**Downtown Development Authority**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

**June 12, 2013**

**Present:** Charles Walsh, Brian Scott, Brettnee Tromble,, Mike Stepp, Charlie Powell, Lisa Burridge, John Johnson, Scott Murray, Renee Penton-Jones

**Excused:** Brandon Daigle, Louis Taubert, Bill McDowell

**Call to Order:** Chair Charles Walsh called the June 12, 2013 meeting to order at 11:38a.

**Public Comments:** Robin Mundell with the Chamber of Commerce provide the following update to the the board:

1. a list of current parking garage customers, printed the morning of June 12th,  was provided to Renee.
2. Chamber sent an uncoordinated letter to existing parking customers asking them to contact Renee for further information.
3. the letter also directed customers that all business would conclude as of June 30th with any refunds being taken addressed by the Chamber.
4. she is retiring as of Fall of 2013 and that the Chamber will be actively seeking a new director. She said she will stay until a new director is in place.

Brettnee asked if the DDA could be coordinate on the letter and Robin told her that it would not be a possibility. Brettnee explained the DDA’s interest in a smooth transition and asked Robin to forward a copy of their letter to the DDA for review and customer follow up. . Charlie Powell told Robin that he and the council have been very pleased that the Chamber of Commerce has handled the transition to the DDA with professionalism. Charles requested a list of customers who have funds due back to them. Robin said it was not important since all would be receiving a refund and the DDA will have new contracts in place. Charles congratulated Robin on her retirement.

**City Report**:

1. Charlie Powell stated the council’s pleasure that the DDA received the contract to manage the parking garage.
2. Liz Becher stated she has submitted a federal TIGER grant, which will be applied to street improvements on Midwest Avenue between Poplar and Center Streets. Liz said it will be a $12.5 million dollar grant and she should know within a few months.
3. Liz also said the City is coming up on year end and her staff is working to finalize contracts so that funds may be encumbered for the next fiscal year.

**Approval of May, 2013 Board Minutes**

***Motion, Second, Passed (Brettnee Tromble, Brian Scott)***

**Financials – Brettnee Tromble**

1. Brettnee told the board that a check for $25,673.68 had been received from the county treasurer’s office. She said another large payment was due in June which should bring tax revenues close to the budgeted number.

2. Brettnee reviewed check detail for June. She highlighted the check to WYDOT, explaining to the board that the DDA is paying for the signage and will be reimbursed, in part, by the Wyoming Division of Tourism. Brettnee then said that the Nicolaysen Art Museum will be invoiced for 50% of the remaining balance.

**Approval of June, 2013 Financial Report**

***Motion, Second, Passed (Lisa Burridge, Mike Stepp )***

**Director’s Report – Renee Penton-Jones**

1. Met with Casper College and the City of Casper regarding a bike path from the college, leading into the downtown area. Pepsi indicated their willingness to donate bicycles to the college, dependent upon liability issues. Renee said she is working with the college on relevant downtown activities in an effort to be better prepared to engage students.
2. Held a lunch meeting with Keith Goodenough as part of her goal to meet on an individual basis with all city council members at least one time per year.
3. Working with Pepper Tank on a new kiosk for the sheep statues in Pioneer Park.
4. Advised board that Rapid City is not a Main Street community, rather attempts to follow most of the principles.

**New Business**

Charles requested board input on the parking facilities contract with the City. He said that he would be meeting with City representatives the following day to finalize negotiations and urged board members to offer any comments as soon as possible. Charlie asked whether a set of proforma financials had been completed on the parking garage. Charles offered to forward a copy to him. Charles told the board that the Infrastructure Committee is overseeing the transition plan with Renee. Renee told the board she would be reaching out to the parking garage employees as soon as there is an executed contract. Charles asked Robin if she knew whether the employees would want to remain and she was unsure.

Charles brought the board’s attention to a draft letter to the editor that explains the Downtown Development Authority mission and value proposition and addresses our the board’s commitment and confidence in its Executive Director, Renee Penton-Jones. Lisa Burridge said she felt the letter was great and encouraged that it be published. Other members of the board concurred.

**Old Business**

Charles introduced the 2013-2014 draft budget for board approval. He noted that the executive director’s salary was not included pending an employee review with Renee. Brettnee also informed the board that the parking garage budget was not included due to the lack of a signed contract with the City. Renee’s salary, along with the parking garage budget will be addressed, with the parking garage being operated as a strategic business unit. Brettnee reviewed the draft budget with the board, pointing out projected final expenses for June and projected revenues for the next fiscal year. Brettnee said the travel expense line had been bumped up due to increased travel projections and that an increase of $5,000 for office productivity equipment would be reviewed. Brettnee said that she prefers a balanced budget will be working with board members to reduce costs to that end.

**Committee Reports**

1. **Executive Committee –** Brian said the committee had received theproposed parking garage contract

just prior to the executive committee meeting. He reinforced Charles’ request that the board should review and offer comments on the contract prior to negotiating final terms with the City. The Governor’s office posed some questions on the pending grant that needed to be addressed, although he was confident these would be resolved. No update provided on the public plaza.

2. **Infrastructure Committee** - Renee reported that Brandon is finalizing the transition plan for the parking

garage and will have it completed in June.. She said Brandon has requested a walk through as soon as

possible after the contract is signed so the assessment process can begin. Strategic planning projects were discussed with the committee. The group does not feel that the DDA should become involved with design guidelines within the district as it would require too many hours. The committee also felt that stringent guidelines could have a negative effect on attracting downtown development. The committee also discussed residential housing, along with the development of a data base. Renee updated the board on the committee’s progress with branding and the Center Street gateway projects. She said that the City branding committee has completed their RFP process and looks forward to receiving a strong response. Renee said that CEPI had completed a complimentary survey of the northern side of the Center Street underpass and the committee will be working with Dave Hough on the next phase of the project. Renee updated the board on the downtown sound system. She said that MOOD is reviewing City conduit plans to determine whether the DDA can upgrade to a satellite system. The monthly cost would be cut in half if the change is possible. Additionally, the DDA would be able to sell systems to downtown businesses at a reduced cost, along with having the capability to sell and play advertising on the new system. MOOD representatives hope to have information back to Brandon by next month.

**Finance Committee** – Brettnee explained to the board that her committee had devoted most of the month toward working on the new budget. She said she will be looking at plaza financing possibilities. Liz recommended that Brettnee contact Missoula to discuss their riverfront plaza and the five (5) TIF’s that they have in place. Brettnee also said that she will be working with the marketing committee on a TIF document. Mike said he hopes to have something in place by July. Renee requested that Brettnee meet with the marketing committee to assist with comprehension of the complications of TIF.

**MARCOM Committee** – Mike reported that his committee had been working on the mill levy campaign. He said that MARCOM had developed a timeline with suggested activities and budget for board review and comment. Mike emphasized that direct contact with stakeholders is encouraged. He said leave behind documents would be produced for board members to utilize. Charles commented that he didn’t feel constituents would be in favor of a $2,500 wine and cheese party. He said he thought assigning property owners to board members for contact would be more effective. Mike said that July 14th is the suggested start day for board members to begin reaching out to downtown property owners. John Johnson asked for clarification regarding the mill levy and whether it may be contentious. Charles explained that voter participation in previous elections has been very small. Lisa commented that a lot of property owners don’t even know they pay. Charles said that when he took over as chairman, he made a point of meeting as many property owners as possible. He said there were misperceptions as to the DDA’s finances as well as lack of knowledge as to what the DDA is accomplishing. John said he wondered if “poking the sleeping bear” may cause challenges. Lisa said she wouldn’t read postcards, etc. She said she would prefer to visit with someone over the phone or in person. She recommended that the contact list of property owners be split up for individual contact. John wondered if some property owners may be concerned that they do not receive the same benefit others do. He said he was not aware of past campaigns, even though he is a downtown property owner. He said personal contact would be preferred. Brian said he was not in favor of meetings and would prefer to have the board conduct one-on-one visits. There was further discussion regarding timing of presentations, along with collateral to present. Mike will adapt the timeline to concur with today’s discussions. Charles urged Mike to let the marketing committee know how appreciated they are.

Mike said there will be a special meeting for parking garage marketing. He said his committee would respond well to a meeting with Brettnee. Mike asked the board to approve $500 to sponsor the Downtown Wedding Walk.

**Motion to Approve $500 Sponsorship for the Downtown Wedding Walk**

***Motion, Second, Passed with Abstention by Charles Walsh (Brettnee Tromble/Brian Scott)***

**Governance Committee –** Scott submitted comments on the parking garage contract and has scheduled a meeting for the following week.

**Action Items:**

1. MARCOM needs to produce a draft marketing plan for the initial transition and a long term plan.
2. Executive Committee to reassess strategic plan action items.
3. Mike to work with Brettnee on scheduling a TIF meeting.
4. Letter to parking tenants to include ACH Withdrawal information.
5. Charles to meet with City to finalize the contract for the parking garage.
6. MARCOM to revise mill levy timeline.

**Motion to Adjourn**

***Motion provided (Brian Scott, Lisa Burridge)***

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at12:59pm.

Approved by:

Secretary’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Board Member’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_