

**DOWNTOWN DENVER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Meeting Minutes – September 3, 2020
(Virtual Meeting)**

Board Members Present: Bahman Shafa, Austin Kane, Jennifer Halliman DeLeon, Sandy Robinson, David Kaufman, Jodi Janda, Jon Buerge

Legal Advisor: Ron Fano

Staff: Beth Moyski, Tami Door, Charlene Laus, Vince Martinez, Steve Shireman, Sharon Alton, Pamela Sellden

I. Welcome

- A. Bahman Shafa called the meeting to order, welcoming everyone attending the virtual meeting. Shafa asked for approval of the Minutes from the BID Board Meeting on August 6, 2020. Sandy Robinson made a motion to approve the Minutes and Jon Buerge seconded. The Minutes were passed by unanimous vote (taken via poll).

II. Public Space

A. Activation Updates

Sharon Alton gave an update on current BID activations, beginning with a review of the Alleyway Art project. Alton reminded the Board that the project goal was to create a destination and generate a presence on social media. This project aims to be longer in duration and currently involves 9 alleys. The newest installation is the alley from Glenarm and Tremont between 15th and 16th (backside of The Pavilions). The next public art project is the installation of a series of 5 minority-produced sculptures. The first two, "Love" and "Hope", have already been installed. "Inspire", "Dream", and "Together/Resilient" are still to come.

Alton continued with an update on Skyline Park. Due to the pandemic restrictions, they were not able to open the Beer Garden this year and instead have turned Skyline Park into a public eating spot – Dine in Skyline. Likewise, they will not be able to open the rink due to the COVID guidelines. The park regulations limit the number of people in attendance to be no more than 20 including staff. Continuing COVID19 restrictions will also necessitate the re-structuring of Parade of Lights into a stationary parade lasting 3 weeks instead of 2 days. Floats will be located on private plazas throughout the BID, with their lights on Friday and Saturday nights. Additionally, they are working with VisitDenver to bring their Mile-High Tree to a more central location and continue the D&F Tower light project with the Denver Theatre District. It was noted that they would need to promote in a different way, while continuing to target families more. Alton noted that 9news was still the presenting sponsor and KOSI a major sponsor, meaning they would have plenty of airtime available. They have plans to reach out to restaurants, hotels and retailers,

III. Safety and Security

A. BID Security Renewal of the Private Security Contract with AUS

Steve Shireman reported that a new RFP for the private security contract will not go out until after Phase 2 of the Security Action Plan is completed in 2021. Instead, in the interest of the impact on the budget and an attempt to maintain the continuity of the officers, he is requesting that the current contract be renewed for another year, with no changes from the current contract. Sandy Robinson made a motion to renew the AUS Security Contract for one year and Austin Kane seconded. The contract was renewed with a unanimous vote of approval by a polled vote.

B. BID Security Metrics

Steve Shireman reviewed the most recent security statistics, noting the increased number of proactive contacts made by the security team. Despite fewer reactive contacts, Shireman did note an increase in verbal and physical aggression towards all uniformed officers in the downtown area. Shireman noted that park curfew violations were down due to the growth of encampments. Unfortunately, public intoxication and urination had increased, as well as the public use of drugs, likely due to the lack of the presence of DPD. The increase of sit-and-lie violations was likely due to the lack of furniture on the Mall, which was pulled in response to the COVID19 regulations. As encampments are broken up, trespassing and camping increased. Vandalism had increased, largely due to the protests. Although artwork tends not to be vandalized, the security team is continuing to monitor and patrol the alleys art. The security team has increased their outreach efforts as a way of support to the businesses.

C. Police and Outreach reports (written)

Lt. Aaron Sanchez from the Denver Police Department reviewed the latest statistics, reporting that they can be misleading due to the situation of the times. Seeing the increase in crimes against society (e.g., drug/narcotic offenses) as a bad omen, Sanchez feels that this is an indication that the issues are not being addressed. Sanchez reported that District 6 continues to be the primary target for protests with the protesters indicating that they intend to take it down. As for the narcotics issues, Sanchez reported that he is not a fan of open-air buys by undercover officers, as they only lead to the arrest of the end users. Despite this, DPD is going to try buy-busts for one month, mainly as a visible deterrent. Sanchez pointed out these are the lowest level of drug dealing, often an addict selling part of their supply to support their own habit. More citations have been issued, due to the COVID operations. Currently they are just trying to get past the riot period, which they anticipate will last through November or even into January. DPD is partnering with mental health agencies and DOTI to create outreach partnerships to assist those experiencing homelessness.

In response to a question regarding the officer's morale, Sanchez reported that the officers were extremely tired and doing the best they could. There have been resignations due to the tolls of the continued physical and verbal abuse. That said, they do appreciate the support as well as the opportunities to talk and explain themselves, and to apologize for their mistakes. Sanchez pointed out that there is a big difference between protesters (they support the right to protest), and rioters (which they view as domestic terrorists). Another question regarding what could be done regarding aggressive panhandlers, which seem to be increasing. Sanchez felt that that DPD's visibility had lessened due to the riots, but that they are starting to send out the bicycle team again, as well as the foot patrols which should help with some of the quality of life issues. In response to a question regarding where they were relocating of encampments, Sanchez stated that the occupants of the encampments are still out there. The relocations merely reduce the size of encampments, so that instead of one large encampment there are several smaller ones.

IV. **Administration**

A. Preliminary 2021 Downtown Denver BID Budget and Work Plan – Board Action

Accept the Preliminary Budget and Operating Plan and Direct Staff to Submit to the City per their Request by or before September 30, 2020

Beth Moyski began the discussion regarding the budget by stating these are challenging times and the BID needs to tighten up just like any other business. Moyski has checked in with other are BIDs and none are reporting that they will be increasing assessments. In the same light, Moyski reported that she is recommending not increasing the 2021 assessments collected by DDBID. To support this proposal, suspending the transferring of funds to the capital and reserve fund accounts will help bridge the gap. Moyski reviewed the proposed 2021 Budget and Workplan, asking that the BID continue to support the sidewalk cafes by waiving their fees through the first half of next year and charge only the winter licensing rate for the vendors. Moyski reported that the maintenance contractor CSG has agreed to keep the same rates for next year and will be looking into absorbing some costs such as metric tracking software. One budget item that is going up significantly is the tree health program to support the growing urban forest and care needed for trees in the public realm. Winter in the City will be less due to the light purchase that was made last year. The Safety budget will increase slightly due to an minimum wage increase and an anticipated potential change in scope. The Pedestrian Environment budget which includes the maintenance of the alleys and the flower program may be reduced slightly due to the planting of less flowers. The budget includes \$10K for tree replacement and funds for property owner outreach work supporting BID renewal.

Charlene Laus reported that as of today the current reserve fund balance is \$1.6M, which equates to 2.5 months of reserve on hand. Per Tabor, \$1.5M needs to be transferred into reserves next year. In response to how this situation makes her feel, Laus stated that this was a tough situation that will not last forever. If things do not turn around in 2021, then there will need to be discussions regarding the budget. With that, Austin Kane made a motion to approve the Preliminary 2021 Budget and Workplan and Jon Buerge seconded. The Preliminary 2021 Budget and Workplan were approved by a unanimous, polled vote.

B. **Resolution Setting Date Time and Place for Public Hearing on Proposed 2021 BID Budget for October 1, 2020**

Beth Moyski explained the schedule of events required in regards of the Budget. Bahman Shafa made a motion to pass a Resolution Setting the Date, Time and Place for a Public Hearing the Proposed 2021 BID Budget for October 1, 2020 and Jon Buerge seconded. The resolutions passed by a unanimous, polled vote.

V. **Other Business**

A. Maintenance and Operations (Written Report)

B. Monthly Update and Core Priorities (Written Report)

VI. **Public Comment and Announcements**

A member of the public asked for clarification on the possibility of board budget meetings and where the postings would be made (Denver Business Journal as well as the BID webpage) and asked if she could be contacted if that were the case. She also asked if BID Board retreats are open to the public. Finally, she reminded the Board that November 5, 2020 is Guy Fawkes Day.

VII. **Adjourn**

With no further business, Bahman Shafa adjourned the meeting.

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2020.

Chair of the Board

Attest:

Secretary