

**Iowa City Downtown District**  
Board of Directors Meeting  
**Meeting Minutes from March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**

Voting Members Present: Charlie Nusser, Nick Lindsley, DingYu Ding, Susan Felker, Tony Branch, Jason Paulios, David Kieft, Diego Lasansky, Wendy Zimmerman, Maka Pilcher Hayek, Greg Turner, Brittany Young, Nina Lohman, Jay LeaVessuer

Non-Voting Members Present: Abby Restko, Rachel Kilburg, Monica Nieves, Austin Korn

Guest: Cady Gerlach

Staff Present: Nancy Bird, Christopher Hunter, Joe Reilly, Julie Watkins

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Nusser at 9:02 am.

February Minutes: Jason Paulios offered a few amendments to the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting notes; find the corrected version of his statement here:

Jason started by saying that the library was seeing huge numbers prior to the pandemic. Their events are doing well and the second floor is getting more computer use than ever, which also alludes to people not having access to computers. The last two weeks have included nonstop learning about lobbying in Iowa and state house bills. They are getting hit left and right with reforms. The Iowa Library Association does lobbying and bill tracking. Current bills are trying to move the State Library of Iowa from 'Education' to 'Administrative Services' at the whim of the governor. This would alter things greatly; the governor would then be able to appoint and remove the state librarian, whereas it was a commission that decided that before. SF356 concerns the library levy. The ICPL gets roughly just over a million dollars a year from the library levy, and wants more to protect this voter-decided appropriation as it's currently about a fifth of their operating budget. The Senate bill wants to put the levy into a general levy fund which would be controlled in a much tighter way and also require it to be shared among other entities. There is also the issue of state interference with drag shows and policing the presence of children, an example being a recent Nebraska bill for which businesses can be fined up to \$10,000 and can be sued. This is all without discussing book banning. The ICPL will table on the Ped Mall at the end of March to encourage people to reach out to legislators regarding these issues. There is a tie to school libraries with all of this; students can use their school ID as a way to check out books at public libraries. If schools ban a book, there is a question of if the student would be able to check out that book at the public library. ICDD staff encouraged Jason to come to the next legislative meeting.

On motion by Susan Felker, second by Maka Pilcher-Hayek, the February meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Financial Updates:

Greg Turner reviewed financial documents included in this month's board packet. Greg noted that all financials seem in line with the projected budget.

- Loan Documents – Alley Repaving Project

Nancy noted that the board will likely take a vote on the Alley Repaving project at a future board meeting. The loan request is currently moving through the Iowa City Council for approval. Once

approved the money will go into a new bank account. The goal will be to pay off the loan in 10 years or less. The repaving project will take place this summer and should be completed in 2–3 weeks.

- Top Chef Budget / Event Summary

Christopher reported to the board that the event was an overall success. This year's event returned to an in-person format and those in attendance had positive feedback about the event. The event included 26 restaurants/mixologists and included a band in the mixology area. In addition, restaurants also had positive feedback as well. This year's event had 2 sponsors and both sponsors are locked in for next year's event. ICDD was able to donate \$5,000 to Strengthen Grow Evolve.

February Financials: On motion by David Kieft, second by Nina Lohman, the February financials were unanimously approved.

Clean Ambassador Services: Joe presented to the board on Clean Ambassador Services. Based on feedback from businesses, this service is needed for Downtown Iowa City. Joe researched similar services that are offered in Davenport and Des Moines. The goal of this service would be to enhance early morning and afternoon services with daily maintenance over heavy traffic days and times focused on weekends (Thursday – Sunday) to address graffiti, alley waste bins, broken glass, and pet waste. This service could also provide support for events, installing new projects and potential maintenance. Joe has been looking at procuring a utility vehicle, cleaning supplies and uniform for service staff person. The service staff person would be integrated with the Downtown District team and have an office presence.

BT2030 - Guest Cady Gerlach: Cady presented to the board an overview of the BT2030 project vision and its 5 pillars. Cady shared what the project has been up to, including a public roll out of the vision and formation of the entity as a community development corporation. The project has also partnered with the CommUnity Foundation of Johnson County as its fiscal agent. The project has held an Excellence in Action awards event recognizing community folks and organizations. The BT2030 project has formed a Board of Directors with representation across various sectors of the community which includes ICDD Executive Director, Nancy Bird who is currently serving as Secretary. Many of the priorities of the project intersect with ICDD. Some of the BT2030 prioritized projects include transit advocacy, neighborhood placemaking to ensure vibrancy, reimagined social service, child care wage enhance, 3D printed affordable housing complex (which would be the 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation for this type of project), and supporting Youth CLP program implementation alongside community partners.

Staff Updates: Nancy presented staff updates included in the board pre-meeting packet sent via email. Updates shared during the meeting included Northside Outside update, Winter Night Lights experience, cost resolution on the alley lights, past and upcoming events, and downtown gift card.

Ex-Officio Updates:

Abby Restko (Glassando, Summer of the Arts)

- Summer Arts will hosting 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert at the Englert Sunday March 26<sup>th</sup>

David Kieft (University of Iowa)

- UIHC is planning to move forward with family medicine facility on the southeast side of Iowa City. No specific decisions have been made regarding the exact location.

Rachel Kilburg (City of Iowa City)

- City of Iowa City approved ARPA funding to the Free Medical Clinic and Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County. Climate Action grant RFP is out; applications for funding will close April 17.

Monica Nieves (Think Iowa City)

- RAGBRAI is coming to Coralville and will route through Iowa City on Saturday's departure to final stop. Volunteer opportunities will be available for the overnight in Coralville.

Austin Kornis (ICAD)

- Hosted Build Johnson County Meeting which includes developers and real estate. The group reviewed last year's development in the area and celebrated successes in development. Design Dash (an event for high schoolers) is in need of volunteers. ICAD and IBP held a joint board meeting and it went well.

**ICDD Reminders**

- Restorative Justice Circle for Bunny theft incident – April 21st at 3pm
- First Round – April 19th at 5pm
- Next Board Meeting – Thursday April 27th at 9am

**Adjourn:**

On motion by Maka Pilcher-Hayek, second by Nick Lindsley, the board meeting was adjourned at 10:09 am.