

Downtown Boone Development Association

Regular Board Meeting – July 26, 2022

8:30 am - In Person at Watauga County Library (140 Queen Street) and WebEx

Board Members Present: Megan Mason, Denise Lovin, Michelle Novacek, Lisa Flanigan
Wayne Miller, Austin Northern

Ex-Officio's Present: Councilperson Becca Nenow and Mayor Pro-Tem Edie Tugman

MSD Members/Guests Present: Grace Morris, Mike Forrester, and Amber Bateman

Staff Present: Paige Henderson, Mark Freed, Brad Farthing, Laney Pilkington, Officer Daniel Duckworth, and Officer Ferrin Page (Via WebEx)

Call to Order

Megan Mason called the meeting to order at 8:30am.

General Business

Request for Approval of July Agenda

Megan asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Michelle Novacek made the motion to approve the July Agenda and Denise Lovin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Request for Approval of June 28, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Megan asked for a motion to approve the June 28 meeting minutes. Michelle made a motion to approve the minutes, and Denise seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Organizational

Upcoming Vacant Board Positions and Reappointments

Paige gave an update on board reappointments: Sarah Long was reappointed at the July Town Council meeting, and Michelle would be up for reappointment by the MSD members in the fall. Paige did note that while she and Megan have reached out to various people as suggested by the board, many of those people were interested in attending the August Annual Meeting to learn more about joining the board. Paige touched on the importance of finding good board members who understand the type of commitment that DBDA is looking for. Paige also noted the importance of maintaining an active, working board for NC Main Street re-accreditation each year. Megan noted to the board that more information was available in the handout that Paige created for the meeting and distributed. The handout has information from the bylaws, DBDA committees, and more. Megan expressed excitement that the board would have something to pull from when speaking with members of the community to educate them about DBDA.

Denise asked Megan and Paige to clarify whether the handout covered board attendance. Paige clarified that it did not, but that the board would be able to discuss updating the bylaws at the Work Plan session planned for the early fall.

Proposed Date for Board Work Plan Retreat

Megan moved the discussion to the work plan retreat for the fall, and asked Paige about a proposed meeting time. Paige noted that since the board would have the annual meeting in August, September would be a good time to

discuss work plan and other organizational needs. Paige suggested that the board block their usual meeting time in September to prepare for a workshop on work plan, committee updating, and organizational needs. The board all agreed to use the September meeting for a workshop.

Organizational Leadership Needs

Megan and Paige began a discussion about organizational leadership needs, namely with the board secretary and treasurer. Paige stressed the importance of each of these roles as they pertain to organizational accountability and best practices for a nonprofit board. Denise asked Paige to clarify who on the board would be eligible to hold these offices, since she and Megan were both already President and Vice President. Paige noted that anyone else holding a current board appointment would be eligible to hold the offices, and Megan asked Paige to read the position descriptions from the bylaws. Mark also spoke up and offered that the treasurer position would not be quite as intense as another nonprofit treasurer position, since the majority of DBDA finances are handled by Town of Boone.

Austin Northern offered to serve in the treasurer position, and Michelle Novacek offered to serve as the board secretary. The entire board thanked them for their willingness to serve. Paige added that their positions would allow them to serve with the organization committee and help steer the organization in the future.

Committees

The conversation turned to committee structures for the board and Paige encouraged the board members present to consider their interests and why they initially joined DBDA before the September work plan session so that they would be able to determine which committee may be the best fit. Mark also noted that committees can be a great way to get community members involved, especially if they do not have time for a full board commitment.

Promotion

White Blaze Update

Megan moved on to the White Blaze update and asked Paige to share what she had been able to gather with the board. Paige noted that while she had made attempts to meet with Craig from White Blaze on multiple occasions, it had not been successful. Paige did mention to the board that another possibility going forward would be to work with the Town of Boone communications specialist on in-house social media management. Paige introduced Laney Pilkington, Communications Specialist for the Town of Boone, and told the board that she had talked with Amy (Interim Town Manager) about working with Laney on website and social media management. Paige then opened up discussion for the rest of the board to comment about working with Laney.

Denise did mention that she had been an instrumental part in the branding efforts completed by DBDA in recent years, and had worked with Lane and other committee members to create a strong online strategy for DBDA. She also spoke about the DBDA branding effort for “Downtown Boone: Live it Up” and stated her opinion that the best next step would be to meet as a promotion committee and reconsider strategy before moving on to who would manage the social pages and website. Megan asked Paige if the Promotion/Design committee should meet before the September work plan session and Paige agreed that it would be useful.

First Friday Needs

Paige discussed First Friday and told the board that she and Megan had been having some productive discussions regarding the need for more participation from downtown stakeholders for the planning of these events. Megan and Paige noted that while planning had traditionally been done by the promotion and design committee, there were a lot of opportunities for downtown stakeholders to get involved with themes and other aspects of planning. Paige also mentioned the need for clarification with “First Friday” and “First Friday Art Crawl”. Amber Bateman spoke up and agreed that many in the artistic community were passionate about seeing First Fridays be celebrated as an art crawl again.

Design

Downtown Public Art

Megan asked Amber to continue and provide an update on the public art policy and placement committee.

Eddie asked if anyone attended the planning special meeting regarding the UDO

Public art in the UDO, historic district, and public private partnerships

Has Amber been in touch?

Yes, committee has reviewed and is working on revisions for public response period

No consideration for public art in the original UDO

Wayne Miller asked for clarification in bullet points

HPC approved historic district right when arts council was planning for murals

Showed that there was a need for further consideration regarding art in town

Clearer boundaries on how and where art can be applied

Wayne asked about how that would impact the work that DBDA does for public art

Paige clarified that we would need to be in compliance for future projects with the historic district

Eddie brought up Brenda Council proposal

Megan had to leave for training at 9:20

Amber joined in person

Amber clarified the complications with the Council structure

Wayfinding Downtown

Paige read an update from Wright Tilley regarding Wayfinding signs

Discussion on where wayfinding is

Discussion on adding some in downtown, use of MSD budget

Pre-pandemic approval

Denise – historic Boone

Howard Street

Easements

Two remaining

Mark

In discussion now with lawyers

Paige out with Justin to talk to businesses about Howard

Wayne asked if the meetings had taken place

Mark said that he had heard that there were two remaining with lawyers to have a review of language

Denise asked about if DBDA needed to get involved with any businesses who had not approved the easement, and

Paige disagreed with this

Discussion began about the delay on Howard and how many people in the community do not believe this will happen

Paige offered to draft an update for the MSD regarding Howard Street's current status and send it out on email

Review of Downtown Vendor Ordinances

Tryon

Blowing rock – does not allow, austin, special permission for parades and stuff

Banner elk- reviewing their ordinances in light of recent food truck issues

Paige discussed the usefulness of having guidelines to ease the burden on public facilities

Pull from other towns with guidelines for food trucks

Time, place, approval from manager, permit,

Guidelines – fire marshal 150 feet from business, 3 feet from fire hydrant

This can help address anyone who is rolling into town and setting up with no thought for how their business may reflect the town or impact town facilities

Yard sale

Nothing in UDO that can prevent

Can be great for a downtown-but time, place and content is important to consider

Only thing we have- don't set up on Veterans memorial or in front of town hall

Amber- downgrades the downtown scene- would love to see handmade items

Wayne mentioned bbq food truck issue and gave some background on the whole issue

Austin noted that blowing rock was a lot more approachable and he was receiving some of that feedback from his customers between boone and blowing rock

Becca Nenow did mention the importance of trying to find a place for these people to operate and do business, and voiced support for a potential permit (as this would deter anyone looking to take advantage and make a quick buck on the street)

Austin- art in the park in blowing rock, one day a week, road closed with vendors welcome

Amber- brought up the market in asheville (awning, juried process)

Austin again- art in the park, good for promotion because everyone is in the same place

Paige- welcomed vendors on first Friday

Pop-ups in stores

Paige asked the board for their approval to continue pursuing this with staff and council, and they unanimously agreed

Denise asked for a motion to adjourn, Wayne made a motion and Michelle seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15am.

Other business, questions, comments, or concerns

Call for Adjournment

Denise made a motion to adjourn, and Wayne seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:54am.