

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, July 14, 2011
9 a.m. Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Conference Room**

Recorded Attendance: Lynne Mason, Omer Tomlinson, Sam Ratchford, Andy Stallings, Sheri Moretz, Bob Meier

Staff: Pilar Fotta

Public: Reta Miller, Steve McLaurin, Cherry Johnson, Evelyn Suddreth, Brad Harmon

General Administration

The meeting was called to order at 9:11 a.m. by Bob Meier, vice president. Sheri Moretz made a motion to approve the agenda. Omer Tomlinson seconded the motion, and it passed. Upon review of attendance, it was noted that a quorum was not present. Therefore the meeting proceeded as a discussion.

Minutes – Sheri Moretz

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed with no problems noted. Approval will be postponed until the August meeting.

Financial Report – Jason Berry

In Jason Berry's absence, Executive Director Pilar Fotta made a report on the organization's financial status. The DBDA has completed the entire fiscal year now. In most categories, the organization is under budget. The only line of note that is over is the staffing line. The reason it was over budget was one staff member leaving and getting paid for her vacation, the hiring of Fotta, which overlapped with the prior employee, and hiring some extra help in June to be able to successfully execute the Doc Watson event and to prepare the office for moving.

Cherry Johnson asked about the \$150 in the Art Crawl line. Fotta will try to find out what it is attached to. It happened before she was hired.

At the end of the fiscal year, Fotta has taken the cash on hand and made the split in it as agreed upon some months back. The MSD funds - \$30,000 – have been moved to the Town and an account with the remaining \$30,000 has been set up at RBC for the DBDA. Some funds will be left in the operating account until the end of July to cover expenses for July and checks that have not cleared. There were no more questions about the financial report.

Organization

Updates – Dempsey Wilcox

Saturday-Game Day Parking – In Wilcox's absence, Fotta reported that the Town has voted to approve Saturdays remaining with two-hour parking. Parking fines will be increased to \$12, and the Town Lot will be a pay by the day lot on Saturdays. Last year, this lot was not used to its capacity. It was suggested that the Queen Street Lot be filled first with game attendees before the town lot is available for longer term parking.

The Michael Vetro Lot, which adjoins the Town Lot, can also be used. The signs make it seem that it is unavailable on weekends. All parking signs need a bit of clarification. When all lots in the downtown area are filled, fans are directed to the Horn in the West lot. Homecoming is the game that brings the biggest crowd and presented the biggest challenge with parking. It was suggested that a dedicated shuttle run from Horn in the West to the stadium on this Saturday (after 1 p.m.).

Lynne Mason pointed out that there are more recommendations from the Parking Task Force that may be implemented. A suggestion was made to consider the Old Watauga High School as an off-site parking

location. Fotta suggested that the County Lots could be used as Visiting Team Tailgating areas. This would put them close to downtown and would invite more business on the street. It was mentioned that anyone operating a parking lot should be required to provide porta-johns.

Steve McLaurin with McLaurin Parking participated in this discussion and is open to suggestions on other places that may be available for parking on Game Days.

Office Relocation – Right now, part of the office is in its old place in the Wade Brown Building and part of it is in the Jones House. Fotta is still moving and sorting through items that can go to storage. The DBDA number will eventually ring at the Jones House, but in the meantime, this number – 265-8557 can be used or she can be reached via her cellphone.

Council/DBDA Board of Directors Appointments

Changes & Updates to the By-laws - Bob Meier, Jason Berry, Dempsey Wilcox, Evelyn Suddreth, Andy Stallings, and Greg Lovins have all agreed to be a part of the Board that is elected by the DBDA membership. The Town still needs a few more candidates for its six. It was suggested that Sam Ratchford could serve on the DBDA side and Evelyn could make application to the Town to adhere to its requirements. Ratchford agreed. Other suggestions of potential board members included Crae Morton, Jean Borman, Brad Harmon.

Some changes to the by-laws are needed to move forward with the new structure. A small group needs to be assembled to examine the by-laws and to make proposed changes. Meier, Tomlinson, Mason, and Moretz agreed to serve and would like to ask Jamie Leigh to serve if at all possible.

Renewal of Contract – The Town wishes to renew the contract with the DBDA for the months of July and then the operation would switch over to the Town. Fotta has agreed to take the position of Director during the transitional period beginning August 1st. (Congratulations!)

Director's Report – Pilar Fotta

Establish Parameters for Neighborhood Representation – The people who live around the Downtown area are concerned with what happens Downtown because it sometimes affects them. It would be advantageous to have a representative from the adjacent neighborhoods – Grand Boulevard, Junaluska, etc. – serving in at least an advisory position on the board. An application process should be established.

Disposal/Donation of Unused Materials – In the process of moving offices, some supplies and materials have been designated as no longer needed. It was suggested that these items first be offered for sale to people in the MSD. If they are not purchased, then they can be offered to other non-profits. Any funds raised will go into the DBDA account.

Map/Directory – The proposed locations for the map/directory of Downtown Boone was presented at the June Town Council meeting. The maps themselves have been examined and there are a few changes that need to be made. Then they will be sent out to the stakeholders for proofing. Responses will be solicited during a certain time period, and then the maps will be posted.

Funding Request – The DBDA website needs to be updated. The previous set up was done with a programmer in mind and it is very difficult to add new information or to update current information. It needs to be revamped to facilitate regular updates and possibly for merging with the Town of Boone's site in the future. Fotta would also like to purchase the domain booneparking.com to promote and explain parking in the Downtown area. She also requested training on Facebook, etc. This could be handled under the promotions budget.

Postage Meter – The postage meter in the DBDA office is a huge expense. With the new agreement and having access to the Town’s meter, it is an expense that can be trimmed.

Signatures – With the change over eminent, Fotta will no longer be able to sign checks on behalf of the organization, so another person or two need to be added to the signature card. Meier is close by and indicated he would sign, and if it isn’t against bank policy, Evelyn Suddreth offered to be on the card as well.

Economic Restructuring

Business Updates – Mellow Mushroom hopes to open within the next two weeks.

Design

Doc Watson Sculpture Celebration – The celebration went very well. Since the concert, Doc has been in downtown several times and has been seen sitting beside the sculpture. Fotta has a photo of Doc with the sculpture that her husband took. She may investigate options of offering it for donations to help in raising funds to take care of the statue. One suggestion was made for future events – having speakers on the street. Most of the sound carried over the people not on the lawn.

Mason reported that the contract has been signed for the street lights and they will be going in soon.

Brad Harmon made a suggestion on a future event – perhaps having an Oktoberfest to bring the people who come to see the leaves into Downtown Boone.

Promotion

Downtown Boone Art Crawl – The next Art Crawl is slated for August 5th.

July 4th Parade – The parade went well and there were many people lining the street.

New Business

Annual Meeting – The Annual Meeting date was set for Thursday, August 11 from 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. It was suggested to ask Ken Ketchie at High Country Press about using his front room again.

Downtown Boo! – What date does everyone want to use? It was suggested that unless Halloween falls on a Sunday, that the actual date be the date of Downtown Boo!. The event will begin at 4 p.m.

Old Appalachian Theatre - Frank Mongelosi, who currently owns the theatre, is in bankruptcy and is in danger of foreclosure. The attorneys are entertaining offers on the building and the bank is pushing for foreclosure. A recent appraisal states that the best use of the building would be “demolition.” The Town of Boone is interested in the property, but because of the short time frame may not be able to act. The best guess for those who have made an offer on the building is that it would not be used for a community-oriented use. There are many variables here, but this is one of the uses that the MSD funds can be utilized for. Estimates for restoring it as a theatre are \$1.5-\$3.5 million. How can we, the DBDA, do something? A decision needs to be made by Tuesday. A special meeting will be scheduled for Monday night to discuss options. Watch your e-mail.

The discussion was ended at 10:45 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted for your approval

Sheri J. Moretz