

Downtown Bloomington Association Board of Directors meeting

May 2, 2016

Present: Jan Lancaster, Nancy Ammerman, Karen Schmidt, Ruth Haney, Steve Parker, Martha Burk, Gemma Billings, Jeff Woodard, Dave Park, Carlo Robustelli, Bob Floyd, Carl Teichman

Excused absences: Joe Haney

Staff present: Tricia Stiller, Catherine Dunlap, Steve Rasmussen, Beth Whisman

Ruth called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Tricia introduced Beth Whisman, the new Executive Director of the Museum.

Minutes – Carl made a motion to accept the minutes and Jeff seconded. Motion passed.

Financial - Nancy reported that we are still in the black with all three of our accounts.

Director's Report

- Joe Haney was injured in a fall at his building. Tricia sent around a get well card for the board to sign
- DBA office update – Redbird Management repaired the walls in the conference room and in the window well near Catherine's desk so there isn't an urgent need to relocate the office. Tricia talked with David Hales and it was decided that at this time DBA wouldn't be moving into the Government Center at this time.
- Signage Committee- The Request for Qualifications for a new sign program was sent out shortly after the meeting.
- BN Advantage – Tricia is serving on two committees for this effort, Quality of Life and Economic Impact
- Downtown Clean Up day – There were 15 participants that donated 4 hours each to clean up downtown on April 24.
- Downtown Clean up – DBA has once again entered into a contract with MarcFirst to have their clients clean up downtown three times a week.
- The mural project between Not in our Town, the McLean County Diversity Project and the DBA has held three workshops for the students. They are considering three designs for the mural. The mural will be painted on the retaining wall for the parking lot for the Beck Funeral Home, near the Library.
- Trivia Night Update – The DBA netted \$6,397 for the Trivia Night.
- Homeless situation in downtown – A couple of days prior to the board meeting, someone poured tar on a public bench in the 500 block of North Main. This bench is the one of the homeless has called home. His clothes were ruined as well as the clothes of a couple of women who sat on the bench. Social media has gone viral with about this situation. The warmer weather tends to bring out the homeless and there is a church on Market Street that is providing meals and services to the homeless, which has also increased their numbers. The sad truth is that most people treat their pets better than they do a fellow human. Tricia has set up a meeting with the church that has taken up residence in the Old Laugh Club on Market Street to see if there is more than can be done in partnership with the faith community to help the homeless. Someone recommended that we possibly try to engage the homeless to serve as ambassadors for downtown and also help with cleaning up

downtown. Tricia will talk to the staff at PATH to see if they have had an experience with this.

- Dave Park made a motion to authorize the board president to form a subcommittee to study the issue and bring back recommendations to the board on how to address the homeless issue in downtown. The motion was seconded by Jan. Motion passed unanimously.
- Dave Park, Jan Lancaster, Steve Parker and Martha Burk volunteered to serve on the committee. Karen recommended that there also be a representative from PATH on the committee as well.
- Ruth reported that Joel Bergner was working on a mural with the students from the Regional Alternative School. The building is located at Washington and Roosevelt.

Committee reports

- Farmers Market – The Farmers Market was a recipient of the Link Up Illinois which provides funds for staffing the SNAP program and to promote the SNAP program. The total award was for \$3,000 over two years. This will allow her to keep her intern through the summer. Catherine reported that opening day is Saturday. Jeff asked Catherine remind the Gleaning program volunteers that the West Bloomington Garden also wants to be a location for them to pick up produce.
- Design – Martha reported that volunteers are busy planting the pots as part of the Adopt a Pot program and the tree wells. Niepagen’s has agreed to give volunteers a 20 percent discount on their plant purchases. The Area Arts Showcase will be this Friday and Saturday. There are more than 50 artists participating in the event. The city has granted the design committee permission to paint three traffic control boxes in the downtown. The committee has decided to do three of the boxes around the Square.
- Promotions Committee – The committee has been working on expanding and redefining a couple of the late summer, such as the July First Friday which will have an added component of picnic in the parks, where we get to get people to enjoy the green spaces downtown. We have been able to assemble some volunteers to help organize the Community Harvest dinner. More details to come shortly.

Museum Update

Jeff reported that the Cruisin with Lincoln Visitors Center celebrated its one year anniversary last week. The museum wants to know what it can do for the Downtown Businesses to better promote them to the thousands of visitors that come to the Center on daily basis. When visitors come into the Center, 75% of them asked about restaurants. The museum is looking for incentives from the restaurants, such as coupons, menus, etc.

New Business

- Bloomington-Normal landed on another top 25 list – This one was the Best place to start a new business.
- Criterium – This bike race will take place in downtown on August 27 and is going to be sponsored by the City of Bloomington. The city is currently working on a definition for what that means. Also, there is going to be open container within the event space. Each bar will be in charge of carding their patrons, but people can walk around with the alcohol within the area.

Karen made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Dave. The meeting adjourned at 6:35.