

## **Iowa City Downtown District**

Board of Directors Meeting

### **Meeting Minutes by Zoom from March 26, 2020**

Voting Members Present: Monica Moen, Cady Gerlach, Mary Kate Pilcher Hayek, Greg Turner, John Schickendanz, Michelle Galvin, Nick Lindsley, Dave Nerad, Ritu Jain, Karen Kubby, Ellsworth Carman, WEB2018, Charlie Nusser, Naftaly Stramer, and Jigna Jani

Non-Voting Members Present: Wendy Ford, Nick Pfeiffer, Sarah Henry, Kim Casco, Kate Moreland, Kevin Boyd, Austin Wu, Abby Restko.

Staff Present: Nancy Bird, Betsy Potter, Marcus Brown, Christopher Hunter, Joe Reilly.

Call to Order: The meeting of the Iowa City Downtown District Board of Directors was called to order by President Pilcher Hayek at 9:02am on Zoom.

February Minutes: On motion by Moen, second by Galvin, the minutes of the February meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

Review of the Financials: Greg Turner shared the financial position of the organization, and gave a thorough overview of the financial reports of the organization. Greg reported that the organization's financials are "routine" and as normal for the previous month – and shared the position of the organization on the Balance Sheet and identified those items Nancy discussed that the Executive Committee met and pretty quickly were able to assist the organization in moving budgeted items to address the COVID19 crisis. ICDD staff asked to move budgeted numbers across the budget into different line items – not going over the budget – but just adjusting the uses of money given the circumstances of the crisis.

COVID-19 Updates: Betsy shared that they have had to postpone the Ped Mall party and the shop crawl – looking for an August reschedule date and looking for dates for Summer Shop Crawl. Due to the shifting issues that are happening daily, no decision has been made on the Block Party. Nancy reported that the partnership efforts have been strongly coordinated and the joint efforts have been a positive experience. Betsy shared that approximately \$12,500 of gift cards are being sold and the \$25 gifts are going well – over \$3500 of the givebacks have been provided. Nancy shared the joint communications and efforts of the ICDD with ICAD, ICABP, and Think Iowa City. President Hayek shared that due to the unknowns – 30/60/90 day adjustments are necessary and being implemented by the staff. Nancy provided opportunities for public art continuation and other ICDD initiatives that may help continue to keep things moving to provide some sense of normalcy to the downtown.

On motion by Lindsley, second by Turner, the Board unanimously approved the February financials of the organization.

COVID-19 Updates Continued: The ICDD is continuing outreach and input and connecting members with direct and immediate questions that people have. The staff will have to continue the conversation about how long the giftcard program can be effective and trying to keep the pulse on what is working or what needs adjustment. The webinars and website are an effective outreach tool – the Wednesday newsletter provides property owners and business owners what they need to be looking at and thinking

about right now. “No contact” has been encouraged and assistance in getting that set up, and UIHC connections with supply chains and staff. Betsy has worked with Robyn Hepker is a “Stay Home, Stay Healthy” campaign – lighthearted and informative that we’re encouraging people to flatten the curve – utilizing CHOMP, online shopping and stores, and social distancing.

Roundtable: Members of the Board discussed the parallels to the flood and lessons learned – communication with vendors, bank, payables, and putting pride aside to describe what you can do. Michelle recommended that folks apply for the SBA loan – as a precautionary measure – because you can always decline the loan. There is a strong downtown customer base – setting up a customer happy hour was a great way to connect. Greg Turner shared that the industry and internal meetings understand the underlying theme that everyone is wanting to work together to get through the pandemic to allow them to keep their business viable and keep jobs to get through the finite period of time that this will last – and recommended that everyone address these in 30-60-90 day increments. Communication is key for members – initiate this with the landlords and set up short term stimulus. Greg shared how great it is that the information is coordinated and consolidated by the area organizations. Cady shared updates on Shelter House and the increased demand for services with reduced funding. Naftaly shared the increased partnerships that have developed. Monica shared that the Fix coffee shop is still open and people are still getting coffee and having interaction. Karen shared that there is still the opportunity for classes and distanced interaction, kits, videos about the kits – and challenges with landlord communication/contact.

Ex Officio: Nick Pfeiffer shared that Thinklowa City is trying to promote “virtual” and “take home” items to get out and get people still engaging with local businesses. Kate Moreland shared that ICAD, ICABP and ICDD and the collaboration has become great for the community – and the organization’s staffs as well. Some of our organizations need to determine whether they want a grant or loan – and need assistance. Kim shared that the ICABP is tracking the changing landscape for members and working to ensure they understand the different options available to them. Austin Wu shared the student concerns and ideas from the University perspective, along with interest in keeping up demand for downtown business. Wendy Ford shared that the City is in the same mode of sharing information, but have been so impressed with the collaboration with the community and that the City is looking to target its efforts to the gaps that will be created by the State and Federal initiatives. The City is determining parking initiatives. Ellsworth Carman indicated that the Public Library is closed but all online services. Ritu discussed and others shared their best ideas of how to address the timing challenges of opening/closing/reopening.

On motion by Naftaly, second by Moen the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:05am.