

Iowa City Downtown District
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting Minutes from August 26, 2021

Voting Members Present: Charlie Nusser, Jeet Saini, Karen Kubby, Greg Turner, Susan Felker, Dave Nerad, Jigna Jani, Cady Gerlach, Jason Paulios, Nina Lohman, Mary Kate Pilcher Hayek, and Jigna Jani.

Non-Voting Members Present: Nick Pfeiffer, Abby Restko, Chastity Dillard, Kate Moreland, Kim Casco, Nancy Bird, and Sierra Wicks.

Staff Present: Nancy Bird, Betsy Potter, Christopher Hunter, and Joe Reilly

Call to Order: The meeting of the Iowa City Downtown District Board of Directors was called to order by President Nusser at 9:04 am on Zoom.

July Minutes: On motion by Kubby, second by Nerad the minutes of the July meeting were unanimously approved by the Board with edits to the date to be July 22 and to move Susan Felker to the voting members list.

Financial Updates: President Nusser presented the financial report, sharing the Balance Sheet of the organization and described the projects account, the Profit and Loss, and the gift card program. Nusser then shared the alley project beginning construction. Potter shared the Block Party financials, sharing that the Block Party generated a net gain of \$14,702. Potter then shared an overview of the highlights of the block party, the programming, and that 28,000 attendees are approximated to have attended. Due to the lack of volunteers and contractors because of the pandemic. 3 people were vaccinated at the UI Mobile Clinic tent with JCPH, which is a huge win for a public event like this. Nancy Bird shared that the budget to actuals for 2020 turned out better than expected along with suggestions of what to do with the 5% surplus into the project fund account. Conservative tax deficiency estimates, event planning, and budgeting has generated this surplus. Throughout the year, the ICDD staff moved resources to higher needs, including marketing and other increased service needs for ICDD, but now there is a 5% surplus they are recommending to be moved into the project account for research and later approval and presentation to the Board. The Board discussed the request and took input from members. On motion by Kubby, second by Pilcher Hayek, the financials were approved unanimously by the Board. On motion by Turner, second by Lindsley, the Board voted unanimously to transfer the surplus amount into the project account.

Advocacy Statement: Bird shared the ICDD Advocacy statement with the ICDD Board. Bird reviewed items within the document and shared that ICDD met with each block and shared the document and took the time to share the advocacy statement with stakeholders throughout the district. No feedback to change anything substantially was received, but members were very happy to receive this information and share their thoughts. The Board discussed the statement and outreach. The next step will be approving this document by the Board. Nancy shared that the CA Ventures project has given an opportunity to amend this statement, and Karen Kubby shared the history of the CA Ventures proposal, values from ICDD that she impressed upon them, and advocacy that was done to acknowledge the historic site, commercial site placement, comprehensive plan review with insets and setbacks. The Board of Adjustment met and had concerns about the height of the building. The building is unable to cash flow at 9 stories of building, as the water table is at 30 feet and the building can't go any lower

underground. The comprehensive plan shows low heights, and the ICDD advocacy statement should be amended to include a review of the comprehensive plan by the City. The Board discussed the plan, including the electric bikes, public safety, and 500 foot rule. On motion by Kubby, second by Hayek, the Board voted unanimously to approve the ICDD Advocacy Statement with the following amendments: (1) review the 500 foot rule “while still having appropriate regulation of alcohol licenses.” (2) Under section 1.3.2, change the work “policing” to “public safety” and (3) to insert a statement under Section 2.2 advocating for exploration of parking regulations in the special exception process and that the city undertake a review of the comprehensive plan, and (4) the Board’s vote required ICDD staff and committee to finalize the ICDD Advocacy Statement with these and the other suggested edits and bring back to the Board within one week for a final vote, including (5) the removal of the two redundancies identified in 500 foot rule section and historic preservation in Section 3.4.

Better Bathrooms: Joe shared that there were 21 applications for the Better Bathroom initiative, and 5 businesses will be selected to move the bathroom renovation process along, and an interior designer Amy Guhl will help give the bathrooms a “wow” factor. Betsy shared that the Farm to Street Dinner sold 300 tickets, was very successful, took over two blocks on N. Linn Street to ensure spacing. New vendors participated this year, and everyone worked extremely hard to ensure that over \$13,000 was donated back to local foods initiatives. Christopher shared that Taste of Iowa City was a big success with many restaurants, including strengthening sponsorships and partnerships, with a large turnout. The Storywalk went well, and Oktoberfest in a Box is in full swing starting next week, including the ShopCrawl and event walks coming up. Nancy shared that the staff is still waiting to hear whether the garbage contract is going to move forward.

Ex Officio Updates: Abby Restko shared that Soul & Blues Fest and the Arts Fest went well and live concerts continue on the PedMall. Movies are running through October 2. September 19 is a Celebration of Life for COVID losses experienced over the last year. Sierra Wicks shared that the student engagement in the giftcards to incentivize vaccination is working well. Nick Pfeiffer shared that ThinkIowaCity is prepping FryFest in the coming week. Masks will be encouraged inside the exhibit hall with many activities taking place outdoors. Hotels are full and good response from travelers is encouraging. Rachel Kilburg shared information about the Mayor’s Mask Mandate, reviewed the census results and publication, including our population growth that doesn’t match up with what is known, the commUnity mental health liaison hire, the ARPA funds, and other updates. Kim Casco shared the CLP Program launch, and sponsorship campaigns, the legislative priorities of the Chamber, and the Better Together 2030 visioning. Kate Moreland shared that ICAD is digging into the EdTech initiative statewide, a talent attraction campaign, and the BT2030 visioning work. Welcoming Week is coming up soon and Kate shared upcoming events. Chastity Dillard shared that NCJC updated August events and an awesome back to school bash with 50 backpacks and the National Night Out event.

On motion by Moreland, second by Pilcher Hayek, the meeting was adjourned at 10:11am.