

**Downtown Boone Development Association
Annual Meeting
Monday, August 16, 2010
6 p.m. High Country Press**

Recorded Attendance:

Board Members:

Staff: Mary Baker

Public:

Call to Order & Welcome

Dempsey Wilcox, president, called the Annual Meeting of the DBDA to order at 6:17 p.m. and welcomed all present. He thanked Ken Ketchie and the staff of High Country Press for hosting the meeting in their offices. Wilcox recognized the officers of the association in attendance and members of the Town Council including Lynne Mason, who serves on the Board, and Stephen Phillips, a former member of the Board. He thanked them for their support over the last 18 months.

Membership Update & Motion for New Nominations

According to tax records, there are 178 businesses in Downtown Boone and 150 property owners. In accordance to our by-laws, we must have 33 members represented at the meeting or via proxy in order to conduct business. We have 26 proxies on file and with those in attendance, there are 65 properties and businesses represented.

The Organization Committee serves as the Nominations Committee. According to our by-laws, the Board of Directors shall be made up of nine to 15 members with each member serving a term of three years. One third of the directors come off each year. This year's slate of board members includes Sheri Moretz, Mast General Store; Marianne Doan, RBC Bank; Andy Stallings, property owner; and Sam Ratchford, Vidalia Restaurant. At this time, nominations from the floor were entertained. No nominations were put forth. Wilcox asked attendees to please vote for board members on their ballots.

2010-2011 Officer Election

Wilcox offered the recommended slate of officers for the year. With all that has happened over the course of the year, the Organization Committee thought it prudent to continue with as near the same leadership as possible. This is the proposed list of officers: Dempsey Wilcox, president; Bob Meier, vice-president; Jason Berry, treasurer; and Sheri Moretz, secretary. He entertained nominations from the floor for any position. With none offered, he asked that attendees vote on their ballots. Moretz exercised all proxies for the evening.

Boone Area Tourism Presentation – Wright Tilley

Wright Tilley, the director of the Watauga Tourism Development Authority and the Boone Tourism Development Authority, shared information on tourism's contribution to the area. He also shared plans for moving forward as a combined marketing organization with goals of bringing more people to the area that will frequent the downtown area as an

attractive asset to Boone and Watauga County. He encouraged members to check listings on the VisitBooneNC.com website and the ExploreBooneArea.com website for accuracy and inclusion. He also encouraged members to take advantage of the new Wilkes County Visitor Center by sending brochures and doing a presentation on your business.

Some funds from the Boone TDA board support revitalization of downtown.

2010 Plan of Work

With a six-month contract, the board has tailored the plan of work to fit the time frame. Initially, we had plans to do a market assessment to determine what holes we had in the downtown area and then to develop a recruitment plan to fill those. In light of the short time, we dialed back our long-term plans. We endeavor to offer a complete package of interest and value both to the local market and to the off mountain visitor. A key to our success is stakeholder involvement.

We will be updating the pedestrian signs quarterly and will post our meeting information online monthly. We will re-evaluate Art Crawl, improve the sign incentive grant and façade incentive grant process and make them available on the website and hope to increase stakeholder involvement through enhanced communications.

2010 Budget Report

Wilcox reported that the budget has been presented to and approved by the Board of Directors. It is developed utilizing ½ of the MSD taxes for 2010-2011. It plans for a reduction in staffing from 2.5 people to 1.5 people. The biggest infrastructure expenditure is replacing pedestrian signs, which is approximately \$3,600 each time. These signs resist weather, graffiti, etc. and will list every business. The new trash cans are out that were purchased from our \$20,000 contribution from last year. The town is replacing the lighting downtown, and it will include both traffic and pedestrian illumination on the same poles. Work on the Post Office revitalization is starting.

Updates

Doc Watson Sculpture

Alex Hallmark in Blowing Rock has agreed to do a sculpture of Doc Watson. It will be installed on the corner in front of the DiSanti, Watson, and Capua office. The cost will be \$40,000, which will include the sculpture, the bench, installation, and insurance for a couple of years. It will bear the inscription: Doc Watson, just one of the people. Those giving \$1,500 or more will receive a brick and a life-size head study in cold-cast bronze. There are 20 of these available. Those giving \$100 or more will get a personalized brick. This is a great opportunity to honor Doc during his lifetime and beyond.

The goal is to have enough money raised to get started in September and installation in November/December. Contributions are tax deductible.

DBDA Website

The DBDA website is changing. We have the ability to update it very often, to announce events and happenings, to display videos, etc. We will soon have the ability to provide links to members and hope that they will reciprocate.

Closing Remarks

Your Board is continuing to fight for this organization and we are focused on doing as good a job as ever. In a few days, the Town is starting a new task force to investigate how they would like to invest tax dollars. We all certainly appreciate Lynne and Stephen for advocating for us as an organization, and we look forward to a more open attitude from other members on the Town Council. If the organization is funded for the next six months, we plan to go back to our original plan.

There was a question about sidewalks. Blake Brown has verbally committed to staff time to install pavers if businesses would purchase the materials. This, of course, would have to be scheduled within his department's time frame.

The DBDA could be located in the Post Office if the rent structure is affordable. There are public restrooms included in the Post Office design work.

There being no further business to be conducted, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted for your approval

Sheri J. Moretz, Secretary