

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – July 20, 2021
8:30 am – Webex Virtual Meeting**

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

Ex-Officio's present:

MSD members/guests present: Laura Kratt and Lisa Flanigan.

Staff present: John Ward, Lane Moody, Mark Freed and Brad Farthing.

Call to Order

Kendra was a few minutes late to the meeting, so Denise called the meeting to order at 8:34am.

Request for Approval of July Agenda

Lane stated that she had no additions to the July agenda. Wayne made a motion to approve the July agenda. Michelle seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of June Minutes

Michelle made a motion to approve the June minutes. Jim seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statements

Lane stated that the financial statement was pretty light because it is the beginning of the budget year. Michelle then made a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

Organizational

Discussion of Town Council Request Regarding Support of Events in Downtown

Lane opened and stated that this item had been discussed informally during the May DBDA meeting. She reminded the Board that there had been a request made of Town Council to display pride flags during pride month. She continued that due to a variety of reasons the Town Council was not able to accommodate the request, but that one Council member suggested that the request be discussed amongst the DBDA. Lane went further to state that the DBDA is considered a component unit of the Town and she was concerned that the reasons the Town Council were not able to support the request would also prevent the DBDA from accommodating the request. She stated that she would like to get Town Manager John Ward's input. John stated that the DBDA would be restricted under the same measures by not being able to use tax money to promote certain groups. John did clarify that the citizen who brought the request had not followed up with him or the DBDA as was recommended during the Town Council meeting. John also suggested that there might be other options for promotion that would not use tax money. Wayne inquired if the Board was supportive of one group, would that then open it up for other groups. John stated that it would and commented that the many requests could be burdensome. Megan stated that she understood the difficulties but voiced frustration that she felt this topic was a human rights issue that is all inclusive. John stated that he understood her frustration, and stated that his concern was in the picking and choosing of which groups to support or not support. John continued that he was not trying to avoid the promotion of important topics but how to do so while taking into

consideration the tax limitations. After some discussion, Lane stated that she would add this discussion when working on the Main Street work plan.

Discussion of Annual Meeting Schedule

Lane opened by stating that in 2019, the Board had a breakfast meeting at Ransom that was well attended. She stated that at the last meeting, the Board indicated that they would like to have another breakfast meeting and now the date needs to be set. After a short discussion, the Board thought that Thursday, August 26 would be the best day to host the annual meeting.

Discussion of Absent Board Member

Lane opened by stating that the Board member that had been absent has resigned. Lane continued that she has sought input from the Town Attorney about adding the automatic removal of absent members to the bylaws and that she will bring back those recommendations at a future meeting.

Discussion of Commercial Requests for use of the DBDA collection

Lane opened by stating that the DBDA has a collection of photos that are housed with Digital Watauga. She continued that per our donor agreement with Digital Watauga it specifies that they (DW) are required to request permission for images used for a commercial purpose. Lane inquired about who the Board would like to approve the commercial requests: would they like full Board approval or would they like to have the promotions committee handle those requests? After a short conversation, Kendra made a motion to have the Promotions Committee handle the approval of commercial requests for pictures housed in the DBDA collection with Digital Watauga. Michelle seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Design

Discussion of Wayne Trapp Skywalk Sculpture

Lane opened by stating that at the last meeting the DBDA agreed that if the Wayne Trapp sculpture were to be returned, the DBDA would cover it on their public art insurance policy. She continued that at the last meeting she had been made aware that there might be some difficulty moving the piece, and hoped to bring back the costs associated with returning the piece and any possible maintenance that would need to happen. She finished up by saying that there had been some difficulty in acquiring those costs and hopes to bring them back to the August meeting.

Discussion of Wayfinding Signage

Lane stated that she reached out to the TDA about the status of the wayfinding sign project. She stated that the TDA reported that there had not been any movement within the legislature and DOT about being able to add historic attractions by name to the signage. However, the TDA stated that they have decided to go ahead and move forward on Phase 1 of the signage. Kendra inquired if the DBDA would now begin piggybacking off of the county wayfinding signage for downtown Boone. After short discussion, Lane stated that she would add this item to the Main Street Work Plan discussion for later in the year.

Promotion

Discussion of Promotional DBDA Items

Lane opened by stating that at the last DBDA meeting there had been discussion about purchasing additional promotional items. Lane suggested that it might be easier to have the Board give her a budget and she would work within the budget to order; t-shirts, sweatshirts, cozies, stickers and water bottles. She also stated that she wanted to be purposeful when selecting items to make sure the DBDA isn't competing with any downtown

businesses. After short discussion, Michelle made a motion to spend up to \$2,500 dollars on promotional items. Kendra seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of Google Ads Report

Lane opened by stating that she discussed the Google Ads report with Abby at White Blaze Marketing. She continued that Abby stated that June was a good month for ads in terms of click thru rates at about 12% and the average cost per click remains low at \$.033. She continued that the "Downtown Boone-General" ad set continues to be the top performer which indicates that the ads are resonating with what people are searching for. The Board briefly discussed the ads report and Lane mentioned that it might be time to consider updating the DBDA's website.

Financial

Discussion of Queen Street Stairs Cost Estimates

Lane opened by stating that she spoke with Bill Dixon and he is still waiting on two estimates. One from National Solar Canopy Company and one from Greene's Construction. She continued that Bill expected to have both estimates by the end of July for presentation in August. John added that he thought that there might be a potential to take advantage of American Recovery funds to help with this project.

Other business, comments, or concerns

Denise inquired about the status of the new trashcans for downtown. Lane stated that those trashcans were ordered in June and should be delivered in mid-August.

Call for Adjournment

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