



Downtown Arlington Business Association

Board Meeting Agenda & Minutes

Date: 1-19-2015

Time: 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Location: Britt Sport Cards

Agenda:

1. 2015 Budget
2. Membership
3. Meeting Location Change
4. Meeting Constructiveness
5. Event Committee Progress
6. Strategic Planning

Meeting Minutes:

Meeting convened at 9:11 am.

Board Members Present: Mike Britt, Jeff Phebus, Zeph Ragland, Mary Andersen, Dana Fowler, Brian Bovee.

Non Agenda Items:

Kids Carnival in July: Mike Britt suggested co-management of event with Life Way Church. They have manpower and good location. If they say no, we can approach another non-profit. Need to get information regarding last year's event. Mike will approach Life Way to see if still interested. Zeph and Dana will approach Chamber this week to get this information. Zeph will provide report at next member meeting on February 4, 2015.

From a budgeting perspective, Mary stated that one cost we have for every event we host is liability insurance. Mary said we pay \$100 per event for insurance.

If we do host this event, the question was raised as to what non-profit or other cause should part of the profits support? Jeff would like to see it go towards Life Way's building restoration. Brian said their building is designated as an historic preservation building, so it is probably expensive to restore.

Mike asked what about grants to help underwrite the costs of the carnival? Dana said that grants may be out of reach as there is only six months lead time. But happy to look at local resources like grocery store community funds which are usually available at the beginning of the fiscal year. And she would like to see the event profits benefit kids, not building costs. Youth Dynamics was also brought up by Brian as helping kids and could benefit by any funds raised.

Historic Downtown Identity/Preservation:

Historic Downtown is an accurate identity as some do have historic preservation designations but not all. Dana mentioned that downtown could be more user friendly to help attract visitors. There are very few seating areas along the sidewalks and only a handful of awnings to keep folks from getting soaked if visiting in the winter. Mary said the City of Arlington had started looking at creating a cohesive plan to make all store fronts more similar in appearance. Multiple Board Members stated that it would be very appropriate for both the City and DABA to help pull together a cohesive plan to present to the merchants and building owners.

Jeff said that some of the burden of this could also be taken on by the individual merchants. He, for example, would be very willing to sponsor a bench outside of his business. Mike said we need to start being stronger advocates about the look and feel of downtown to the right folks.

Dana said that if we get the entire downtown district to become a national historic preservation site, this could open up additional funding sources that are interested in helping preserve history.

Mike stated his goal is to get every downtown merchant into DABA so we can have power through numbers when advocating for restoration funding from all sources.

Agenda Items:

1. 2015 Budget:

Mary Andersen explained that budget is broken down primarily into two categories: Income and Expenses. Mary will send out budget projected versus actual from 2014. There is no difference between the two except for one event – the Street Fair. The Street Fair had expenses that exceeded budget by quite a bit. Security was biggest factor there.

One barrier to getting the 2015 budget finalized is the status of grant submitted in October 2014. There has been no official word of approval of the grant request we submitted to the City of Arlington in late fall of 2014. Mike believes that although it has not been officially announced

that we have been approved. Mike will talk to Julie Morse and Kristen Granroth today to confirm.

Mary said there is no due date yet from the Chamber for our finalized budget. Mary asked if there are any other events or expenses planned.

Officer Suggestions for Budget Line Items for 2015:

Promotions:

Mike wants to create spring promotion line item. Dana added would like to have miscellaneous line item for all of 2015 to cover any new projects for the entire year, not just promotion. Not an earmark which would require committee oversight just a line item. Mary said we can set aside an advertising/promotion line item.

Super Saturday:

Mike also really wants to spend more money promoting Super Saturday in November. Jeff and Zeph really like the idea of promoting Super Saturday. It was also mentioned by multiple DABA members at the last member meeting in January. They would also like to see more time and effort and funding directed towards promoting Super Saturday.

Billboard Opportunity:

Promotion opportunity from Mike - Sarah Arney email – there is a big billboard at Island Crossing available and Sarah would like to see the painting by Sherry O'Brien that DABA commissioned on the billboard. She has connection with billboard people. Can be less expensive than other billboard advertising.

Highway Signs:

Jeff wondered about green highway signs that announce things like lodging, food, art walk and other information to highway travelers as they approach and drive through Arlington exits. He feels it would be much better to have downtown advertised from the freeway rather than a billboard that is off the freeway. Zeph stated that getting one of those are very challenging. Mike stated that he thinks those signs require that the event/activity/location needs to be open or available to tourists 7 days per week to have that sign.

Dana asked if Jeff could find out more about the highway sign idea. Would like to know how much it would cost and whether we meet their requirements, etc. He said he would.

Holiday Decorations:

Mary said someone approached her about getting some of the Christmas decorations updated/replaced. Wondered if DABA could help replace some or all over time. Perhaps within 5 years. Sara Lopez at City is contact. Mike said we should look at either restoring décor like Jeff would like to do for the vintage/historic aspect, and or add some new additional to increase festive atmosphere as Dana suggested over the next 5 years if City will match funds committed by DABA. Mike will present to City Council.

Holiday Promotion:

Dana would like to promote shopping in downtown in general way before the holidays arrive. We already have campaign materials developed that promote shop local. Mike said we could get tourism funds to help offset expenses and support advertising and materials creation. Mary suggested we could do quarterly campaigns. Mary also stated that in the past we obtained County funds to get promotion campaigns on buses and billboards.

2. Membership:

Mike said we are doing great at getting members signed up for DABA membership, but we really need to get them to the meetings. Mike just did big newspaper article outlining benefits to them. One thing we could do is modify membership language in by-laws to state that members must attend six meetings per year in order to be a member. Mary asked how we would track attendance, and what about those business owners who are one man shows and really struggle to get there and have no representative to send on their behalf?

Jeff thinks it would be a great idea to send each attendee a personal, post meeting notice that would thank them for coming. Dana agrees that this is a great idea but also need to think about what kind of communication can we do to get them to attend the meetings in the first place.

This issue will be addressed in much greater depth in the Strategic Planning session that will be scheduled soon.

3. Meeting Location Change:

Mike said nobody was in favor of dinner. Regarding moving the meeting location to City Council Chamber. All officers in favor with one indifferent to moving the meeting location. Dana stated we were ready to vote on this matter:

- **Brian Bovee motioned we move the meetings to the City Council Chambers.**
- **Zeph Ragland seconded.**
- **A vote in favor was taken.**
- **Motion carried.**

4. Meeting Constructiveness:

No discussion/action taken at this time.

5. Event Committee Progress:

Mike noted that all the current event committees are making great progress. No action to take at this time.

6. Strategic Planning Meeting:

All members are in favor of setting aside time to do some Strategic Planning. Need a couple of hours at least. We should obtain a conference room somewhere. Mary stated that the Stilly Coffee House has a conference room and she will ask about getting that room donated. We also consider having Local Scoop cater it.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15am