

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**Board of Directors Meeting****January 11, 2012**

Present: Peggy Brooker, Cathy Carson, Randy Pryde, Charles Walsh, Sona Rummel, Brettnee Tromble, Kate Sarosy, Liz Becher, Mike Stepp, Brandon Daigle, Brian Scott, Dick Munroe, Renee Penton-Jones

Call to Order: Chair Peggy Brooker called the January 11 meeting to order at 11:36am.

Public Comments: Peggy acknowledged Kelly Byer from the Casper Star Tribune.

City Report:

Kate Sarosy - Kate deferred to Liz Becher.

Liz Becher - Liz gave an update on the market analysis for the conference center project. The original completion date of next week has been postponed so more analysis can occur with respect to the type and size of conferences Casper can expect to attract. Liz said that the strategic advisory had spent a lot of time visiting regional facilities in Colorado, South Dakota, Billings around the state of Wyoming and Northern Idaho and gathering information on the types of facilities, the size, types of conferences, etc. As a result of their travels and analysis they have asked for an additional month and will present on February 27th. The group is analyzing data in order to provide answers to three questions. First, whether Casper is a large enough market to support a conference center, second where would the center be located (within a 3-4 block radius) and third what would be the recommended size? The consultants will be back in town, next week, to meet with local meeting planners and conduct more analysis. There are still surveys out with business planners and everything is moving according to plan with the exception of the extra time required to analyze data and finalize their recommendations.

In late August or September, the DDA had asked the City for an opinion regarding tax increment financing as to whether it is constitutional within the state of Wyoming and whether it would be a source of financing that Casper could pursue. Liz and Kate approached the city attorney, Bill Lubin, for his opinion. Bill has spent the past several months researching TIF opportunities for Casper. Bill also looked into what has and has not worked well. An extensive write-up of Bill's findings has been sent to City staff and council with an edited version being provided to Renee for board distribution. Liz said that she and Kate were impressed with how informative the document is and that it will be useful if the DDA and City should choose to go forward with TIF financing. Peggy asked whether the OYD would qualify for both sales and property tax TIF funds if it were annexed into the DDA. Liz explained that the OYD's status as an urban renewal area would make it ineligible for a sales tax TIF. Liz also commented that she feels the urban renewal designation is very beneficial for other funding qualifications. Annexation would leave designated boundaries intact.

Approval of December, 2011 Board Minutes

Motion, Second, Passed (Brettnee Tromble, Kate Sarosy)

Financials: Brettnee Tromble reviewed December and year-to-date percentages. She said that everything is still right on track with administrative at 50.05% and operational being 47.70%. Marketing is low at 25% and revenue pacing on track. Brettnee reviewed January payments, explaining the breakdown of the invoice from AdBay for website improvements and maintenance. She also pointed out the payment to Bob Ide which was submitted after completion of sidewalk improvements. Brettnee drew attention to the invoice from the Casper Chamber of Commerce that was the final payment for the free holiday parking campaign, along with the invoice from the Wonder Bar for the Christmas appreciation party.

Motion to Approve December Financials

Motion, Second, Passed (Randy Pryde, Kate Sarosy)

Motion to approve January Payments

Motion, Second, Passed with Abstention by Brian Scott on Townsquare Media invoice (Mike Stepp, Cathy Carson)

Director's Report: Renee drew the board's attention to the website project and asked for board opinion on the data base overview that was submitted from AdBay so she could proceed with the next phase of development. Renee told the board she had been visited by Farmer's Market representatives who were inquiring about the possibility of moving the market to a different downtown location. She said that they told her they feel they have outgrown the Nicolaysen area and would like to consider other possibilities. Renee will contact Brett Governanti to visit further. She recommended to the group that Liz Becher would be a great contact to discuss their ideas with. Renee noted that there is sensitivity from some property owners to closing City streets for extended periods. Renee also informed the board that she will be meeting with Library representatives to discuss a solar system project which will be presented to them. She will report back to the board. Renee commended First Night on their New Year's Eve event. Finally, Renee asked the board if there is interest in the Main Street Conference and encouraged them to consider attending.

New Business:

Brettnee discussed recent developments with the Sonoran Institute. She explained that the finance committee was introduced to Joe Minicozzi, a presenter with the Institute, via the Fort Collins DDA. She said Mr. Minicozzi has developed a presentation based upon the value of revitalization of downtown areas versus urban sprawl. She said he compiles actual data to compare downtown buildings and their per acre tax value versus a Wal Mart or a mall, for example. She told the board that Cheyenne, Laramie and Sheridan had already received the presentation and were very impressed. Brettnee told the board that she feels this presentation would provide the "why" we should be invested in a strategic plan. She told the board that John Heyneman, the regional representative with the Sonoran Institute would be accompanying Joe to Casper. She explained that there is a \$5,000 fee involved and that John had committed the first \$500. She said that she would like to see the County, City, other entities and stakeholders be contacted for financial support because their buy-in is important. Liz commented that the boundaries of the study would encompass the entire downtown area, including the OYD. She said

there may be urban renewal budget funds in the amount of \$2,500 that can be committed. She said that there was a similar study completed in 2000 and she would be curious to see an update. Liz felt this study would be great with regard to upcoming TIF discussions. Brettnee offered to send out email copies of presentations and Peggy noted the need to finalize the fundraising process, soon. Charles suggested that the presentation be incorporated into the strategic plan process and Mike agreed. Peggy reminded the group that funding would need to be separate from the strategic plan. Cathy talked about possible funding sources and the fact that it would assure more buy-in. Liz suggested that CAEDA would be a good candidate and Renee said she had sent an initial email to Scott at CAEDA. The group discussed contacting stakeholders to solicit funding.

Motion to approve \$2,500 to proceed with the Sonoran Project

Motion, Second, Passed (Dick Munroe, Mike Stepp)

Peggy updated the board on the status of the RFP process for the strategic plan. She told the group that the selection committee had met earlier in the day to narrow the entries from 20 to 5. She said that the top 5 finalists would be invited to present, in person, to the committee on January 30. Liz said background checks will be performed after a final consulting group is selected and the planning process will begin immediately.

Peggy reported final numbers on the free holiday parking campaign. There was discussion about whether the statistics were relevant to actual dollars. Mike suggested that the board would offer to provide holiday validation stickers should they proceed with the program, next year. He felt it would be more accurate vs. the current method. Peggy said a poster could also be displayed in participating merchant windows in addition to banners displayed in the garage. Randy commented that this would be open to additional downtown business, such as banks, law firms, etc. Brian Scott asked for an accounting of monies expended in previous years. He remarked that he would have a concern about complicating the ease of parking for shoppers. He also asked whether the merchants found value in offering free shopping and recommended that negotiations be restricted to an amount that will be paid to the Chamber, going forward, versus inconveniencing shoppers with extra steps. Randy and Peggy noted that the process may be difficult due to the perception that the number of cars should equate to a larger amount of sponsorship. Mike and Sona talked about there being ample time to review garage statistics, etc. before discussing the 2012 season. There was also discussion about the newsletter.

Old Business:

Peggy updated the board on business award nominations. Liz talked about honoring Joshua's Storehouse, Slumberland, the City of Casper (for the lighting project) and organizations who are producing festivals in the downtown area. NicFest, Wednesday Night live, the Farmer's Market, the Wedding Walk, Wild West Photo Fest, the Firefighter Challenge, First Night and the Chalk Art/Pancake Festival were mentioned as certificate worthy. MARCOM will assign award sizes for all nominated recipients. Renee will place orders. Peggy said that she and MARCOM felt there is enough revenue in

the MARCOM budget to host an awards ceremony. She said that there may be an opportunity to combine the ceremony with an opportunity to involve stakeholders in the strategic planning process. She said that planning meetings should be taking place in March.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee - Nothing additional to report

Finance Committee - Brettnee said that the "number nerds" have had quite a lot going on. She told the board about the conference call with the Ft. Collins DDA and their ongoing methodology for funding. Researching state laws regarding a TIF was strongly suggested. Brettnee said that their projects are funded as a partnership between TIF's and bonds. They pool projects for a period of time and issue bonds which are recovered with TIF funds. Brettnee felt the model was intriguing but cautioned about the expense of issuing a bond. She felt that smaller projects would not qualify for bonding. Brettnee also cautioned about the variance between Colorado and Wyoming property taxes when considering TIF as an option. She said finance was also looking at the Billings DDA model and remarked that their model of funding might be more compatible with Wyoming. Brettnee said that her goal is for the finance committee to look at several different financing models and determine which one works the best for Casper. She told the board that Ted Grooms has joined the committee and thanked Dick for recommending him. Brettnee hopes that sustainable and project funding solutions will be found in conjunction with the strategic planning process.

Infrastructure Committee - Dick Munroe visited with the board regarding public restroom facilities. He reminded the board that the top location from the committee is a portion of the Petroleum Building. Brandon Daigle is in charge of finding out whether the building is for sale and finding an asking price. Brandon told the group that he would like to welcome Sona to the infrastructure committee. The committee's next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 17th at 11:30a. Dick talked about the Urban Renewal conference in Denver and talked about board members attending. Liz confirmed that she will be attending. Dick is having Renee check on hotel accommodations and felt that it might be good if Ted Grooms could attend in lieu of Brettnee to represent the finance committee. There was discussion about the DDA budget for this trip. Charles asked Liz about the City per diem for travel and suggested that it be used as a guideline.

Motion To Set Travel Per Diem Rate To Coincide With City Of Casper

Motion, Second, Passed (Brettnee Tromble, Kate Sarosy)

MARCOM Committee - Mike talked further about recognition awards and the committee's work on developing brand awareness with the general public, along with stakeholders. Sona reported that she is working on the quarterly newsletter with a print date that has been moved to February. She said she is adding more detail to the letter and looks forward to strategic planning information.

Governance - Cathy and Kate are still working with Bill Lubin on language in the bylaws for DDA board term limits that will coincide with adapted council term limits. Bill will be reviewing language contained in the state statutes to try and avoid conflicts. Cathy said that while it is subject to interpretation, the committee wants to make certain we have the best possible solution. Kate said that Bill can't act as the DDA attorney but that he will provide some guidelines for consideration. Cathy said that Jackson

