Downtown Boone Development Association
Regular Board Meeting – November 24, 2020
8:30 am – Webex Virtual Meeting

Board Members present : Austin Northern, Megan Biddix, Michelle Novacek, Wayne Miller, Wayne Randall, Monica Caruso, Denise Lovin and Kendra Sink.

Ex-Officio's present: Sam Furguiele and Dustin Hicks was in attendance at 9:15.

MSD members/guests present: David Jackson and Laura Kratt.

Staff present: Lane Moody, John Ward, Kat Eller, Ferrin Page and Mark Freed

Call to Order

At 8:37 Denise called the meeting to order because Kendra was having some technical issues.

Approval of November Agenda

Wayne Miller made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Wayne Randall and had unanimous vote.

Approval of October 27 Minutes

Wayne Randall made a motion to approve the October 27 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.

Approval of Financial Statements

Lane took a moment to update the Board of a few items that still needed to be taken out of the budget. Wayne Randall then made a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion was seconded by Wayne Miller and had a unanimous vote.

<u>Organizational</u>

Update on Logo License Agreement

Lane opened by stating that per the suggestion from the last meeting she reached out to Cultural Resources staff to inquire if they had any agreements that could possibly be modified into a logo license agreement. She continued that unfortunately they did not have anything that was applicable. Lane finished up by stating that she reached out to Town Attorney Allison Meade and she agreed to help draft the license agreement and once drafted Lane would bring back before the board.

Review of Main Street Vision Statement

Lane opened by stating that this item and the following were housekeeping items for our Main Street Assessments. She continued that both the mission and vision statement are due for adoption this year. Lane then stated that the Vision Statement is defined as the economic role that downtown plays in the greater economy and read it aloud "Embraced by the gentle slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the campus of Appalachian State University. Boone is a real downtown experience- a community with heart, focused on its economic, social and environmental impact and dedicated to the enriching experiences of art, history, music, food and shopping." Lane also stated that the vision statement had been discussed during the work plan workshop in 2019 and felt that they were still relevant.

Kendra then made a motion to adopt the vision statement. The motion was seconded by Michelle Novacek and had a unanimous vote. After the vote, Denise inquired how long the vision statement would be in place. Lane stated that according to the Main Street Assessment the vision statement needs to be reviewed every three years and adopted every 5 years. Denise thought it would be good to review more frequently.

Kendra inquired if expectations of Main Street work plans requirement had been adjusted to accommodate for COVID Restrictions. Lane stated that at the Regional Main Street meeting it had been stated that assessments might not have to be submitted for 2020. However, since DBDA did not have National accreditation in 2020, due in part to staffing turnover, Lane has asked Main Street staff about the possibility of still submitting an assessment in an effort to work towards national accreditation for 2021. She continued that Main Street Program Coordinator Sherry Adams had responded that they would be sending out more information regarding assessments following the Thanksgiving holiday. Lane stated that she would keep the Board posted.

Review of Main Street Mission Statement

Lane opened by stating that the current Mission Statement is defined as the purpose/role of the downtown revitalization organization in accomplishing the vision. Ours is currently "The Downtown Boone Development Association's mission in part is to promote the historic preservation, protection and use of Boone's traditional downtown area, including the area's commercial, civic, and religious enterprises and residences. To encourage property owners to maintain, improve and beautify downtown properties. Lane reminded the Committee that it is required by the NC Main Street assessment to be adopted but can be adjusted as needed. Kendra thought that it could use a review. However, Lane reminded the Board that it needed to be adopted but could be reviewed in the near future. Kendra then made a motion to adopt the mission statement. The motion was seconded by Austin and had a unanimous vote.

Appointment of Board Treasurer

Lane and Kendra both opened discussion by stating that this is an easy position that needs to be filled. Wayne Randall then volunteered to take the position. Wayne Miller then nominated Wayne Randall to be Board Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote.

Appointment of Authorized Signers on PNC Account

Michelle moved to add Wayne Randall as the authorized signer on the DBDA's PNC accounts. The motion was seconded by Kendra and had a unanimous vote. (Wayne Randall has left the meeting due to a prior engagement.)

<u>Design</u>

Discussion of Queen Street Stairs

Lane opened discussion by reminding the Board that the Queen Street stairs project is included in the work plan that was developed earlier in the year. She continued that the stairs were first discussed during a design committee meeting for possibly becoming an additional space for art, but that the conversation continued and the stairs could also be beneficial for parking. Lane stated that she and Town Manager John Ward discussed and thought it would be best to reach out to Bill Dixon with Appalachian Architecture. John then reviewed Bill's role in other Town projects including renovations of the Rivers House as well as the removing the dated "porch" area in front of the Downtown Fire Station. Lane then shared her screen via Webex to show the estimate of costs that had been submitted by Mr. Dixon. Kendra expressed her desire to update those stairs. John added that he thought it could add to the downtown streetscape masterplan and would be very beneficial to a variety of initiatives. Lane agreed with John that upgrades to the stairs would be beneficial for a variety of reasons. Lane also stated that a survey would need to be done. Michelle inquired if there was estimated cost of the stair renovations. John stated that it would be hard to estimate until it is designed, but noted that Mr. Dixon is proposing different options for review. He continued that there is a certain percentage of the DBDA budget that is required to go to streetscape projects. He continued that once an option is chosen and the price designated there would be a variety of different funding options. Michelle asked if there was an estimate time frame. John stated that depending on price it could possibly done in stages but that it was hard to estimate without seeing the options. Wayne Miller then made a motion to hire Appalachian Architecture to move forward with designs for the Queen Street stairs. The motion was seconded by Michelle and had a unanimous vote.

<u>Promotion</u>

Discussion of Grinch Live Events

Lane opened the discussion by informing the Board of the current Grinch Scavenger hunt that is in partnership with the Watauga County Library. She also reviewed the upcoming Caleb Sigmon events that are schedule for the first three Friday's in December. There were some technical issues regarding feedback so Monica Caruso put details regarding the events in the chat box. Kendra inquired about the advertising strategy for the events. Lane stated that a press release was sent out about the scavenger hunt and that one would be coming for the virtual events as well, along with promotion on DBDA social media. John suggested that Lane reach out to both the Children's Playhouse as well as possibly the Appalachian Theater.

Discussion of Holiday Window Decorating Event

Lane opened by stating that there had been a discussion among the promotions committee about how to change up the holiday window decorating contest in response to the COVID restrictions. Lane reported that instead of a contest the committee thought that something more inclusive would be better and thought that a social media campaign aimed at inviting people to downtown could be productive. Lane stated that she hadn't received a great deal of feedback but was still moving forward with the campaign.

During discussion Denise asked if discussion about the recent Governor's orders regarding face coverings could be reviewed. Lane suggested to Kendra that, that discussion could be added to the end of the meeting.

<u>**Financial**</u>

Discussion of Public Works Staff Appreciation

Lane opened by reminding the Board that in past years the Board has bought breakfast for our Public Works staff who work so hard to maintain our downtown. Lane continued that this year is a little different because of COVID restrictions Public Works staff is spread between numerous buildings. Kendra emphasized the importance of upping the amount of money spent to acknowledge their hard work during such a difficult year. The Board discussed for a few minutes and Kendra made a motion that Lane not spend more than $500 on a staff appreciation breakfast for Public Works. The motion was seconded by Monica and had a unanimous vote.

Discussion of PBID Software

Lane opened by stating that a woman from California, with a position similar to hers, had reached out about software she had developed that could be helpful for our MSD. Lane stated that in her discussion with the folks at PBID, she thought that the software could be helpful in keeping up with property and business owners, and liked some of the reporting features that had been offered. However, PBID stated that they would like to put together a demo site but they have not gotten that developed. Lane asked to table this until she had more information.

<u>**Other business, comments, or concerns**</u>

Other comments

Kendra then inquired about enforcement of the recent mask mandate. John stated that the Town of Boone Police Department had been spending a significant amount of time working to enforce the mandates. John then took a few minutes to update the Board about the recent changes. He also asked Lane to forward an email to the DBDA regarding the recent changes. The Board then discussed some of the issues that they were running into regarding face coverings.

Denise also asked to have an update regarding the food truck discussion. Lane stated that she would be happy to update the board and let them know that she did the follow up podcast with the Chamber of Commerce (that was proposed at the last DBDA meeting) and it was posted to the Chamber of Commerce, as well as the DBDA's social media. She continued that no comments regarding food trucks had been left on the DBDA social media and White Blaze thought it would be best to let it rest unless comments did start. Lane continued that she reached out to The Appalachian Student Editor Emily Broyles regarding the article that was published. Lane continued that she and Emily discussed at length the facts of the situation and the errors in the article. Lane stated that from the conversation she was under the impression that corrections would be made with the potential for a follow up story. However, she stated that she had not seen any corrections or heard back from anyone at the Appalachian. Sam informed the Board that he received comments from a political group that expressed their extensive support and willingness for intense advocating on behalf of food trucks on private property. The Board talked for a few minutes acknowledging the large amount of misinformation regarding food trucks. After continued discussion, the board acknowledge that the conversation would continue in the future and the need for the Board to be proactive informing the community about who the DBDA is as well as what their role is. John agreed that there was a significant amount of misinformation being put out about the conversation about food trucks and the DBDA. The Board continued discussion for a few minutes and then Lane stated that she would discuss with White Blaze to get a game plan for getting correct information out.

Kendra then made a motion to adjourn at 9:35. The motion was seconded by Denise and had a unanimous vote.