Downtown Boone Development Association
November Special Meeting – November 26, 2024
8:30 am – The Jones House

Board Members Present: Fulton Lovin, Renee Boughman, Austin Northern, Sarah Long, Megan Kevorkian, Mike Forrester and Kendra Sink.

Ex-Officio's Present: Eric Plaag and Edie Tugman.

MSD Members/Guests present: Bob Flannigan (King Street Lofts), Alyssa Hasty (Lost Province) Hope Thingelstad (Explore Boone).

Town Staff Present: Lane Moody, Mark Freed, Geoff Hayes and Brad Farthing.

Call to Order
At 8:40 Kendra called the meeting to order.

Request for Approval of November Agenda
Fulton requested to amend the agenda to discuss the Howard Street Bid Approval first, because he needed to leave the meeting early. Kendra made a motion to amend the agenda as suggested by Fulton. Mike seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of October Meeting Minutes
Sarah made a motion to approve the October minutes. The motion was seconded by Mike and had a unanimous vote.

Request for Approval of Financial Statements
Renee made a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion was seconded by Sarah and had a unanimous vote.

Howard Street Update
Lane began by asking if Eric or Edie would like to speak first. Edie stated that the Town Council had recently approved a bid for the project but noted that additional approvals were still required from the USDA and the Local Government Commission. Fulton asked about the project timeline, and Edie mentioned that she hoped to begin in the spring. Lane agreed, adding that it was still too early to confirm a specific date, though spring seemed likely. She then read the details outlined in the November 13Town Council agenda packets from when the bid was approved. Lane also shared that she had delivered a gift basket to M&M Construction as a gesture of enthusiasm for the project. A brief discussion followed about certain project details, and Lane assured the Board that she would provide updates as the specifics were finalized.

Organizational
Discussion of the December Board Meeting
Lane began by noting that this year's December Board meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, December 31. She expressed concern that attendance might be limited due to the holiday and asked if the Board would prefer to cancel the meeting, as had been done in previous years. Mike made a motion to cancel the December Board meeting, which Kendra seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion of Setting Budget Retreat Dates

Lane began by noting that the Board would need to have a budget ready for adoption in early March. Since the December meeting was canceled, she suggested scheduling budget retreat dates as soon as possible. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to hold the budget retreat on the morning of Tuesday, February 11. Lane added that she would include a reminder on the January Board meeting agenda.

Recap of Buy Boone Lunch Results

Lane began by referencing the thoughtful letter from F.A.R.M Café staff included in the packet. Lane informed the Board that the café served 86 lunches that day, with an average donation of $6.65 before the Association's contribution. With the donation, the average increased to $13.63, significantly helping to close the gap in providing meals at low or no cost to diners. With no further discussion, Lane thanked Sarah and Geoff for their participation, and the Board proceeded to the next agenda item.

Discussion of Headshot Session

Lane began by directing the Board's attention to the results of the interest survey, noting that 14 people responded, with 11 indicating that the session would be beneficial for them. The Board expressed some concern about the cost and requested a clearer understanding of the cost per person before proceeding. After some discussion, Lane stated that she would gather specific pricing details from photographers related to the session and present them for the Board's review.

Promotional

Discussion of Festive First Friday Programming

Lane pointed out that a rundown of the evening's planned events was included in the agenda packet. She expressed disappointment that Aaron Norris, who had previously offered carriage rides, would not be able to attend this year. She added that they are addressing some insurance issues before confirming any carriage ride arrangements. Kendra shared that she had secured someone to play the Grinch for the evening. Lane then provided a brief update on the vendor markets, preparations for the snowball fight, staffing for the Post Office, and refreshments for the event. The Board also had a brief discussion about expanding the programming and the potential purchase of puppets.

Discussion of Holiday Parade

Lane began by noting that the Promotions Committee had discussed organizing a Holiday Window Decorating Contest to complement the nighttime holiday parade. She shared three proposed award categories and their creative names: the "No Aunt Bethany, Those Are the Christmas Lights" award for the brightest display, the "FRA-GEE-LAY, Must Be Italian" award for the most unique display, and the "Every Time a Bell Rings, an Angel Gets Its Wings" award for the most traditional display. The Board discussed scheduling the judging for the week following the Christmas parade. Lane offered to finalize the details and distribute the contest information.

Discussion of Hosting Recordings of Destination Development Training

Lane began by providing background on the Destination Development Trainings and the requirements for becoming a certified NC Destination Business. After discussing the prerequisites for attending the live session with Jon Schallert in Boone on February 17, the Board agreed to host three in-person sessions to support participation. They scheduled Tuesday, January 14, as a full-day session to complete all five trainings at once and designated Wednesday, January 22, and Thursday, January 23, for two half-day training sessions.

Discussion of 2025 First Friday Art Crawls

Lane began by sharing that she had connected with Amber Bateman at the Watauga Arts Council, and together they are starting to develop a new framework for arts crawls in response to the vendor ordinance. She mentioned that they held a trial run in November and anticipate the need to adjust the programming as they refine the process. One area likely to require attention is whether to assign artists to specific spaces or allow vendors to choose their own locations. Lane concluded by assuring the Board that she would keep them updated on the progress

Discussion of Boonerang 2025 Funding

Lane invited Mark to open the discussion. Mark began by reviewing the past year's events and informed the Board that he was working on expanding programming for Boone’s Got Talent as well as adding international programming. He noted that, thanks to the growing success and revenue from alcohol sales, he could cover more of the financial costs. As a result, he would only require a $10,000 sponsorship from the DBDA for the following year’s event. After a brief discussion, Kendra made a motion to approve the $10,000 sponsorship, which was seconded by Renee and passed unanimously.

Call for Adjournment

With no other discussion, Kendra made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mike and had a unanimous vote.