

Downtown Boone Development Association

January Board Meeting

Thursday, January 3, 2013

In attendance: Marsha Wapole, Lynne Mason, Dempsey Wilcox, Andy Stallings, Evalyn Sudderth, Bob Meier, Greg Lovins, Robb Olsen, Jamie Goodman

Staff in attendance: Pilar Fotta, Mark Freed

Others in attendance: Reta Jackson

Dempsey called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Marsha made a motion to accept the agenda, second, all approved.

Bob made a motion to accept the minutes, second, all approved.

Budget

Pilar gave an update on the budget, explained that for the past several years she has been saving money, so we have a nice bit to use on downtown improvements. She has regularly come in under budget. Bob motion, Marsha seconded

Dempsey says he would like to request a budget amendment of up to \$1,500 to pay Priscilla Norris for her work on our audit and budget.

Marsha moved to request a budget item of \$1,500. Greg seconded.

Personnel Discussion

Pilar updated the board that 4 days of interviews for the DBDA position have taken place and that the applicant pool was excellent. Pilar made recommendations based on what we had asked for, Greg Young from the Town of Boone is going to interview the top applicants.

Mark Freed attended the meeting, and Pilar announced that he is now the new Cultural Resources' Director of Programming. He updated that we now have \$8,000 for public arts programs from grants. When the new DBDA hire is made, Pilar and the new team will be getting together to plan out distribution of responsibilities. Pilar also noted that once we have the new Director, we will need to schedule an executive board meeting, spring planning meeting, and training session.

Appalachian Theater

Pilar noted that the board needs to establish a transition committee for the AppTheater as soon as possible. Dempsey mentioned that once the building is paid off and the AT becomes completely independent, that it would be good to have someone from DBDA on the AT board, even if it is an ex-officio position. Dempsey said he would recommend making the original \$75,000 down payment as a

contribution to the Theater. Marsha suggested making this an agenda item on the Feb. meeting. Bob mentioned coming up with some ideas to consider. Among the ideas suggested during the meeting are:

- Making the stage name Doc Watson Stage... helping get that going.
- Investing money in the facadé
- Paying for ½ of the marquee

The board will also need to get a new Finance Committee together, and will possibly need a new Treasurer. It was noted that Evalyn might be interested.

Town of Boone / TOC Lynne Mason Update

Town Council Member Lynne Mason mentioned that DBDA should participate in discussions about height restrictions of buildings for downtown, noting what our vision is for the future, and to help take measures to insure any new development falls within our vision. This would include looking at and addressing parking, talking about sidewalk improvements, Howard Street improvements, mixed use development, and other improvements. Dempsey mentioned these should be included on the agenda for our 5-year Planning session in the Spring. Pilar is going to get together with Blake from the Town to talk more about his ideas for downtown improvements.

Economic restructuring

Mark Freed noted that we have \$8,000 from the Arts Council to support the music program, \$1,000 from a private donor, and \$2500 from ASU group. This money will go to buy instruments, subsidize lessons for kids, and other needs. Dempsey noted that Andy Stallings had mentioned in the past about instruments in people's attics, and Dempsey suggested having a call for donating instruments and we renovate them. Mark noted that due to the restrictions of the grant, the instruments would need to be limited to Appalachian traditional, but could be something to consider.

Holiday 2013

Pilar noted that it would be helpful to know from the merchants what events and promotionals worked from the 2012 Holiday season and what they need for the 2013 season. Some ideas suggested included a big Local Shopping day... Small Business Saturday, or Small Business Wednesday, perhaps.

Bob suggested that the town make all downtown parking exclusively for businesses from Dec. 1 on... he was concerned about the tailgating parking on game days and how the lot next to town hall was reserved for the Saturday playoff game, but was only ½ full.

Jamie recommended having more clear signage, perhaps temporary signage to indicate what the parking lot is intended for each time.

Dempsey mentioned that there were tremendous numbers of people buying trees during the holidays, and most of them wanted information about how to expand their day beyond the tree buying – where to go, eat, shop. He suggested talking to the Christmas Tree Association, to try to plan something with them. He noted that the weekend before Thanksgiving and the two weekends after are the busiest. Bob suggested that each farm could put up a themed tree in the Jones House. Pilar did get Christmas trees from the CTA this year, but is going to work with them again this year to see how we can expand on these ideas.

Bob mentioned how Asheville / Grove Park does the gingerbread house competition, perhaps turning this into a competition to get people to come to Jones House or downtown to see the trees.

Promotions 2013 schedule

Pilar handed out the events schedule for this year, and the board discussed a conflict with the upcoming Easter EGG-Stravaganza and the Watauga Schools spring break. The group decided that the date should change to Mar. 23. It was also noted that Art Crawl would run the entire year this year, rather than ending for the winter, and the 2013 schedule starts Jan. 4.

Public Art Committee

Pilar noted that the town needs to get some public art installed in the spring, and that she would like to reconnect with the Turchin Center about our downtown art installations. Lynne mentioned having a competition for students at ASU, and creating a partnership with Department of Art. Pilar noted that students are going to have senior projects in the Jones House, and that this is a partnership that could be expanded.

Doc Watson update

Pilar updated that the DBDA needs to add some bricks to the statue, and that we have to pay to get the bricks done. She noted that she would also like to add a plaque with information about Doc and Rosa, either affixed to the bench or next to it, including a QR code.

Pilar is meeting with the Town Attorney about murals. A new procedure will need to be set up, because the existing sign ordinance does not have any provisions for murals or art. Dempsey mentioned setting up two separate procedures, one for expensive permanent murals we want to maintain, the other for more temporary murals (possibly partnering with ASU Art students / Art department every couple of years).

With no further business on the agenda, Marsha moved to adjourn. Bob seconded.

Dempsey adjourned the meeting at 9:36 a.m.

Submitted by Jamie Goodman