

DOWNTOWN GRAND JUNCTION BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
BOARD MINUTES  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2014  
248 SOUTH 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
7:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Les Miller, Shane Allerheiligen, Martin Chazen, Jason Farrington, Kirk Granum, PJ McGovern, Kevin Reimer, Stephan Schweissing,

ABSENT: Jodi Coleman-Niernberg

STAFF: Diane Keliher, Harry Weiss, Aaron Hoffman

GUESTS: John Shaver, Brian Watson, Jack Ballenger

CALL TO ORDER: Les called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Marty made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2013 meeting; Kirk seconded; minutes were approved.

RESOLUTION #2014-01: This is a resolution to set BID meeting schedule of dates and times to be posted in the lobby of the Whitman Building located at 248 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The first meeting of the month will be the BID meeting. Marty made a motion to set the BID meeting to the first meeting of the month in accordance with the DDA schedule; Stephan seconded; motion carried.

DISCUSSION OF BUSINESS RECRUITMENT: Harry is trying to find the right structure for implementation of a business recruitment program. He is concerned that we have a clear focus that aligns with the Plan of Development, the Strategic Downtown Master Plan, and the statutory authority under which we operate. Harry would like the board to discuss the legal capacity and authorization as well as where the funding is coming from.

Harry explained that there are two different geographic boundaries. He suggested that business recruitment should be a function of the BID which is a specifically cited activity authorized in the BID statute, and since its funding comes from the central business area. Current funding of the BID is fully allocated to special events and promotion and there is no additional source of BID funding. Harry reminded everyone that the renewal of the BID is coming up in 2016, and this would be a great enhancement of services for BID constituents and members. Stephan asked John if there is a conflict if both BID and DDA boards are the same. The governance of the BID was determined by a resolution that City Council made in 2006. The is not a legal conflict, but he warned that both boards need to be cautious about spending DDA money for operational purposes. PJ stated that was the exact same situation with the DTA in the 1990's when DDA money was used for DTA functions as well as DDA programmatic activities. Since that time, the City has been very strict about TIF money being used solely for "brick and mortar" capital projects. Harry added that City Council passed a resolution in 2001 that restricts the use of TIF funds to capital improvement projects only, but a closer reading of the state statute does not explicitly restrict the TIF that way, and in fact the statute specifically mentions "economic development" undertakings as a permitted activity. John added that he feels strongly that business recruitment should be a function of the BID according to City policy.

Kirk wanted to know what “business development” means as far as budget and activities. Harry suggested starting with what is unique about downtown assets and the DDA/BID’s resources, how we can leverage both, and what deficiencies we can improve. There are multiple strategies to advance, including downtown housing as a factor in attracting new businesses. In terms of more focused recruitment of retail or office prospects, we need to network with commercial brokers to better identify their prospects needs and what deficiencies in commercial space the DDA might help rectify. A comprehensive inventory of commercial spaces assessing its condition and degree of obsolescence is also needed. That could support a retail mix study of downtown to identify the existing strengths and logical niches to complement current businesses as well as target certain demographic groups. Some capital improvement opportunities might be to provide a retail “incubator” or a co-working facility with high speed internet connection. The DDA could work with private property owners to address deficient infrastructure and determine the most immediate market opportunity for their property. The DDA could use explore grants or other financial assistance to help private property owners reposition their properties and attract tenants. A successful downtown has economic activity, employment and people living downtown. Kirk would like to see a partnership between the DDA and BID to address business recruitment. Harry would like to see a good balance of participation with the two entities.

Marty asked what the budget might be. It would depend on the project (i.e. market study vs. retail incubator). Jason felt that the DDA should address infrastructure rather than do business recruitment. Kirk suggested forming a steering committee. We need the engagement of constituents, especially big property owners. Jason asked if GJEP has current marketing materials. Harry stated that GJEP’s main focus is primary jobs recruitment/retention, which does not fit with the typical retail wage. Brian Watson would be interested in GJEP findings. Shane encouraged the board to go forward with Wi-Fi on Main Street. Shane has spoken with GJEP about money for marketing and thinks they may be willing to work with us. Marty feels we should make our marketing plan and then see if other entities can participate in some way. He feels the public doesn’t know what we have to offer downtown and the region.

The DDA Plan of Development and BID Operating Plan will need to be modified. Marty emphasized that City Council is sympathetic to the issue of business recruitment. He added that the City could give an economic development grant to the BID, but there needs to be a marketing plan. Stephan asked Harry to develop a downtown marketing plan with specific parameters and costs and then ask the City for funds. Marty urged the sooner, the better. John added that March 3<sup>rd</sup> is the work session for the Economic Development Committee.

OTHER: Brian Watson and Jack Ballenger are both here from the BID steering committee. Brian would like to see more conversations between the steering committee and the board.

ADJOURN: Kirk made a motion to adjourn; Jason seconded; the board adjourned at 9:40 a.m.