

Board Members in Attendance: Jill Reeves, Andy Stallings, Jason Berry, Janet Mahala, Marsha Walpole, Jamie Goodman, Lynne Mason, Bob Meier, Dempsey Wilcox

Others in attendance: Michelle Ligeon, Bettie Bond, Cherry Johnson, Officer Danny Houck, Officer Michael Foley, Reta Jackson
Staff: Pilar Fotta

Minutes & Agenda

Jill moves to approve agenda, Second, all approve.

Jason moves to approve minutes, with the addition of Jill Reeves to those in attendance, Jill seconds, all approve.

Budget update:

Pilar presented the most up to date reports form the Town of Boone. The \$75,000 down payment to the town for the Appalachian Theater was not taken out, so the comprehensive budget printout Pilar has is not the final (the line-item just needs to be adjusted). We have also received a donation of \$25,000 which is not reflected yet on the Statement of Position. Next quarterly report for Town Council is in May, Pilar asked Betty Bond if she would like to update the Council on the Theater.

Pilar passed around a rendering by Frank Mohler of the design and proposed budget they are showing to Whitney Jones. Looking at \$6.2 million: \$4 million for renovations, \$600K to pay town back, \$1.2 million operating budget for first 3 years. Whitney Jones, Inc. will also provide assistance with fundraising, if the organization chooses to contract with them for the second part of this project.

Jason made motion to approve Budget, Jill seconded, all approved.

Seeking Board Member

Sam Ratchford resigned from the board, we need recommendations to fill the position. This is a DBDA position, needs to be someone from downtown business. There is about 18 months left in this position

DBDA Spring Retreat

The retreat seemed to be very productive. Pilar took the info and went to the Town Council retreat. The town indicated that they are interested in updating the sidewalks, and seemed generally supportive. Jill expressed concern about business interruption, but the workers cannot work on sidewalks during the winter so there will be some interruption. Marsha visited a town (Chattanooga) that had concrete and pavers, and thought it looked very nice, and the sidewalks on different streets were not exactly the same but it had a consistent theme.

Lynn mentioned the downtown lighting is not performing as expected, are trying to address this, also looking at how to extend the lighting to all areas of downtown, also how to extend to other side of the street. Blake from the Town is looking into ways to accomplish these goals. Town Council discussed Howard Street improvements, the cost for the full idea is very expensive and the current budget is limited. The council is looking at some different options to possibly move forward with some type of aesthetic improvements.

Website Update

The web site designer, JD Dooley, will come to the May board meeting to discuss the website with us, to give us time to look over the site and have questions for him. Pilar also noted that the website is going to take some work to keep updated, adding new features, etc., and will need someone to help keep it updated. She asked for \$1000 to finish the website by June. It was agreed by all that having a good website is very important.

Jill moved that we transfer \$1000 to this budget line from the contracted services line in order to finish the website project. Marsha seconded, all approved.

Appalachian Theater

The AT project is moving forward in a good progressive manner. Betty mentioned there are actually people on the board who know what they are doing. Marsha noted that the community is actually invested in this project, and that makes a difference.

The roof needs some work, Pilar mentioned the Town is working on this but we may need to spend some significant money for the next couple of years (up to \$15,000) to fix and maintain the roof and possibly install a temporary façade. Officer Foley mentioned that until we have someone in the building, we might want to find a way to keep people off of the roof (gate on the back staircase, perhaps), because people climbing on the roof is likely causing the damage.

Kay Hagan

Kay Hagan came to town, visited the downtown businesses, bought shoes at Mast store, and got a parking ticket (!). Overall was a good visit.

First Fridays

Pilar has talked with Mark Freed about a special First Friday concert that will run later (from 8 to 9 p.m.), and that would be kid-friendly. Mark is going to talk with some of the ASU music teacher students to have a family-friendly, kid-specific event. The idea is to also have local businesses stay open later on First Friday. This will need to be contracted through DBDA, Pilar is working with Mark to determine the cost, looking at around \$125 per event (up to \$700 total).

Janet (from Mast) made motion to fund \$700 for the special later-night concerts on First Fridays, Jill seconded, all approved.

Fifth Quarter

Pilar has heard nothing but positive feedback regarding this idea, Town Council is enthusiastic, now we just need to determine the logistics. Would like to start small, and let it grow naturally (no vendors this time). Ideas for streets to close off include Depot to Library, Depot from King to Howard. It was agreed that closing off King Street might be a lot to take on this first year.

The first game is Sept. 8 with Montana. We will need to start making decisions soon, apply for permits, etc.

OTHER:

Jill asked about the Street Vendors issue, Pilar says she is working on that, but ultimately it will require a change in the ordinance, and that is a detailed and lengthy process.

Easter Extravaganza: Had a big attendance, it rained hard for a few minutes beforehand, but it quit and the day turned out well.

Marsha moved to adjourn! Meeting was adjourned at 9:45.

Minutes Submitted by:

Jamie Goodman