

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, August 5, 2010
9 a.m. Watauga County Library Conference Room**

Recorded Attendance

Board Members: Omer Tomlinson, Boone Chamber; Sheri Moretz – Vice President, Mast General Store; Jason Berry- Treasurer, Footsloggers; Lynne Mason – Town Council Liaison; Dempsey Wilcox – President, Property Owner; Rich Jacobs – Past President, ArtWalk; Jamie Leigh – Town Council Liaison

Staff: Mary Baker

Public: Sam Ratchford, Vidalia Restaurant; Cherry Johnson, WAC & Jones House Community Center; Andy Stallings, Property Owner; Leigh Jacobs, ArtWalk; Marianne Doan, RBC Bank;

General Administration

Dempsey Wilcox called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

The agenda was presented for approval. Sheri Moretz made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Jamie Leigh seconded the motion and it passed.

Approval of Minutes - There are two sets of minutes in your packet. The board felt it was important to provide the information from the special meeting held on July 23. The minutes were not complete until early this week, so they were not contained in your meeting announcement.

Andy Stallings had a question about the MSD and services outside the district...what does that mean. Wilcox explained that the organization should use fund accounting to better track the staff time and expenditure of funds as it relates to activities the DBDA sponsors or hosts that include participants from outside the MSD. It is mostly a staff time tracking issue. Town Manager Greg Young may be updating the MSD map by parcel number and building name to ensure there is a clear understanding of where the MSD lines are. Leigh indicated that from the list that Executive Director Mary Baker forwarded her there are three businesses that are represented by the DBDA that are not in the MSD – the businesses around Mellow Mushroom. Wilcox thinks that those businesses asked to be a part of the MSD some years back. According to the current map, the Library is not located in the MSD, but records indicate otherwise. So, cross checking the status of all parcels is a good idea. Jason Berry made a motion to accept the minutes. Rich Jacobs seconded the motion and it passed.

Financial Report

It was unclear just how to proceed with this report, since no new funds have been received for the new fiscal year. Baker ran the report as if it was a continuation of last year. The DBDA has engaged an accountant, Priscilla Norris, for its annual audit. In years past, Bryce Holder has been used, but since Wilcox is an employee of that organization and president of the DBDA, a position that is not paid, it was decided to seek another candidate for the audit to avoid any insinuation of impropriety. Billy Combs was also suggested, but he also audits the Town of Boone and thought there might be a conflict of interest. The audit should be complete by September 1st and Norris has about 90% of the information already.

ORGANIZATION

Update on 2010 DBDA Contract Renewal by the Town of Boone – Dempsey Wilcox

The Town Council did approve a six-month contract along with funding at its meeting on July 22. The town attorney had the contract but no one from the DBDA had seen it and several of the Council members did not

appear to have had adequate time to review it. A lengthy discussion was held that evening at the meeting. There are some details of the contract that were further discussed by Baker, Wilcox, Lynne Mason, and Greg Young. Within the document are several caveats that require changes in the bylaws. It is hoped that the Council will perceive that the organization is moving forward in good faith and will release funding at its August meeting. Mason indicated that it is on the agenda for discussion on August 17.

Update on Proposed Work Plan for 2010 – Dempsey Wilcox

This document required a few updates that will bring it into compliance with the proposed contract.

Under Promotion, the Council would like to see the wayfinding signs updated quarterly. These signs have all business names on them along with a map. Meeting information and minutes must also be posted on the website. It was suggested that an additional tab be added to the website to keep the informational aspect for residents and visitors separate from the business of the organization. Omer Tomlinson questioned what the low-cost, but high impact media are. Baker explained that the DBDA would be initiating a social media presence.

Under Design, the Council has concern with businesses that are participating in the Art Crawl that are outside of the MSD. The organization will be investigating how to adjust the participation rate for those businesses – all costs for their participation must be covered without the expenditure of MSD funds. The DBDA must also explore how to proceed with Art Crawl if those within the MSD can participate without a promotional fee.

Under Economic Restructuring, the DBDA was given the goal of improving the sign and facade incentive grant application process. Not everyone is aware of these services. This information is included in the DBDA Welcome Packet for new businesses. It will be worked on with the Design Committee and will be announced at the annual meeting, scheduled for August 16. The design program offered through Main Street will also be highlighted. This information will also be available on the website.

Tomlinson made a motion to approve the updated plan of work. Mason seconded the motion, and it passed.

Update on Proposed Budget for 2010 – Jason Berry

Overall this is the same budget that was approved at the last meeting; however, in order to meet the terms of the contract, a few changes had to be made. To pay for the wayfinding sign updates, under the heading of Design, Infrastructure/Pedestrian Signs was previously \$3,000. It is now increased to \$3,600. This will cover one update during the term of the contract (we estimate that each update will be \$3,500 to \$3,600). The funds to increase this line item were moved from Promotion – Printed Materials. That line was \$1,750 previously. In light of this change, the organization will have to rely more heavily on the website, e-mail, and other non-traditional ways of communicating with the public as well as its members.

We are concerned about the size of the sign that will be used for wayfinding. All businesses, 178 of them currently, will be included on all signs. We will investigate a larger sign size for better exposure for businesses and convenience for pedestrians.

A question was raised about Art Crawl being under Design. It was suggested that it be moved to under promotion. Berry made a motion to approve the amendments to the budget and to move Art Crawl from Design to Promotion. Tomlinson seconded the motion, and it passed.

Town of Boone Downtown Task Force – Jamie Leigh and Lynne Mason

The Town Council made a resolution in June to form a Task Force to look at the Main Street Program, the MSD tax and how it is used, and how a stronger organization may be formed to move forward. All five Town Council members and the mayor will serve on the Task Force along with six representatives from the Downtown area. At the July meeting there were four applications. Three of those were approved – Ethel Simpson, Nancy Rivenbark, and Marsha Walpole. Andy Stallings also made application, but his tabled to a special meeting on August 2. Mason anticipates Stallings being involved. The restrictions for serving on the committee may be too restrictive and may be loosened to allow for participation. The facilitator position for the committee is going to be an independent contractor. It is anticipated that initial meeting and further schedule will be established soon. November 1st is the deadline for findings, recommendations, etc. to be given to the Town Council. Liz Parham has offered to make a presentation to the task force to better explain Main Street, etc. It was indicated that it would be good for the Task Force to be seated and a meeting schedule established first, then the offer can be made to them to schedule. Leigh will bring this offer up to the Task Force.

By-Law Changes – Sheri Moretz

By-laws provide guidance for the governance and operation of an organization and should not be changed willy-nilly. Moretz's suggestion is to form a small committee to examine the by-laws from all aspects, not only the changes requested in the contract, to ensure smooth operation in the future. It is hoped that the committee can come up with wording that will work for approval at the September board meeting and that the Town Council will approve the contract and funding at the August meeting, as the DBDA is acting in good faith. Leigh said that she would be willing to introduce that. The members who volunteered to serve on the committee are Omer Tomlinson, Jason Berry, Lynne Mason, and Cherry Johnson, along with Sheri Moretz.

Berry made a motion to establish the by-laws review committee. Jacobs seconded the motion and it passed.

Personnel Policy and Time Sheets – Sheri Moretz

The board reviewed the Personnel Policy manual, which had been circulated at a prior meeting. This edition had the job descriptions removed, the full-time and part-time hours modified, and provision for time sheet accounting in 15-minute increments added. There were several questions about Family Leave and other subjects that the board felt like needed further review.

Mason made a friendly amendment to the by-laws committee motion to include review of the personnel manual and time sheets. This motion passed.

DESIGN

Downtown Pedestrian Sign Update – Mary Baker

There is nothing new happening with the pedestrian signs. We are waiting on information from the Town.

Facade & Sign Grant Policy & Application Information – Mary Baker

We are continuing to work on the application and getting the word out to the MSD members. It will be posted on the website and announced at the Annual Meeting.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING

Parking Update and Question and Answer – Rita Jackson

She indicated that she had not been told if Saturday enforcement was coming up or not. Mason said that the Parking Task Force requested that Saturday enforcement should be implemented soon – it is hoped before the return of ASU students. The plan included hiring people to help direct people on where to park on Game

Days. The use of funds collected from the meters is still up for discussion. There is legislation in place that dictates what these funds can be used for. Signs are being made and will be up before the first game. Parking on Saturdays will be for two hours. This is viewed as a first step among four or five steps. Wording for validation will need to be looked at as will the way in which information about parking is communicated. The meters on Queen Street will need a new sign because it does not include enforcement on Saturdays and adjustments need to be made for people to paying on Saturdays to park in the First Union Lot. Jackson indicated she did not feel safe for staff to be in the booth after dark collecting funds.

MSD Tax Expenditure Policy – Jean Borhman

It is in the new contract that the organization must create a tax expenditure policy for the MSD funds. Borhman is willing to work with the Board to help create this policy.

PROMOTION

Next Art Crawl – Mary Baker

The next Art Crawl is tomorrow night. The Worthless Son-in-laws will be performing at the Jones House.

Doc Watson Sculpture – Mary Baker

You will find information on the sculpture and a donation form in your packet. John Cooper is working hard on this project and there are many in the community who are excited about this honor for Doc. The project's total cost is \$40,000, which will include installation, maintenance, and insurance for a couple of years. It will be located in front of the DiSanti/Watson building on King Street. There are different levels of giving and you can have a brick for a donation of \$100 and a cold-cast bronze head study for contributions of \$1,500 or more. Currently, \$7,500 has been raised. Please contribute.

Website Changes – Mary Baker

Carrie Phillips will be helping with website changes and keeping them current. Listings will be updated quarterly and will include only those within the MSD.

New Business

Site furnishings are ordered and are coming in. The light poles are more expensive than anticipated, but they include pedestrian lighting and are utilizing a more energy-efficient system. It is hoped that they will be installed soon.

The Town just received the initial layout of the Post Office from the architect and it will include a conference room and public bathrooms. Planning and Inspections will move downtown. There may be a problem with the bathrooms and how to work them in. A visitor center will be included. A question was raised about Main Street and MSD services being housed there.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted for your approval

Sheri J. Moretz

