



Meeting Minutes: Cheyenne DDA Board Meeting

Thursday, June 20, 2019

3:00 pm

Location: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Depot

Call to order: Alane West, President at 3:05 pm

Jonathan Savelle, Secretary

Astrid, Vice President

Del Lummis-Absent

Bruce Heimbuck

Ex-Officio: Amber Ash, Laramie County Representative

Charles Bloom, City Representative

Don Herrold, Cheyenne Historic Preservation Board

Steve Borin, Treasurer

Elisa Maggio-Absent

Dan Holbrook-by phone

Jeff White, City Council Representative- Absent

Guests: Glen Garrett, Julie Tucker, Amy Mahoney, Chrissy Suttles and Officer Allen

Consent Agenda:

1. **Approval of May 16th & 28th Board Minutes:** Bruce Heimbuck made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Steve Borin seconded the motion. Motion approved by all.
2. **Approved by all Treasurer's Report:** Payables: \$44,866.48

Standing Committee & Supporting Organization Reports

Director's Report (in addition to staff report that was part of the board packet) – Vicki Dugger reported that Rock the Block is going on this weekend and asked for volunteers. She also updated the Board that the "Insider's Guide to Downtown Cheyenne" brochures have been designed with 50,000 ordered that will go to Visit Cheyenne for distribution as well as to downtown businesses for distribution. Dugger also let the board know that the Urban Renewal Feasibility Study (TIF) had been completed and had been sent to the project committee, as well as to the City Council & Mayor. The ball is now in the City's court as to whether/or not they want to move this funding-tool initiative forward.

City Report, including Brownfield Revolving Loan Committee: Charles Bloom reported that the City is working on a Comp Plan update that will have a transportation focus. He also said the City had passed their FY2020 budget. As far as the Brownfield Committee, Bloom said that the Bell Building project was moving forward.

Laramie County Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Ash updated the Board by saying the commissioners had been busy with property tax appeals cases and that decisions would be made by August. She also stated that the jail and event center projects were on track and that the event center is expected to be completed to the point of hosting the fair in a couple of weeks. She also stated that a decision on proposed impact fees for the Belvoir Wind Farm would be made on July 1. Finally, she said that the County's budget process for FY2020 is almost complete; with the expectation the budget would be passed soon.

Historic Preservation Report: Don Herrold reported that the “Tour the Legend” event is set for September 21st and will include tour sites associated with Women’s Suffrage. He also said the HP Board has asked to name the new Municipal Court after Joseph Carey – and that will hopefully move forward.

Budget & MOU Report & Agreed-upon Next Steps: Alane West provided an overview of the MOU document with the City of Cheyenne, including the requirements that DDA will: monitor sales tax (with a Dec 31, 2019 timeline), utilization of space (thanks to DDA Board for helping with this project) and changes in property taxes. She also stated that DDA would be responsible for 17th Street lighting, banners, planters and street furnishings under the new MOU. West also stated that the Board will need to set a special work session in July to align the strategic plan to the new decreased budget; with the goal of also keeping the new MOU reporting requirements in mind. Steve Borin had some questions regarding this month’s financials; which were answered by Dugger.

Mill Levy Planning: Alane outlined the City’s schedule for the upcoming Mill Levy (with additional documentation provided in the Board packets). The letter of request to the City is due on the 24th of June. West asked the Board whether they wanted to keep the rate at 20 mills or change it. Steve, Jonathan and Astrid (all downtown property owners) supported keeping the mill levy at the current amount. Bruce Heimback also made the case for keep the mill levy at the same level. Jonathan Savelle made the motion to keep the proposed new mill levy at 20 mills. Bruce Heimback seconded the motion. Ayes: all yes. West asked for volunteers to work with Dugger on getting paperwork and filings ready for mill levy election process. Steve Borin volunteer to help.

Downtown Development Foundation Report- Alane West reported that the DDF’s annual meeting is set for July 1, 2019 and that she would be rotating off that Board, along with one other. She said DDF is looking for two citizens-at-large for their Board and wondered if a DDA Board member would be interested as it would help keep open communication.

DDA Strategic Plan Reports: Jonathan Savelle reported on the results of the Upper living Unit Survey, saying he had received 332 responses to the survey and had received great feedback on what type of housing, the amenities and community amenities that potential downtown residents were looking for.

President’s Report & Year-End Comments: The word had come through the Mayor’s office that Alane was not to be re-appointed to the DDA Board. Alane told the Board that DDA is supposed to take over the Forward Greater Cheyenne committee leadership but it might be wise to ask to skip this turn. The Board will need to discuss and decide. Alane then gave her last report and was thankful for the opportunities of being the Board President. The following is the transcript from her final report to the DDA Board of Directors as President.

“Because of the uncertainty of my re-appointment to the DDA board, this is an opportunity for me to reflect on the last year and share what my view is of important challenges and tasks ahead for this board in the years to come

The last year has had several firsts for the DDA.

- The board created a strategic plan that aligned to the budget. This was a board effort done with thought and attention to actionable tasks not seen in my 4 years on the board.
- Created a pilot Graffiti abatement program that is already making a difference.
- Researched and adopted a financial reserves policy.
- Developed an RFQ/RFP for the Hynds Hole. This was the first foray into redevelopment for the DDA. Although the results have not led to the redevelopment yet of the property it has created

a national exposure of downtown Cheyenne and has shown the process for future redevelopment endeavors.

- Created a data base of property ownership contact information. Finally learning that we have just under 28% out of town property owners.
- Started the advocacy for a master infrastructure plan for the district. This needs to continue for 17th street and with the governing body using the plans in place as a starting point to make a 5- 10-year commitment to a master plan.
- Housing Market survey
- Conducted a TIF study

There have also been many other efforts led by staff.

This coming year will be the watershed year for the DDA's existence.

As this board moves forward here are some actions from my viewpoint that need to be taken in the next 30 days.

- Finish the building use survey by June 30th for submittal to the Governing body.
- Once the board appointments are made and new members taken their oath call for a special meeting to elect officers and align the new approved budget of \$290,000 to a revised strategic plan. This plan should take into consideration several items.
 - o With this budget cut this board needs to look at not being everything to everyone. The MOU with the city has very specific areas it looks at that are measurable and there will become the report card for the DDA. Increased in sales tax means increase in business's in the district so that dedicates more business development, decrease in vacant space equates to more business on ground floors and upper floors being developed into living units. As the other items on the MOU are not as measurable. The strategic plan and efforts should focus on these items first.
 - o Form a small 3-person team to develop a plan to meet the MOU plan requirement. This could be as simple as the revised strategic plan.
 - o Consideration should be given to the value to the DDA of being a Main Street organizing vs. a Development focused organization. Is the current DDA district should focus on smaller Main Street area of the district? Say 15,16,17th, 18th streets? How would that effect the sales tax and vacant space data? Is the cost and reporting time spent on the Main Street program worth the cost?
 - o Look at H2 buying the Hole from LEADS and then repacking the H2 RFP and add the donation Hole in addition to some more funding say \$500,000 to \$700,000 to package. This would fill the gap in the project.
 - o Review the FIP grant. Now the DDA receives about \$15,000 in funding from a Federal grant underwriting this program. This money comes with requirements for the type of project that it can be used on. Consider starting a 2nd FIP program in additions to the existing that would not have the Federal requirements.
 - o Upper Floor living unit grants—this would help with the unused space measurement of the MOU with city.
 - o Staffing – My suggestion is that staffing should be discussed in detail during the strategic planning process. Budget for professional help in evaluation and writing of job

descriptions to the strategic plan and aid with the recruitment for the new staff. Align Team has supplied an estimate in the past for the business development position as previously written. Because of the negative comment received during the budget process from not only government but also business owners about not being able to contact the DDA by phone and that no one is in the office. An office staffing plan should stagger staffing hours and stagger phone coverage from 7:30 to 5:30 and part time on Saturday. The phone should be answered by a human voice and not go directly to voice mail.

- New office space that allows for private conversations and private conferencing area. The lease ends in August and the loan for improvements have been paid off.
- Look for an opportunity to get the Mayor and Councilman Laybourn to provide very defined expectations of the DDA. Clear and defined with a time-line.
- Selling the DDA—communications to the property owners and the community at large. The DDA does not take credit for what it is doing in a big enough voice. The current strategic plan has quarterly updates to the property owners and the governing body. This needs to be expanded to all business owners. The WTE op-ed updating the community proved effected during the budget discussions. These could be monthly.

Other areas:

Continue the meeting with the business owners and LISTEN

Look at other DDA's, how they are regulated their focus and funding. Work towards a long-term MOU with the city. For Example, Wellington CO has a 5-year MOU with the city. Its on its second MOU cycle. Total Budget is \$250,000 a year. And its focus is redevelopment of buildings and filling existing vacant building. No banner, planters etc. The uncertainty of the DDA and the political football it became in the city's last budget cycle will continue unless the focus, structure of the organization and relationship with the city changes.

Thank you for the opportunity that being DDA board president has provided me. To say I have learned alot would be an understatement. My heart filled thanks go to all you for the time, passion and engagement as we have moved through an interesting year.

My parting gift to you is to share these quotes, which have provided focus for me.

Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world. Joel A. Barker

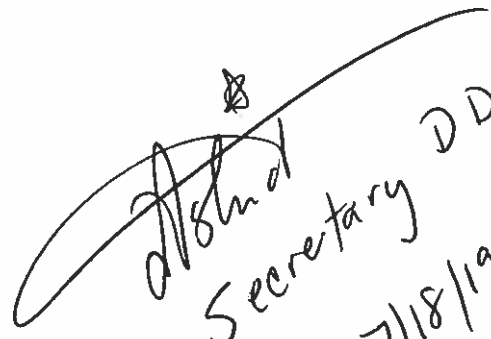
"The devil is in the detail" is an idiom that refers to a catch or mysterious element hidden in the details, meaning that something might seem simple at a first look but will take more time and effort

It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters. Epictetus"

Vicki Dugger made a few remarks thanking Alane for her leadership and vision and presented her with flowers as a symbol of appreciation of her hard work and dedication to DDA.

The meeting adjourned at 4:52 pm.

Next DDA/Main Street Board of Directors Meeting: Thursday, July 18, 2019, 3:00 PM, 2~ Floor Conference Room at the Depot, Cheyenne


Secretary DDA
7/18/19