

**Downtown Cheyenne Development Authority
Strategic Action Plan Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 2, 2021**

Board Members: Anthony Ortiz, Bruce Heimbuck, Jonathan Savelle, Breck Collier, Katherine Brady, Jeff White, Steve Borin, Astrid

Staff: Amber Ash, Haylee Chenchar

Public: Margaret Austin, Wyoming Tribune Eagle; David Hatch; Jim Weaver

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 pm by Bruce Heimbuck.

TIF Collection: In follow up to the email that Amber sent out last Wednesday, Amber explained that State Statute has a sunset clause on tax increment financing (TIF) collections of 25 years. Since the tax was implemented in 1993, it would have sunset in 2018. Amber explained that while the TIF could be implemented again, it took 23 years before it generated \$650,000. While there has been a lot of growth downtown and the hope would be that it would generate revenue commensurate with the growth, it will still take years for it to provide substantial funding.

David Hatch asked for clarification about the TIF and how it would affect his proposed project at the Hynds. Amber clarified that the TIF the DDA was pursuing was for sales tax. It wasn't a new tax. Rather it diverted funding from the City to the DDA. She explained that the TIF David was looking at pertained to property tax. The DDA's implementation of a sales tax TIF would not affect David's ability to pursue a property tax TIF should City Council allow it.

Amber explained that she had met with Mayor Collins the previous day to discuss funding. The Mayor had explained that the City was faced with over a \$3 million deficit going into this budget session. The Mayor explained that many purchases which kept the sales tax collection afloat last year were one-time purchases. The Mayor did not anticipate the City's financial picture changing for 2 years. Amber shared the conversation that she had with the Mayor regarding the DDA budget. Amber and Mayor Collins had discussed that the bare minimum needed just to sustain current operations was \$250,000 and that this amount did not include the History Under Foot project. Amber advised the board that her discussion with Mayor Collins indicated that History Under Foot should be postponed until such time as the City and DDA became more financially stable.

Based on that information, Bruce suggested that the board wait to take any further action on the strategic action plan until Amber had an opportunity to rework it. In addition, he noted that funding would determine which activities could proceed or whether further reductions in service would be required. The general consensus of the group was to wait until City funding was determined and Amber had a chance to reevaluate the plan to move forward with the strategic action plan.

Part-Time Temporary Staff: Bruce asked the board if they would allow Amber to hire someone on a part-time, temporary basis to assist with administrative tasks. This person would be responsible for answering phones, greeting people, taking minutes, and performing general administrative tasks. He anticipated that this would cost no more than \$10,000 through the end of June. This would give the

DDA a chance to see what funding, if any, the City was able to provide. In the event that the City doesn't fund the DDA, this position could be terminated.

Anthony asked if this meant that the office would reopen to the public. Amber explained that yes, she intended to reopen the office from 9 am to 3 pm with a closure from 12-1 for lunch. Amber anticipated reopening the office to the public on or about March 1st. This would improve the DDA's accessibility without creating an additional burden on staff. Astrid said she felt like this was worth pursuing. The consensus was that Amber would move forward with hiring the current open position, work with a company like Express Employment to hire a temporary person, and the board would formally vote on this item at their next board meeting.

History Under Foot: Amber asked the Board for clarification on how to proceed with History Under Foot. Would they like Amber to continue to pursue this initiative or would it be better to put it on pause on after the DDA funding stabilizes. The general consensus was to pause it and to return the funds to the Wyoming Cultural Trust Funds. Pursuant thereto, Amber will reach out to the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund to determine next steps.

Since there were no further items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.