

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, June 2, 2011
9 a.m. Watauga County Library**

Recorded Attendance: Dempsey Wilcox, Sheri Moretz, Jason Berry, Bob Meier, Jamie Leigh, Andy Stallings, Sam Ratchford, Lynne Mason, Greg Lovins, Omer Tomlinson

Staff: Pilar Fotta

Public: Cherry Johnson, Ana Lipford

General Administration

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Dempsey Wilcox, president. Sheri Moretz made a motion to approve the agenda and the minutes as presented. Bob Meier seconded the motion, and it passed.

Financial Report – Jason Berry

In reviewing the financial report for the prior months, our lines are over in some places and are under in others. It all is balancing out with no major concerns. The Doc Watson Sculpture will affect the budget a little. The original goal for the sculpture was to raise \$42,000 to cover placement, the artistic work, and insuring it. Based upon some further investigations, we need to amend that goal and raise it to \$45,000 to adequately cover the statue. That should be covered with some additional sponsors that are interested in participating. Many of the sponsors are from outside the Boone area – Maryland, South Carolina, and even Phoenix, Arizona. The project is generating great interest.

Jason Berry made a motion to accept the financial report. Meier seconded the motion, and it passed.

Organization

Update on Council Action, May 17, 2011 Meeting – Dempsey Wilcox

It was decided to maintain Saturday parking as it is with the two-hour limit. Lynne Mason, council member, indicated that there are some details that will be worked out at the budget workshop. Long-term parking can be offered at the Town Lot. Reta indicated that they were turning people away if they were going to the game. Perhaps spots could be leased here. Meier suggested that if the lot is leased that restroom facilities must be provided. This is an issue at many of the leased lots off campus because porta-potties are not always provided. Pilar Fotta indicated that she will inquire at ASU about providing restroom facilities in public lots.

Office relocation was a topic of conversation at the last Council meeting. Over the objection of the Jones House Advisory Board, it was decided that space will be made available for the relocation of the DBDA to the Jones House. We are not sure if there is adequate space and we are also unsure of a move-in date. Two month's rent was included in the proposed budget to allow for these questions to be addressed.

Update on Council/DBDA Joint Meeting, May 19, 2011 – Dempsey Wilcox

Changes/Updates to the By-laws - The by-laws of the organization must be changed to accommodate the new board format. We have contacted two attorneys to see if they can provide their expertise on this matter. There is a question on how to handle residents on the new board. Bettie Bond, who lives on Grand Boulevard, is interested in serving, but she lives outside of the MSD. It was suggested that a non-voting member could be on the board to have a voice of the people and how decisions affect them. It is agreed that this is a good idea. The School of Government will provide input on how fundraising and other aspects will be handled with the new board make up. Jamie Leigh, council member, suggested that these elements be added to the Town Council's June agenda.

Renewal of Contract – The present contract with the Town will have a six month extension to account for transition time. The new board will be put in place at the Annual Meeting.

Director's Report – Pilar Fotta

Board of Directors Candidates – Fotta suggests that if these individuals are willing to serve, they will be on the DBDA's ballot for election – Bob Meier, Jason Berry, Dempsey Wilcox, Greg Lovins, Evalyn Suddreth, and Anna Lipford. The Town's six positions still need to be filled. It was suggested that an individual from Mellow Mushroom or Art of Oil might be good candidates.

Proposed Budget for 2011-2012 – The salary for the director will be a 50/50 split between the Town and the DBDA. So, the organization will be getting a \$60,000 director with a benefit package and realizing a \$10,000 savings (the last full-time director was paid approximately \$40,000 a year without any real benefits). This offering will bring in a qualified candidate. Cherry Johnson pointed out that in order to do the work of the DBDA/Main Street Program, more than one person is optimal. Some funds are in the proposed budget to help with training for the newly-hired director and also some funds for contracted labor, which could be used perhaps for a part-time person. In the streetscape line, the funds there, \$30,000, can be used for streetscape elements or for promotion of downtown, according to the minutes. Moretz made a motion to approve the proposed budget as presented. Meier seconded the motion, and it passed.

Changes to Banking Facilities – Fotta will be moving all DBDA accounts to RBC for convenience. High Country Bank is leaving its downtown location soon. All accounts will be separated and each will have its own Quickbooks account. On July 1, a DBDA account will be set up with a starting balance of \$30,000 from the fund balance. This is the amount that was agreed upon by the board and Council. The treasurer will take the DBDA account; John Cooper will take the Doc Watson account, and the Town will take the MSD funds. The Public Art account will also be handled by the treasurer. The MSD account will be handled on paper, but the funds will be administered and accounted for through the Town's accounting department. Bills to the DBDA will be paid by the DBDA and submitted for reimbursement from the Town via MSD funds. Greg Lovins made a motion to approve moving the accounts to RBC and the proposed set up of accounts. Berry seconded the motion, and it passed.

Storage Facility – The intern helped move items from the smaller storage facility into the larger unit. It was conveniently located. Fotta will take inventory of what is there soon.

Disposal of Unused Materials – Any items that will not be carried over to the Town need to be donated or disposed of before the new arrangement takes full effect.

Map/Directory Locations – Locations for the downtown signs were determined during a walk with Andy Ball (council member), Laura from Appalachian Signs, Eric and Blake from Public Works. Pictures were taken of the proposed locations so they can be clearly understood by all involved. Long-term agreements must be struck between the parties. Names have been gathered for the town attorney to craft easement agreements.

Economic Restructuring

Business Updates – Pilar Fotta

The Art of Oil has moved from Howard Street to King Street. Its new location is near Vidalia. The Mellow Mushroom is working toward an opening date in the middle of July. Beanstalk is closed.

Design

Doc Watson Sculpture

Greg Young, town manager, has asked the Department of Transportation to close Highway 421 from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m. on Friday, June 24 for the Doc Watson Celebration. We are hoping to hear if the closing will happen soon. The insurance will be split between the Watauga County Arts Council, the DBDA, and the Town. The DBDA will pay the Town's share since it has waived the fee for closing the street. We will be

acquiring an additional rider to cover the private event after the celebration. The Town lot will close at 4 p.m. and free parking will start then. The rain option is Farthing Auditorium, which has been offered for a minimum fee. Dignitary Parking has been donated by Harmon Parking (thanks to Brad Harmon).

Additional Banners

Fotta requests \$1,500 for banners to be displayed in the downtown area. This will complete the collection that is currently used. Berry made a motion to allocate the funding to purchase the banners. Meier seconded the motion, and it passed.

Promotion

Downtown Boone Art Crawl

The next Art Crawl is scheduled for tomorrow evening, Friday, June 3. Fotta proposes that moving forward the Art Crawl will be done under the MSD and everyone will be included. This action will eliminate the additional fee. Flags will be purchased and for placement downtown like the Lions Club does for patriotic holidays. This will make the event more inclusive, like an Open House for downtown, but it will still be called Art Crawl. It was also suggested that the season be shortened.

July 4th Parade

The parade will be held on July 4th and will step off at 11 a.m. This year's route will take it all the way to the Poplar Grove Connector to include the district members west of Water Street. It is important to fill that block with people. Fotta is working on a band.

New Business

Bus Depot Redevelopment – Greg Lovins

If you've gone to the intersection of Depot and River Streets, you'll notice some changes in the old bus depot. The walls have been torn down. The original intent with the building was to renovate the building utilizing the walls as they stood with the interior housing labs and studios for the radio and TV classes. The building would have been added on to in order to accommodate more classroom and office space. The original contractor went in and said that it could not renovate it. The plans then changed to keep the historical wall for the building and add two additional floors. Then FEMA changed the floodway, and the walls were found to be unsafe.

The intent now is to clean the stone and to put it back in the style as before. The walls will be structurally reinforced and will for a plaza between the old wall and the new building. Andy Stallings and others were disturbed by the new developments and hope that steps are taken to reach out and get the story on this building. Stallings inquired about the old brick – they could be cleaned and used again (and may match the brick used on his building's façade). He also would like to see the new plans for the building.

Office Needs

Fotta voiced a need for a new laser printer and a shredder. Meier made a motion to approve the purchase of these items. Lovins seconded the motion, and it passed.

The meeting was adjourned 10:05 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted for your approval

Sheri J. Moretz