Downtown Boone Development Association
Special Board Meeting – May 16, 2023
8:30 am – Webex Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present: Megan Mason, Denise Lovin, Lisa Flanigan, Wayne Miller, Megan Kevorkian, Rene Boughman, Suzanne Livesay, and Kendra Sink

MSD Members/Guests present: Sarah Welch, Jay Welch, Mike Brown, Jessica Brown, Kelly Mosenfelder, and Amber Bateman

Town Staff Present: Amy Davis, Allison Meade, Lane Moody, Laney Pilkington, Geoff Hayes, Jon Houck and Mark Freed

Call to Order

At 8:35 Megan Mason called the meeting to order.

Discussion of Downtown Vendor Policy

Lane opened the discussion by acknowledging that a few people had requested to speak at the meeting and expressed the need to amend the agenda. Kendra then made a motion to amend the agenda to include public comment. This motion was seconded by Renee and had a unanimous vote. Allison took a moment to introduce the members present. Kendra then made a motion to amend the agenda to add a discussion of Boonerang at the end of the meeting. Megan K. seconded the motion and it had a unanimous vote. Lane then called on Sarah Welch to speak. Sarah commented that she and her partner Jay were both logged in under her name. She continued that she had no remarks prepared. Allison clarified that public comment is the time during the meeting for the guests to comment and that once the discussion of the policy was underway the discussion would be for board members only. Sarah then stated that she believes that vending is an important part of business downtown and recognizes that there are times when regulation is required. She continued that she was unaware of what the actual changes would be and asked how to find out what they will be. Allison explained that a draft ordinance had been created at the request of the DBDA. She highlighted that the Downtown Boone Development Association would not be the governing body to adopt the changes, it would be Boone Town Council and there would be other opportunities for input. Sarah stated that she had no additional input.

Mike and Jessica Brown owners of Little Wing Ice Cream introduced themselves. They took a few moments to review their business plan and the relationships they have built downtown. Allison asked if they could confirm what type of business. They stated that they have an ice cream cart and Jessica sells her art. Allison inquired if the ice cream cart was licensed by the Watauga County or State Health Departments. Mike explained that he was not under the jurisdiction of either because he is reselling a product. Mike and Jessica explained their practices and Allison noted that she was not calling into question their practices but wanted to understand the nature of their business. Mike and Jessica explained that both businesses are LLCs that are registered with the state, they have insurance, a separate tax number, and do remit sales tax to the state. With no other comments, Lane called on the next guest.

Kelly Mosenfelder spoke next and explained that she was given a copy of the proposed ordinance by a parking attendant. She stated that she felt that the vendors were the face of downtown and they

worked hard to promote downtown. She continued that she had numerous concerns about the proposed regulation, including the requirement of insurance. She said that her business is registered in the state of Tennessee and she does remit sales tax. Kelly continued that she has concerns that the requirement of "handmade" goods is too restrictive. Kelly also expressed concerns about how any potential schedule would be set up, again citing that it could be too restrictive. Kelly suggested using the parking lot behind Town Hall as a vendor space on the weekend and suggested that staff research the vending pavilion in Roanoke, VA. She finished up by expressing her concerns that the ordinance is restrictive on relationships with downtown businesses, restrictive overall, and advocated for additional speaking time for the other vendors present.

In light of Kelly's request, Allison asked if anyone had any additional comments. Sarah Welch voiced her support for everything that Kelly brought up and thanked her for speaking. Jessica also thanked Kelly for her comments. Kelly added that if she needed to get additional business licenses to remit taxes to the state of North Carolina she would be willing to do that and thanked the Board for listening to her points. Amber added that she thought that parameters are relevant, and could be helpful for all, and thanked the Board for their work. Amber finished up by voicing her support for a vendor pavilion.

Megan Mason thanked the vendors for their attendance and their input. She acknowledged the careful balance needed when developing ordinances. She continued by recognizing that the draft the vendors received is a very early draft and many things listed in the document have yet to be discussed. Allison then acknowledged that the time for public comment was now closed and asked the Board how they would like to move forward with the discussion.

Denise expressed her concern about the draft document being disseminated and inquired as to the reasoning for distributing it. Amy stated that a part-time Town employee had taken it upon themselves to distribute the document and that it was now a personnel issue. Allison added that once she emailed the draft to the Board it became a public document and suggested the board keep that in mind moving forward. Megan highlighted that this was a preliminary document and some of the items listed in the proposed ordinance had not even been discussed. Megan also apologized to the vendors that something was given to them that was confusing, likely to cause stress and not entirely reflective of the conversation that was happening.

Allison asked how the Board would like to move forward working through the document. Megan Mason stated that she had allotted an hour for the meeting and would need to leave shortly. Suzanne and Wayne also stated that they would need to leave shortly as well. Allison stated that with three board members leaving that would leave 5 in attendance and encouraged the setting of another meeting. The Board chose to set the next meeting for Tuesday, May 23 at 8:30am for one and a half hours.

Megan then asked Kendra to speak to the motion she made regarding Boonerang. She stated that there is a lot going on between the new mural unveiling and Boonerang and that the Board needs to be intentional about volunteering and having a presence at these events. She continued that she thought it would be a good idea to purchase some promotional items with the new First Friday logo for these events. After a brief discussion, Kendra made a motion to allocate up to $2000 for promotional items including stickers, tattoos, canvas bags, and koozies with the new First Friday logo. The motion was seconded by Suzanne and had a unanimous vote.

Megan M. made a motion to adjourn. Denise seconded and the motion had a unanimous vote.