



Downtown Cheyenne

Staff Report

March 2020

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BIG INITIATIVES

- **COVID-19 Relief** – I am helping the WBC and SBDC identify businesses that have been financially impacted by COVID-19. They are working with the SBA (sorry about the alphabet soup) to ensure that Wyoming can be qualified under SBA rules for Economic Disaster Loans to Small Businesses impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Businesses will need to fill out a simple form to show the revenue impact for the period of 1/1/20- present compared to the same period in 2019.
- **Marketing & Event Director:** I am conducting interviews this week and hope to have them finalized by Wednesday. Bruce has graciously agreed to sit in and assist with these. My goal is to offer the position before the end of the week.
- **Rock the Block:** We have tentatively selected June 13th to host this event. The event would be hosted in the street rather than in the alley as it previously has been. This is due to the fact that we are looking to book a much larger national act and the stage in the alley would not meet their requirements. Please note, this event will blow the budget as proposed. I am hoping to obtain sponsors to offset the costs. I understand the risks but also understand that if we get 5,000 and spend \$5 each versus spending \$15,000 and only having 1,000 people (or \$15 each), the investment is well worth it. You will see this reflected in the revised budget. We would turn it into a fundraiser/awareness project for hunger as June is Hunger Awareness Month. Our plan is to work with merchants downtown to donate a portion of their profits from the day to 3 (perhaps 4) charities in town to fight hunger. In addition, we would show a documentary by Thrivent on hunger between the opening and main act. I do have some concerns with the documentary not conforming to separation of Church and State so it may have to be edited. Finally, we are hoping that First Lady Gordon will attend and speak since hunger awareness is her platform. We may have to consider moving this to later in the year depending on what happens with COVID-19.
- **Re-Ride:** We are tentatively planning to order the bicycles by May 16th and then unveil them at Spring into Green on June 13th. In conjunction with Visit Cheyenne, we would set up a booth to demo the bikes and help people download the app to their phones.
- **Parking:** The City passed the new parking ordinance on final reading on March 9th. The ordinance changes parking violations from a criminal to a civil offense. It contains enforcement mechanisms for unpaid booting/towing/legal invoices and a \$10 discount for paying the ticket within 2 days (which will now be possible utilizing the app). The system has the capability for merchants to go in and extend time for customers in appropriate

circumstances. We will be working with CPD to educate merchants on this. If it is abused and the merchants use it so that they or their employees don't have to move their cars, merchants could lose privileges or we could wind up removing the feature all together.

- **WY/ART Summer Pop-Ups:** I am working with Glen Garret and Steve Knox to begin securing a location for the WY/ART Summer Pop-Ups. The DDA would lease the space and put down the deposit. These are held the 2nd week of the month. This year, Steve is looking at June, July, and August. I am hoping to capitalize on June and expand it to include Saturday in addition to the traditional Thursday so it is incorporated into Rock the Block.
- **Speaking Events:** Over the past month, I was the featured speaker at the Lions Club Annual Banquet where they recognize the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. In addition, last Friday I got to meet all the students at Array and discuss my journey to becoming the DDA Director.
- **Placemaking Project with Realtors:** Bruce and I attended the Commercial Brokers Meeting on March 5th. We asked them to partner with us on a placemaking project. Afterwards, Chuck West requested that we make a flyer so they could begin collecting the local match. Special thanks to Haylee for putting that flyer together for me.
- **Against the Wind:** I met with Lindsey and Jon Lamb on the 11th. They have since submitted a proposal for designing a logo, website development, sponsorship deck design and strategy, call for artists, kick off mural, insurance, etc... The total cost of this event will be \$100k plus.
- **AARP Grant:** The grant application is being finalized. It is an online application and is due April 1st. I will send a final copy upon completion to the board, assuming their system allows me to print a copy.
- **Cycle WY Grant:** The Cycle WY Grant is complete and I am just waiting on confirmation of one item before submitting. Once that is confirmed, I will send a copy to the board.
- **\$2,000 WBC Small Funds:** Bruce and I met with Kayla and Linda this morning to discuss Main Street. They have small grants up to \$2,000 that we could use for a small project. Pete Laybourn has asked that we install some posting kiosks around downtown to try to get people to quit taping their posters to the light posts. This type of project would be eligible for these funds.
- **WBC Placemaking Grant:** This is a \$2,500 grant that could be combined with the NAR to do a small placemaking project. This grant is due by April 1st. Technically, we haven't completed the placemaking requirements. In the application, we will offer to complete placemaking requirements before project implementation.
- **Wyoming Arts Council:** The Community Support Grant for up to \$20,000 is due by April 1. I am planning to apply for the Against the Winds Mural Festival.
- **Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund:** This grant for up to \$50,000 is due by April 1. This is a dollar for dollar match. I am planning to apply for the History Under Foot Project.
- **New Belgium Brewery Grant:** This grant will be submitted through the Foundation. The Foundation board has met and granted approval to apply.
- **7th Penny:** Forward Greater Cheyenne is asking for a vote of confidence/support from the four economic development agencies. We have many businesses who are closing temporarily due to COVID-19.

BUSINESSES OPENING/EXPANDING/CLOSING

- Opened: RePeak (March 1), Hambones Pizza (March 7)
- Coming: Blacktooth Brewery (mid-March), Ninja Playground (March 27), Hawthorne Tree (May), The Lincoln (May 1), Little Moon Boutique (unknown), Omelet House (unknown), *confidential* (mid-June)
- Still Looking to Expand: Desperado Depot & Prairie Home House Goods
- Potential Business: Silversage Ceramics, Project Onyx

- Closing/Closed: Minuteman will be vacating 211 E. 19th.
- Net business openings (since last July 1st): 7

BUSINESS & PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Downtown Development Initiatives:

- **Downtown Merchants:** Participation continues to expand and repeat attendance remains high. We need to explore obtaining a larger space for the meetings. Mike Randleman from KGWN has been attending the meetings.
- **February & March Downtown Promotions:** Downtown BINGO promotion is in full swing. It is scheduled to end March 31, 2020. To date, one bingo card has been turned in.
- **Boot Loot Raffle:** \$5,060.00 was redeemed of the available \$7,000.00 in Boot Loot Bucks thus far. The winners had until February 29th to spend Boot Loot Bucks. No procedure was put in place in the event funds went unspent. To date, we've collected \$1,666.66 from the businesses towards this promotion. 7 businesses have not paid yet (approximately \$583).

MAIN STREET UPDATES

- **WEDA/Main Street Conference (February 26):** Bruce and I attended the WEDA/Main Street Conference in February. I got some great ideas for how to proceed with the Christmas Pop-Ups. I've asked Linda if I could get a copy of the participant survey from one of the workshops for us to use to assess return on investment during events.
- **Community Transformation Workshop:** Tentative dates for CTW in Fall 2020 are October 7-9 in Cheyenne at the Plains Hotel. It will be combined with the WY Working Together Conference. Registration will open on April 1st.
- **Main Street Conference:** At this time, the Main Street Conference in May is still scheduled. Currently Bruce, Craig, and I are scheduled to attend all or a portion of this event.
- **Best Practices Workshop:** A decision will be made on or shortly after April 1st as to whether or not this will occur in May. Currently Bruce, Craig, Breck, and I are scheduled to attend.

FIP/CIG PROGRAMS

- The Design Committee met. There were no new applications to process. We could potentially receive an application from *confidential* business to assist with a tree as required with the tree.
- 2020 FIP final applications are due on April 1st. I have spoken with both David Hatch and Glen Garret. Both are planning to submit a final application.
- 2019 FIP projects are still in full swing: Mateo, owner of Rail Yard Coffee House, is in negotiations to open up the Coffee house in the Thayer (Mendicino) building this summer.