

## **Downtown Bloomington Association Board of Directors meeting**

February 2, 2016

Present: Jan Lancaster, Carlo Robustelli, Nancy Ammerman, Steve Parker, Karen Schmidt, Carl Teichman, Jamie Mathy, Bobby Vericella, Dave Park, Ruth Haney, Joe Haney, and Bob Floyd

Excused absences: Martha Burk, Tim Tilton and Gemma Billings

Staff present: Tricia Stiller, Catherine Dunlap, Steve Rasmussen, and Tom Dabareiner.

Ruth called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Minutes: Carl made a motion to approve the minutes. Jan second the motion. Motion passed.

Financial report: Nancy provided the financial report. We spent \$4,600 in January.

### Committee reports:

- Design – In Martha’s absence, Tricia provided the design committee report. This committee is working on the artist trading card First Friday, which will be in March. They are also working on the Area Arts Showcase, which will include stops at the McLean County Arts Center and the library. One recent accomplishment is that the city will allow DBA to do a trial of painting three traffic control boxes within the district. Thanks to Marlene for her efforts on this. The next tentative site for a mural has been identified. The McLean County Center for Human Services would like another mural painted on another one of their murals. Bobby Mays from the Parks and Rec is reworking the heart shaped wreaths with lighter red lights.
- Promotions Committee – Catherine reported on the efforts of this committee. The committee met for the first time in January and will continue to meet monthly. The committee offered some really good ideas about how to improve First Fridays and to include highlighting a different niche of businesses throughout the year. The first one is being developed our Outreach Intern Lily Chang. In June, we will be doing a Tour de Couture, which will highlight our emerging fashion niche. Another one to be scheduled is a Taste of Downtown/Restaurant week promo. The next committee meeting will be February 9<sup>th</sup>. Catherine handed out the business promotional calendar she will be emailing/handing out to downtown businesses. The board recommended that she add DBA board and committee meetings to the calendar.
- Organization – Tricia reported the Trivia night will be held on April 13<sup>th</sup> at the Eagles Club. They are donating the space along with a portion of the food sales. Jamie Mathy is currently working on coming up with questions for the event. Tricia is working on developing a tool kit for the board members to use for talking to their groups about DBA.
- Economic Vitality – Austin Grammer from the city and Aimee Ingalls from the EDC are working on a business survey to track sales trends in the downtown.
- Farmers Market – Catherine reported that applications for the Farmers Market opened on Monday. We have already had several vendors apply for the market. Bake sale spots are filling up fast with most of June already committed. Catherine and a member of the committee are working on sponsorship levels for the market. At the pre-season vendor meeting on Saturday, more than 25 vendors showed up along with some new farmers. The vendors really liked the idea of the Farmers’ Market themed First Friday in April. Several of them indicated wanting to participate in the event.

Directors Report – We presently have two interns from IWU working in the office, Lily Chang and Jarred Shifflet. There have been some complaints about trash debris in the district. DBA spends \$10,000 to hire MarcFirst clients to clean up downtown. This goes from April to November. Tricia has reached out to Corrective Services to see if they had anyone that needed community service hours that could help with the trash pickup. She has been asked to serve on the BN Advantage Business retention committee. This meets quarterly.

#### Old Business

Signage Committee – Steve Rasmussen reported that nine international parking symbols have been installed on the two parking decks. It was important to use the international symbol because of the increased number of international visitors. The funding was a 50/50 split from the city and the CVB. The signage committee is also working on a joint effort with the Town of Normal to do consistent wayfinding signs throughout the district. The city will be requesting \$75,000 in the next budget for a study on this topic.

City Minute – Steve asked Tom Dabareiner, City Community Development Director, to talk about the one-stop shop to make it easier for projects to be developed in the community. Tom asked the board what their challenges were with the process. He then shared what his department's concerns were and they were very similar in nature. The departments under him are working on coming up with a one-stop shop that cuts down the time for approval and is more customer service focused. When he started working there it took 4-6 weeks to get a project through. That is now down to 19 days with the goals to make the average plan review 10 days. Tom is working with the departments under his division to redesign the review process. What he is proposing is that each project will be assigned a project manager that will serve as a liaison between the developer and the city staff. He also hopes to implement a project review committee that will allow all of the departments that have to approve the project to meet and talk about the project together. The developer will receive one report with all of the recommendations in it. The board recommended a feedback loop be built into the process and bring in individuals that have done the type of project that is being proposed. Tom indicated that the Project Review group would be a place where the developer could offer some input.

Other business – Jamie reported that Bloomington was listed as “one of the 10 most livable cities” by Livability.com

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.