

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – June 29, 2021
8:30 am – Webex Virtual Meeting**

Board Members present: Kendra Sink, Denise Lovin, Megan Biddix, Sarah Long, Michelle Novacek, Brandon Bettis, Monica Caruso and Wayne Miller.

Ex-Officio's present: Lindsay Miller.

MSD members/guests present: Laura Kratt and Bill Dixon.

Staff present: Lane Moody, Mark Freed, Ferrin Page and Brad Farthing.

Call to Order

Kendra called the meeting to order at 8:31am

Request for Approval of June Agenda

Kendra asked if there were any changes for the agenda. Lane stated that she was not aware of any changes, but did have one item that she would like discuss at the end of the meeting. Michelle then made a motion to approve the June agenda. Kendra seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of May Minutes

Michelle made a motion to approve the May minutes. Monica seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statements

Lane stated that she had spent some money for Freedom First Friday that is not reflected in the current statement. She also informed the Board that the purchase order for the new downtown trashcans will be rolled into the next fiscal year as well as the money for downtown streetscape. Lane also updated the Board that Town Council had allocated \$128,000 for parking meter upgrades. Michelle then made a motion to approve the financial statements. Wayne seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of DBDA Applications

Lane opened by letting the Board know that there are 3 spots that will be coming open in July. She stated that she was thankful for both Kendra and Monica's 6 years of service on the Board, and since they had each served two consecutive terms they would have to roll off of the Board for at least one year. She added that Wayne Miller's term was also up but that he reapplied for his position. She continued that 2 spots are to be appointed by Town Council and 1 spot will be filled by the DBDA Board and that the DBDA application presented today is for Melody Pineda who owns Mountaineer Mania. Kendra then made a motion to approve the application of Melody Pineda. Wayne seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote of approval.

Organizational

Discussion of Town Council Request Regarding Support of Events in Downtown

Lane opened and stated that this had been briefly discussed at the last DBDA meeting. She continued that she would like to have input from the Town Manager before moving forward with discussion and asked to pause the discussion until John joined the meeting.

Discussion of Returning to In Person meetings

Lane opened by stating that it was her understanding that Town Council would like for virtual meetings to continue through July and could go back to in person beginning in August. She continued that in regard to returning to in person there had been a suggestion that the DBDA meet at the library instead of the Jones House so there would be more room. Denise and Kendra both expressed frustration about having to meet virtually again and asked Lane to see if there could be any type of appeal to request to meet in person. Lane stated that she would check with the Town Manager and let the Board know if that would be possible. She then inquired where the Board would prefer to meet, and there was general consensus to meet at the library in August.

Discussion of Megan Sheppard Photography

Kendra then inquired about Megan Sheppard photography. Lane stated that before COVID hit the Board was planning to photograph all the businesses downtown, however when masks mandates came out the Board paused the project. Lane then asked that since the masks mandates had been lifted would the Board like to move forward with photography? After brief discussion, there was general consensus that the Board would like to move forward with photography this August and would like to include restaurants when they are busy, some photos with masks and a couple shots with dogs.

Design

Discussion of Wayne Trapp Skywalk Sculpture

Lane opened by reviewing the history of the sculpture. She stated that in 2010 Wayne Trapp donated the sculpture "Skywalk" to downtown Boone in honor of Peter and Joni Petschauer. She continued that in roughly 2014, Mr. Trapp took the piece to his home to clean and repaint. Unfortunately, he passed away while the piece was on his property and it has not been returned. She stated that there had been some discussion among DBDA members and the Watauga Art Council about seeing if the piece could be returned. Lane continued that there were many things that were worked out regarding agreements for returning the piece including, insurance coverage and family input. Lane stated that there had been good movement towards bringing the piece back and would like to ask the Board for permission to add the insurance coverage to the DBDA's insurance policy. However, she did want to add that she had been informed that there is the potential for the piece to need a crane to have it returned, and thought that there might be a future request of the DBDA to help fund that. After a brief discussion, Kendra made a motion to approve adding the Wayne Trapp sculpture and also inquired about any potential cost for maintenance. Lane stated that, if the Board chose to move forward and add to the insurance (when installed) she would work to get costs estimates for moving the piece as well as any needed maintenance and bring that information back to the July meeting. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

Public Art Update

Lane opened by stating that the sculpture "Formal-ly 2.0" by Joe Bigley had been installed and she thought that it looked great and encouraged the Board to visit the spot. She continued that she was still working with Watauga Arts Council Director Amber Batemen on the call for submissions. Lane noted that there were sidewalk upgrades occurring in front of the sculpture pad at Melanie's that should enhance the area. Lane finished up by letting the Board know that the Instrument Art Scavenger Art project should be up and ready by the weekend and encouraged the Board to check out the instruments. Kendra inquired about how to find out more information. Lane stated that she anticipated a press release later in the week.

Kendra then inquired if there would be prizes for the scavenger hunt. Lane stated that she still had some downtown Boone teddy bears that could be used as prizes. After some discussion, Lane stated that she would use the teddy bears and stickers as prizes for now and then would bring back a list for new promotional giveaway items at the July meeting.

Promotion

Freedom First Friday

Lane opened by stating that she sent an email to downtown businesses requesting information about any specials or special events they were doing for 4th of July weekend. She stated that she would add those specials to any promotions for the weekend. She then informed the Board that the promotions committee discussed Freedom First Friday and had developed celebrations on the Jones House Lawn. She continued that there will be character representations of all the holidays that have been missed due to COVID, including New Year's, Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, Easter, 4th of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Lane stated that staff would also be putting out the large yard games, be giving out fried apple pies, having music and handing out small goody bags from 5pm until 8pm. She encouraged the Board to check it out.

Financial

Discussion of Queen Street Stairs Cost Estimates

Bill Dixon opened the discussion by reviewing the quote from Greene's construction and stated that the quote came in at a total \$151,780 for the stair replacement, new handrails and sidewalks only. Bill briefly reviewed the project and then stated that he hoped to have cost estimates for the roof as well as solar component at the next meeting. Michelle noted that currently there is a concrete shortage that might be influencing the cost. She also added that if we are to move forward she would like to make sure that the rubble from the demolition is recycled. Bill then asked if Michelle had any experience with heated stairs or sidewalks. She stated that she had and it had been problematic but commented that technology might have improved since installation. She continued that she would be happy to talk with ASU maintenance staff to get more details. After some discussion, Bill stated that he would bring back the other cost estimates during the July DBDA meeting and Lane stated that she would see if she could gather financial information as well.

Kendra then made a motion to table the discussion regarding the "Town Council Request Regarding Support of Events in Downtown" until the July meeting when Town Manager John Ward could weigh in. Monica seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Other business, comments, or concerns

Michelle stated that she would like to give the Board a heads up about family weekend events that would be happening during the week before Halloween weekend. She continued that some events would be offered virtually and some things had been cancelled. She said that the most significant event for downtown would be the homecoming parade that would come through downtown and would close the road from 5:30pm until 6:30pm. She continued that it was her understanding that Boone BOO would be on that Sunday from 3pm until 6pm. Kendra expressed some concern about the timing of Boone BOO and it's impact to downtown businesses. Mark chimed in that Sunday would be the best day to do it but that he was flexible on the time frame. After brief discussion, the Board stated that they were comfortable with the time frame.

Sarah took a moment to let the Board know that her office has put up a little free pantry in front of her building and encouraged people to participate if possibly.

Denise asked for an update about the wayfinding signs status. Lane apologized that she didn't have an update and stated that she would add the item to the July agenda.

Call for Adjournment

Kendra made a motion to adjourn. Michelle seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.