Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – October 13, 2020
8:30 am – Webex Virtual Meeting

Board Members present: Kendra Sink, Monica Caruso, Brandon Bettis, Wayne Miller, Michelle Novacek and Denise Lovin. Sarah Long was briefly present but had to leave due to connectivity issues.

Ex-Officio's present: Lindsay Miller, Dustin Hicks and Sam Furguiele.

MSD members/guests present: David Jackson, Katie Greene and Diane Cornett Deal.

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

Call to Order

At 8:35 Denise called the meeting to order.

Approval of October Agenda

Lane informed the Board that Laura Berry with Discovery Maps reached out to see if the Board was interested in advertising. Lane stated that the agenda could be amended to discuss. Denise made a motion to amend the agenda to discuss advertising with Discovery Maps. The motion was seconded by Michelle and had a unanimous vote.

Approval of September Minutes

Michelle made a motion to approve the September minutes. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statements

Lane informed the Board that there were two items that would be coming out soon but have not been reflected in the statements. She continued that our National Main Street membership and an invoice for an advertisement in Carolina Mountain Living. Kendra made a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

<u>Organizational</u>

Discussion of Input Regarding Proposed Updates to the Smoking and Vaping Ordinance

Lane opened by stating that she has not heard back from Public Health Director Jennifer Greene, but expressed understanding given the current state of the pandemic. Lane the pointed the Board to their packets which includes the original agenda request from ASU Professor Christopher Seitz. Monica asked what the status was of the changes. Lane stated that it was her understanding that the Town Council is still in the public comment period but asked for John or Sam to please clarify if she is mistaken. Sam clarified that the original discussion began around smoking at bus stops, and the town's ability to regulate on that property. He continued that it was referred to the DBDA for input about the points that are specific to downtown which are regulating vaping in the same way as smoking, banning smoking within a certain radius of building entrances and a potential ban on smoking/vaping on town sidewalks. Sam also mentioned that there might be some enforcement issues that would need to be taken into consideration. Sam followed up that he also felt there was consensus regarding regulating vaping in the same manner as smoking. John concurred with Sam interpretations. Lane stated that earlier some Board members had voiced some concern for the effects on smoke shops and some restaurants. There was little input and Sam thought that it might be easier if it was broken up. He suggested breaking out each of the pieces that affect downtown instead of blanket support for all of the proposed changes. There was short discussion about how long this item had been outstanding. Kendra expressed that she was in support of treating vaping the same as smoking, banning smoking at bus stops, as well as banning smoking at business entrances. However, she stated that she was not in support of a blanket ban of vaping/smoking on downtown sidewalks. Michelle echoed her support for Kendra's comments. Kendra then made a motion that the DBDA supports regulating vaping like

smoking and banning it outside of business entrances. However, she continued that she was not in support of a full ban of smoking on town sidewalks. Michelle seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Sam then inquired if the Board would weigh in in regards to the radius surrounding the business entrances. He continued that it was his recollection that during past discussion by Town Council there was a question about the width of the radius and what would be more protective. It was his recollection that there had been discussion to expand the radius from 6 feet to 10 feet. However, he asked if that was Dustin's recollection. Dustin concurred and also suggested that some kind of curfew might be helpful as well. Lane asked if the radius and curfew could possibly be addressed in November. John urged the continuation of the discussion to get input before Town Council this year. After a brief discussion about the width of sidewalks Kendra made a motion in support of expanding the radius from 6 feet to 10 feet. The motion was seconded by Michelle and had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of Possibly Moving DBDA Meeting Schedule

Lane opened by stating that at the last meeting there had been some concern that typically the DBDA meetings fall after the Town Council agenda deadline. She continued that there had been important discussion about public restrooms but because of the way the meeting falls on the calendar the item could have had to wait a month to be put on the Town Council agenda. Sam had suggested at the last meeting that it might be worth looking into moving the meeting so that important items don't have long wait times before being discussed by Town Council. Lane continued that currently the meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month, but in order to meet Town Council agenda deadlines the monthly meeting would need to be moved to the last Tuesday of the month. Kendra then made a motion to move the monthly DBDA meeting to the last Tuesday of the month. The motion was seconded by Michelle and had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of Draft FIG Wording

Lane opened the discussion by referring the Board members to the draft language in the packet. Lane then read the draft language that would replace item number seven in the Façade Incentive Grant packet "If during the façade renovation, the materials or designs are altered in order to suit unforeseen circumstances the business owner will still need to meet the Secretary of the Interior standards before final approval of the grant." Kendra made a motion to approve the draft language. The motion was seconded by Michelle and had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of Draft Statement for Digital Watauga

Lane opened the discussion by stating that she currently does not have a statement for review. She explained that Eric Plagg has offered to draft the language however he has been incredibly busy working on Historic Preservation Commission tasks. Lane stated that once she received the language, she would bring it before the board.

Discussion of Chamber of Commerce Business Support

Lane opened by stating at the September Town Council meeting there was an item proposed that would have different town departments search for opportunities within their department of supporting and potentially rescuing small businesses. She continued that at the beginning of that meeting Boone Area Chamber of Commerce President David Jackson proposed an ad-hoc committee with input from the Town as another option for supporting Downtown Businesses. Council Member Furguiele was amenable to these changes and altered his motion to reflect David's suggestion. Lane stated that she and David had already been in talks discussing the roster that would be made up of Town Staff, business owner and other business support individuals. Lane continued that while the goals were still in the works she stated that the following were being considered; post COVID recovery support, a "Doing Business Guide" and continuing education opportunities. David chimed in that he would be presenting to the Town Council tonight regarding the committee. He continued that he would like to look for opportunities in the ways that Town Department's interface with businesses and confirmed that there would be focus groups to gather input. He also stated that the SBTDC would be involved and looked forward to the partnership. There was some continued discussion regarding the goals of the committee and that the committee has the potential to expand support throughout the town.

Appointment of Board Treasurer

Lane stated that the Board does not currently have a Board treasurer and asked if there was anyone who was interested. There were no Board members who volunteered. Lane followed up by stating that if there were any members thought someone would be interested in serving on the Board to please let her know and she would follow up.

Appointment of Authorized Signers on PNC Accounts

Lane stated that she thought that the signer would need to be whomever the new treasurer is and since there is not a volunteer for the position it should be moved to the next meeting.

Discussion of Trademark License Agreement

Lane opened by informing the Board that our trademarking was complete. She continued that our trademark attorney noted the need for the Board to license the use moving forward. She stated that we currently have been granting permission for use but could possibly reach out to Cory to help with drafting the license agreement. Sam chimed in and stated that he didn't think that we would need a specialized attorney because it would be a pretty straight forward document. Lane stated that she would touch base with Mark and work on finding draft language for a license agreement.

Design

Discussion of Request for Additional Lighting in Downtown

Lane opened by stating that there was a request for additional lighting downtown at the corner of Rivers Street and Burrell Street as well as the Jimmy Smith Park. John stated that he would like to get some input before moving forward. He stated that there is the potential for additional renovations at the Rivers House which could be a possible solution. John continued that currently there is an improvement plan that works from the center of downtown outward. He was concerned that that to stray from that plan in favor of responding to individual requests could be inefficient. Sam added that he thought that at the corner of Burrell and Rivers there was a light pole there but it might just need maintenance. John stated that it might prudent to see what affect Rivers Walk has on the area as well as have Public Works check the light.

Promotion

Discussion of Website Updates

Lane opened by stating that she is working on the "Volunteer" page for the DBDA website that highlights our committees and event volunteer opportunities. Lane continued that she also had a request from our NC Main Street Director Liz Parham for each Main Street Community to develop at "Things to Page". Liz stated that the NC Main Street program is revamping their Main to Main trail website and they are wanting communities to have a virtual way to link to the trail that is updated and maintained by the individual community. Finally she added that in coordination with the newly developed Downtown Business Advocacy Committee she would like to include a resource page for businesses, but that would be further down the road.

Financial

Discussion of Print Distribution Contract

Lane opened by stating that our Print Distribution Contract is up for renewal and reminded the committee that this is the company who distributes our brochures. Denise made a motion to approve the contract. Lane added that there was a COVID discount for this year as well as the addition of additional delivery spots. Kendra seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of Discovery Maps

Lane stated that Laura Berry with Discovery Maps had reached out about advertising and Lane reviewed the costs. Lane asked if anyone had any interests no Board member expressed interest.

Other business, comments, or concerns

Discussion of Trespass Options for Repeatedly Disruptive Patrons

Lane opened by informing the committee that this is an opportunity for input regarding experiences downtown. John added that he would like gather any questions, concerns and experiences. So that he could take those back to the Police Department to work on solutions. Denise stated that she had some trouble with people openly drinking and being intoxicated with aggressive behavior. Denise also expressed concern that there might be people sleeping under the Jones House porch and/or stashing things under the porch. Monica stated that while things had been quiet at the library she hoped that the Downtown Officer could possibly check in on a weekly basis. John thanked the Board for the input and said that he would report the experiences to the police department.

Discussion of Potential Shred Event

Lane stated that after discussion with the Shred Truck vendors she thought it would be best to work towards a spring event. John thought that was a good idea and Lane stated that she would work towards planning a spring event.

Other comments

John stated that he had one item that he would like to inform the Board about. He continued that it was his understanding that during public comment at the Town Council meeting would be initiating discussion to continue the conversation about allowing food trucks in downtown. There was brief discussion regarding the conversation from earlier in the year. John asked Lane if she would forward the Board the recommendation that was submitted in March as well as the meeting minutes.

Denise added that she was concerned about a gentleman at Howard's Knob who is very unwelcoming to people who are coming up to the park. She recognized that the property is outside of the MSD. However, she wanted to communicate how off putting and potentially dangerous that behavior is and how she felt it is not consistent with the Downtown's welcoming environment. John suggested reaching out to Stephen Poulos for input and possible going before the county commissioners to bring awareness to the problem.

At 9:55 Michelle made a motion to adjourn. Kendra seconded and the motion had a unanimous vote.