's comfortable, run the next few meetings or appoint a new chair. The Board had a general consensus that Denise could run the next few meetings until officers are elected in September.

The Board then took a moment to do introductions.

Discussion of and Request for Approval of Tax Rate

Lane opened by stating that she has included a timeline in the packet of the past year's tax history and then reviewed the history. There was a general discussion confirming the timeline, reviewing the history, and the County tax software issue that occurred. Lisa inquired if the tax rate change would be permanent. Denise and Guy both confirmed that the tax rate can be adjusted yearly. Lane stated that not increasing the tax rate would likely impact larger streetscape projects and reviewed potential future streetscape projects. Megan inquired if there was a way to incrementally increase the tax rate. Kendra then asked about possibly raising the rate and reviewing further later. Lane suggested that the Board take into consideration any potential Main Street comments. She then pointed to the chart of tax rates from around the state that had been provided by Main Street staff and noted the average MSD rate is $.17. Edie inquired about different fundraising opportunities and the different board members added that special events, membership fees and selling promotion items are some things that come to mind. Mark reviewed his recollection of the decision made to change the tax rate to $.12. After continued discussion, Kendra made a motion to increase the tax rate to $.1575 with the requirement that the Board revisits the rate at the beginning of the year during the budget retreat. Suzanne seconded the motion and it had the following vote:

In Favor: D. Lovin, W. Miller, K. Sink, L. Flanigan, and S. Livesay (5)

Against: A. Northern, S. Long, and M. Kevorkian (3)

Discussion of Request for Approval of DBDA Budget

Lane opened by presenting a visual aid for the budget and apologized that she didn't have to the Board sooner. She continued that the Board needed to approve the budget line amounts as well as the projects listed under each line. She continued that she since the Board voted to increase the tax rate, she asked that they look at the numbers in the center column labeled "with tax increase." She then took a few minutes to review the projects listed in the budget. After a short discussion, Sarah made a motion to approve the proposed budget. Megan seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of Town of Boone Contract

Lane opened by stating that no changes had been made to the contract from last year. After a short discussion, Kendra made a motion to approve the contract with the Town of Boone. The motion was seconded by Austin and had a unanimous vote.

Update on Downtown Vendor Policy

Lane opened by stating that she wanted to update the Board and then reviewed the past few meetings and stated the need to set our next meetings. The Board set the meeting for Tuesday, June 13 at 8:30 am via Webex. There were two guests present that indicated their desire to speak about the vendor policy. Kendra then made a motion to amend the agenda to allow the two guests present to speak for 3 minutes a piece. Sarah seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote. Patricia Parrish from Highway Robbery stated that she thought the downtown vending has gotten out of hand and continued that the practice makes downtown look bad and is negatively impacting downtown. Bob Meier then spoke and expressed his concerns that the downtown vending had a "flea market" feel to it and that some regulation is needed. He also expressed his displeasure with his show windows being blocked by vendors. After a short discussion, the Board moved on.

Update Downtown Boone Walking Tour

Lane stated that Bettie Bond has called her to let her know that the TDA had fully funded the project. Lane continued that she thought it was a great project and that the DBDA could support the tour by promoting it on social media.

The Board also briefly talked about the Doc and Merle mural unveiling. Lane stated that she talked with Mark and they both thought that covering the mural would be problematic, but that a ribbon cutting could be incorporated.

Update from Downtown Development Coordinator

Lane then quickly updated the Board about what she has been working on and the By-Laws, Town of Boone Contract, Main Street, and 501(c)(3) statuses.

Wayne made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.