

GRAND JUNCTION DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 2014
248 SOUTH 4TH STREET
7:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Jodi Coleman-Niernberg, Les Miller, Shane Allerheiligen, Jason Farrington, Kirk Granum, PJ McGovern, Stephan Schweissing

ABSENT: Kevin Reimer, Marty Chazen

STAFF: Harry Weiss, Diane Keliher

GUESTS: Rich Englehart, Bennett Boeschstein, John Shaver

CALL TO ORDER: Jodi called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Jason made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 12th meeting; Shane seconded; minutes were approved.

BUDGET AMENDMENT: In February the DDA pledged a \$5,000 match toward the GoCo grant for Las Colonias Park, but the DDA budget was not amended pending the outcome of the grant application. The grant has been awarded and we need to formally amend the budget to include the matching contribution. The match will be taken from the DDA 203 Capital Fund and is eligible as a TIF-funded expense. Stephan made a motion to amend the DDA budget to add \$5,000 for the matching GoCo grant for Las Colonias Park; Les seconded; motion carried.

CMU DOWNTOWN GALLERY: The estimate for the renovation of 437 Colorado is about \$35 per square foot. The DDA's portion would be 30-35% which translates to \$40 - 50,000. Jodi asked about using façade grant money to do some of the renovations. PJ suggested contacting the landlord(s) to see if they would be willing to help with improvements. Stephan is concerned about the reported noise coming from the neighboring tenant. The plan shows the DDA occupying space on the opposite side of the building from the Crossfit gym. Shane asked about the lease. Harry explained that the proposed structure is for CMU to master lease the entire building and sublet to DDA. CMU will have an initial term of five years with multiple renewal options. The DDA sublease will be at the \$7/sf rate; with utilities and other expenses, we anticipate a total occupancy cost of approximately \$1,500 per month. The DDA board is comfortable with going forward. Kirk asked why CMU wants to locate on Colorado Avenue. Harry explained that the rent is lower and the spaces are bigger than on Main Street.

MOBILE VENDING PERMIT POLICY: The DDA is delegated by City Council to review permits for commercial activity on Main Street. There have been hot dogs, coffee, pedi-cabs and now an Italian Gelu ice vendor. Gelato Junction was upset that a competing vendor was permitted and allowed to locate by the splash pad directly across the street from them. Jim Golden, Gelato Junction's landlord, contacted Harry to discuss the matter as the store is now considering not renewing its lease, citing the competition from the mobile vendor.

Harry told Mr. Golden he would bring the matter to the attention of the Board and request that the Board review the overall permitting policy to determine if any changes might be warranted. Kirk

suggested increasing the street vendor permit fee. Harry noted that in the original PoD there was a condition that the applicant would have to get the consent of surrounding businesses, but this has not been enforced; moreover, it is legally suspect as an inappropriate delegation of police power to private individuals. Harry mentioned that we are also getting interest in locating food trucks downtown for which we have no permitting protocol. PJ feels this is an issue not just for the DDA but also the BID. Kirk feels competition is inherent in doing business and the DDA's policy should not impede competition. Stephan suggested \$100 per month instead of \$100 for 6 months. John said the fee was purposely set low to encourage economic vitality downtown. PJ feels we should bump the fee up to limit street vendors and generate more revenue for the DDA. Harry will look at other communities' fee structures for food trucks and street vendors and will get back to Jim Golden.

SPLASHPAD ISSUES: Rich stated that the city is continuing to see overuse of the splash pad. The problem centers on public health and safety issues. Rob Schoeber has observed children drinking the water, toddlers with and without diapers, pets in the fountain, and bird droppings in the trees above the fountain. Rich is concerned with the potential of an illness claim against the City. He ran it by Mayor Norris and is working towards eliminating the liability by ending human contact with the splash pad. Kids are lying in the sun on the sidewalks and people are bringing food and spending the day. It has turned into a free water park. The Parks Dept. has tried to limit the usage through restricting the hours of operation and modifying the site, but usage has grown more intense, not less.

Stephan asked if the Mesa County Health Dept. could help monitor the water. Rich replied that we have certified employees that monitor the water. Kirk said parents aren't supervising their children. PJ stated that he had to modify his building at 5th and Main and move 2nd floor tenants to the 5th floor. Jodi asked if we could adjust the programming to lessen the water level to that of a fountain and not a play structure. John could draft an ordinance to say that it is not an interactive splash pad or limit activity to weekends. Rich is most concerned about health issues. Kirk feels we are going to get blowback no matter what, so just shut it down to public contact. Harry asked for suggestions of where to put the splash pad. Bennett likes the idea of having a water feature downtown but the splash pad has become a problem. He feels it is just in an inappropriate location. Kirk would like to see City Council decide what the permanent solution should be. The Board generally concurred with Rich's assessment and the recommendation that Council consider closing the feature to human contact.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS: City Council adopted a three to five-year Economic Development Plan. The partners (DDA, CMU, Chamber of Commerce, GJEP, the Business Incubator and the Mesa Co. Work Force Center) gave input for recommendations. Harry participated in the conversation regarding what the DDA needs for economic development (offering developer incentives, more TIF money flexibility, establishing a line of credit, etc.). Bennett added that the City of Grand Junction has some of the lowest tax rates and many exemptions. Elizabeth Tice and Jodi Romero have prepared a summary of the Plan.

UPDATES: PJ mentioned that at the last meeting a motion was passed to obtain an alternate member for the DDA board. Harry replied that he and John are looking at the constitution of the DDA board and have it align with City policy. Kirk added that people are much more involved if they are board members. Bennett has noticed that the DDA board always has someone absent and could use an alternate. PJ likes the notion because it takes so long to get up to speed.

The Farmers' Market change in layout was the subject of a front page article. We had a huge crowd last week and some logistical issues, but feedback was good from merchants. Even the farmers that were quoted in the article had good nights.

Jeff Dunn and Harry are meeting today at 10:00 for a White Hall walk-through. Harry had a conversation with Hilltop who is looking at the building as a for-profit market complex with mixed ages and incomes.

The Downtown Housing Study has been on the back burner.

Harry had a conversation with Peter Booth regarding Whitman Park. The lead agencies are The Museum of Western Colorado, the DDA and the Parks Dept. Rich said that the recommendation for the park will come after the Matchett Plan is complete. We need to have open dialog about what the residents would like to see. Rich will pull the Vagrancy Committee together to see if we need a coordinator to help decide what to do. Kathy Portner, Kristen Ashbeck and Cory are looking at other city's models. Three council members sit on the Committee. Bennett would like to work with Social Services and the State home. Harry feels the issue needs to be addressed by the entire community. PJ suggested surveying the homeless people to see why they are there. Rich said there is a HOT (Homeless Outreach Team) that is doing a cost study. Harry gave a brief description of the a Vulnerability Index Survey. Bennett spoke with Todd from Epic Rides and they need more space and would like to use Whitman Park for vendors. They would need police presence.

Les mentioned that the St. Regis façade grant was polled by email and their application was approved with one dissention. Jodi asked what the name was on the application. Harry stated it is the St. Regis HOA.

ADJOURN: Stephan made a motion to adjourn; Kirk seconded; the DDA board adjourned at 9:05 a.m.