

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Board of Directors
Minutes of September 9, 2009**

Present: Peggy Brooker, Cathy Carson, Jesse Helm, Drew Perkins, Randy Pryde, Kate Sarosy, Brettnee Tromble, and Tina Wulf

Excused: Liz Becher, Bob Ide, Toni Lussier, Dick Munroe and Charles Walsh

I. Call to Order – Chairman Perkins called the Sept. meeting to order at 11:35 a.m.

II. Public Comment – Kermit Wille was presented a special recognition award for his ten years of service to the board.

III. City Report

Liz Becher emailed report, which was included in packet.

Kate Sarosy reported the re-design of Beech Street started. Also, Sanford's received a new liquor license for a bar & grille and will be renamed to "Steamboat's Territorial Bar & Grille". They will be changing the menu and the layout. Kate said Liz referenced the City's increased participation towards the HUD loans. Peggy asked if there have been any applications for the new loans. Kate said not yet - not as far as she knows. She said the City also approved the rezoning for the new loft project in the old Northern Storage and Transport building on "C" St. and Kimball.

IV. Approval of Sept 9, 2009 Minutes

Motion, Second, Passed (MSP) (Brettnee Tromble, Cathy Carson)

VII. Financial Report

Treasurer Tromble thanked Peggy for the new budget format. Brettnee said this format better represents all of the board's suggestions from the previous meeting. Brettnee noted that the budget review task force met with auditor and although the auditor did not make any specific recommendations for the budget, she did say our format works and there are multiple ways of presenting the same information. Brettnee hopes this compilation of everyone's ideas is a more understandable and comprehensive representation of our accounts.

Brettnee noted the presentation of expenses on the top of the report indicating advertising and marketing expenses for summer promotions and the cost of flower plantings. Chairman Perkins asked if the insurance payment of \$1,134 was for the Director's & Officers insurance. Brettnee said yes.

Dropping down, the report reflects revenue. She said this section shows the DDA's operating revenue deficit or surplus, and below is a separate section showing monies set aside for capital improvements. The bottom line was off by about \$38 [\$36.12, to be exact]. Tina indicated that amount reflects the NOW Account interest which is calculated on the last day of the month and the report was likely not updated to reflect that increase. Kermit asked if DDA was still in the WYOSIP account. Tina said

no, we transferred everything out of WYOSIP into the NOW Account due to the very low interest rate of return in WYOSIP. At least with the NOW Account, DDA was guaranteed a minimum 0.035% interest rate. He asked what DDA was doing regarding insurance; "Did we buy extra?"

Tina said yes. Cathy asked if DDA was covered through Dec. 31, 2009. Kermit said DDA is covered up to \$250,000 for non-interest. He suggested we consider some staggered investments; "I know we have some CDs. We might consider some short term CDARs, which are Certificate Account Registries, and then DDA wouldn't have to buy insurance." Cathy and Jesse clarified if the accounts are less than 50 basis points, insurance is not required, but we will need to pay attention at the end of this calendar year when two of the CDs mature.

Kermit went on to explain the CDARs are certificates of deposit in excess of the \$250,000 that "we sell to another bank and that bank sells us the same amount back. From a managing the money standpoint, it is invisible to the customer, but you receive the benefit of a little bit better interest rate and full coverage on the FDIC insurance. There are one month, three months, six months, an odd amount and up to five years available." He recommends the shorter terms and to continually roll them. In the event DDA needs the money, it can borrow against these short term notes.

Chairman Perkins asked if there were any other questions on the financials. He thanked those involved in creating the new format and said it is very helpful in showing business within each month and from month to month.

VIII. Approval of August Financial Report

Motion, Second, Passed (MSP) (Cathy Carson, Jesse Helm)

IX. Director's Report

Tina inquired of Susan DeWitt, Natrona County Treasurer, what the assessment forecast is going forward. Susan doesn't project assessments much beyond one year and she said they should remain fairly stable for the next year. She also suggested Tina contact Buck McVeigh, Co-Chairman of the Dept. of Admin. & Info. Economic Analysis Division.

Mr. McVeigh explained the assessments are based on the statewide mineral revenues. For example, using natural gas, the average for 2008 was \$6.50 per MCF versus 2009 YTD of only \$2.75. He said the revenue differences between 2008 and 2009 thus far are at about \$27.8 billion versus \$19.6 billion, and this is reflected locally in two years (2011) meaning DDA can expect a decrease in 2011 tax collections. He added, DDA might be wise, therefore, in recommending a continuation of 16 mills.

Peggy said if the mineral assessments are down, the property taxes will probably stay high to offset the decrease in minerals revenues. Chairman Perkins said it is not that kind of relationship. Property taxes are based on a national cost of replacement values which the state then adds in depreciation values (based on the age of structures). Then, at the local level, actual property inspections are factored in and adjustments are made either up or down based on whether or not improvements have been made to individual structures. So the property sales values within a district have relatively little to do with the overall property assessments except that they are part of a range of statistical analyses within a district and individual assessments cannot be

higher than 105% or lower than 95% of the average property sale price within a district or neighborhood. So, sales affect that somewhat but not directly, said Drew, and obviously taxes assessed this year are paid next year. This means any significant change in the assessment is delayed a year. The mineral revenues impact a district if there are gas and oil reserves under a particular district. The indirect impact of mineral revenues impact a district when revenues are down due to a decreased demand for those goods and services and this in turn impacts employment which then impacts property vacancy rates. Eventually it all catches up with the property values within a district such as the DDA.

Proud to Host the Best Sponsorship – Casper Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) request for sponsorship of the upcoming sports tournaments. Tina explained the DDA sponsored at a \$1000 level the past three (3) years but the commitment levels have been changed this year and to receive the same benefits as DDA has in the past, DDA would need to increase its contribution to \$1500. Tina said that at last night's DMPA meeting, Pat Sweeney recommended the DDA kick in \$2000 to the DMPA's \$1000 for a combined \$3000 Silver Sponsorship Level. Pat said there is good economic value in supporting this as most tournament coaches steer their teams and parents to support sponsoring entities.

Peggy said there isn't much difference in the benefits between the \$3000 Silver Supporter and the \$1500 Bronze Supporter level. Brettnee said Board previously discussed how it doesn't necessarily benefit the downtown by just having our name in an ad. Drew suggested the parking garage consider offering free hourly during tournaments or put validation stickers into coaches' conference bags. Tina said at the DMPA meeting, Darlene Matz (CVB) asked Joe Garnier to inquire about it through Lori Becker of the Chamber. He said he would.

Tina showed the Board the DDA banner which was created for last year's Proud to Host the Best tournaments. Peggy asked if the DMPA has a banner. Tina said not yet but they are working on it. Tina suggested the DDA minimally match the DMPA's \$1000 and ask the CVB to keep their tournament and meal passes but allow two banners (instead of one) at all tournaments (for DDA *and* DMPA) and give us a full page ad instead of a ½ page. Drew said the tournaments are in October, February and March. Tina said the DMPA has been discussing a quarterly promotional calendar to allow greater continuity in getting people downtown. Peggy asked what the deadline is. Tina said September 18th for the ad. Peggy recommended we match the DMPA's \$1000, ask CVB in lieu of passes and meals, allow two banners and give us ½ page ad. Cathy noted we are asking for a sponsorship level exception. Tina said yes. Chairman Perkins said thank you to Pat Sweeney for thinking outside of the box.

Motion, Second, Passed (MSP) (Peggy Brooker, Randy Pryde)

XI. New Business

Mill Levy Election – Peggy noted the mill levy election letter, which is in board meeting packet, for property owners. The bulleted items are on-going, planned and perspective DDA projects. She said the task force talked about sending out a postcard, then a letter and a three-fold brochure and a follow-up reminder postcard. Peggy said the best quote received is from Mtn. States Lithographing for \$199.

Brettnee asked about whether or not Mtn. States would be able to get the printing done in time. Cathy said Mtn. States was late in getting a recent print project to her bank. Randy said Adbay now has the capability to do print jobs, too. Tina said she committed to Paul at Mtn. States after the last task force meeting. She said she'd keep Adbay in mind for possible future projects as it is preferable to support downtown businesses and property owners whenever feasible.

Chairman Perkins said the plan is to send the letter, the two postcards, and the brochure and then have personal contact.

Proud to Host the Best – covered under *Director's Report*

55+ Employment Network

Tina explained this is a national workforce preparation and employment system designed to train and ultimately employ Wyoming trainees who are 55+ seeking jobs. Tina met with the local program manager, Natalie Hancock and there is a candidate eligible to start. The candidate recently finished an office certificate program and is eager to find a training location. The trainee's position is funded through a grant from the Stimulus package through Wyoming Workforce Development and works part time for about a year, possibly two. The Board agreed this would be a good opportunity for additional office assistance.

October Board Meeting

Date changed from Wed., Oct. 14 to Oct. 7th to accommodate guest speaker Jim Davis of Evanston. Jim will speak to Board about Evanston's recent acceptance into the Wyoming Main Street program and what is involved. Tina said there will be a special notice in newspaper and on website about this subject to alert interested constituents.

IX. Old Business

Joy of Life Raffle Tickets

Reminder raffle is Tues., Sept. 15th (last Downtown Farmers' Market). Chairman Perkins asked Board members to please bring all ticket returns in to office ASAP.

Nominations for 2009 Recognition Awards

Randy asked if the County could receive an award for the new judicial center. Chairman Perkins said yes as the DDA has given awards to the City of Casper.

Main Street

Peggy said Casper has been given permission to apply to be a Wyoming Main Street community should it wish to do so but application must be made by December 1, 2009. Her concerns are that this combined with a mill levy election may be untimely. Kate asked how becoming a Main Street would change the DDA. Tina said Jim Davis would honestly address all of that. Jim is biased, but Evanston is seeing firsthand what it's like to tackle becoming a Main Street after a year into the program. Jim said it's not an easy process and he will be honest about it. Casper's application does not automatically mean acceptance into the state program. Peggy said there is nothing to preclude the DDA, if interested after hearing from Jim Davis, from saying next year

would be a better time for Casper to join (especially given the mill levy election Nov. 3rd and the 2009 deadline of Dec. 1, 2009). Kate asked if the application process would be open to us in the future. Drew said presumably it would. He added the state funding for the program right now is, like every other program, very limited which makes the benefit of joining not as promising. Jesse and Brettnee said they have concerns about mixing the application process with the mill levy election this year.

By-law Revision

Kate asked about DDA by-laws as relates to E-votes. She emailed Chairman Perkins. Tina received a copy of Kate's email and read it to the Board:

"I spoke with Dave Drell regarding his proposed changes to the Amoco JPB bylaws. The following paragraph is based on the AG's opinion and he is happy to share it with the DDA.

'When the Chairman determines that a condition exists that does not permit sufficient time to convene a special meeting, an emergency meeting may be held on matters of serious immediate concern to take temporary action without notice. Reasonable efforts shall be made to offer public notice. All action taken at an emergency meeting is of a temporary nature and in order to become permanent shall be reconsidered and acted upon at an open public meeting within forty-eight (48) hours. Special and/or emergency meetings may be conducted by a telephone and/or video conference wherein a quorum of members of the Board are gathered together by telephone communication or video conference to participate in the decision making process.'

The point is to allow for a discussion among members. Dave said there is nothing for or against email votes in the statutes. He doesn't know enough about electronic means of group communication (e.g., chat room or other) to develop some language in the bylaws. He suggested that perhaps the DDA and Amoco Boards could together contact Adbay to see if they could recommend a way to accommodate our need for open discussion electronically."

Tina said she did speak with Shawn Houck at Adbay and he said:

"Perhaps a publicly accessibly chat or blog area on the site would address the issue? Or maybe a voting system that would allow for public comment? So...they could discuss the issue/matter at hand via telephone or meeting and then log their decision/votes on their website and allow for public comment for the next 48 hours or however long it will be before they hold a public session.

Seems a bit more cumbersome to me, but if they are interested in total public transparency, it's probably the best way to go. I think it might be wise to sit down with the players in this and talk it out in person."

Board members expressed the best policy is to avoid e-votes if at all possible. Randy said he did not feel comfortable with the process. "I miss getting other people's input."

Mill Levy Contact List

The Board finished the meeting out by deciding who would be contacting which property owners about the upcoming election.

X. **Adjourn - 1:05 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Wulf, Executive Director

** A compact disc recording of this meeting has been placed in the DDA Minutes. The CD can be played using both DR-02 Software, Real Play and Windows Media Player.