

Business Loop Community Improvement District

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

601 Business Loop 70 West #128

Thursday, May 21, 2020, 8:00 am

Via Zoom

Present:

James Roark-Gruender

Ryan Euliss

Linda Schust

Karen Geotz

Michele Batye

Crystal Garza-Matthews

Jeff Spencer

Rae Adams

Carrie Gartner

Roark-Gruender opened the meeting, welcomed new board members (Geotz, Batye, and Garza-Matthews), who gave a brief introduction of themselves. Euliss moved to accept the minutes, Spencer seconded. Motion passed, with Geotz, Batye, and Garza-Matthews abstaining. Euliss and Gartner presented financials and explained the known impact of COVID-19. Euliss motioned to approve financials, Schust seconded. Motion passed, with Geotz, Batye, and Garza-Matthews abstaining.

Committee Reports

Etsy Committee

Schust and Gartner gave an update on the Etsy Maker City project. The committee is working through a joint brand that all makers can use. Adams is organizing Maker Monday, a virtual maker fair that highlights three local makers each week and allows people to bid on Instagram for their products. It's a temporary solution that helps us keep makers and our small-scale manufacturing project top of mind while events are limited. Board members recommended highlight the bios of the local makers so Adams will start adding short bios to the Maker Monday posts. Once we are further into the project—with a website, videos, and other collateral—we can do more to personalize the makers and manufacturers.

New Business

Five Year Plan

Gartner presented an updated Five-Year Plan for the CID based largely on the two approved plans—the Loop Corridor Plan and the Small-Scale Manufacturing economic development plan. She also included COVID-19 recovery, with the understanding that we do not yet understand the lingering impact on the corridor. The Five-Year Budget is also based on post-COVID-19 revenue estimates so is smaller than previous years.

The board recommended added an additional item to public safety—working with the police and social service agencies to address safety issues, with the understanding that some issues are best addressed by those who specialize in substance abuse, homelessness, mental health, etc. rather than the police. Roark-Gruender recommended presenting the Five-Year Plan at the Annual Meeting in August. Gartner will update the website with the new goals. Schust motioned to approve the amended plan, Batye seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

FY2021 Budget

Euliss and Gartner offered an update on the FY2020 revenue estimates. Although April and May showed higher revenues than usual, the sales tax dispersants are a lagging indicator and the future impact of COVID-19 is unknown. As a result, estimated revenues were based on 85% of the average of the last three years. As per board recommendations, the budget itself focused primarily on tasks associated with recovery including marketing and economic development, support, and recruitment. Small amounts are dedicated to projects along the street and a substantial surplus was built into the budget. Gartner noted that the budget may be amended to address any major changes in circumstances due to COVID-19 through the regular public process.

Board recommended shifting banner installation and traffic box art back into the FY20 budget (originally postponed due to COVID-19). Gartner will make updates to the draft to present to the board at the June meeting for approval.

Director's Report

COVID-19

Gartner gave an overview of the CID's response to the COVID-19 crisis and the business support offered, including additional marketing, online listings of open businesses/businesses with modifications, communication about grants, working with the city and the county's Emergency Recovery Task Force, and so forth. Although the last few months have not been easy, businesses adapted quickly and it appears we have avoided a collapse in the Loop economy.

Pop-Up Park

Gartner and Adams cleaned up the Pop-Up Park—resetting the artificial turf, planting flowers and vegetables, and placing the all seating 6 feet apart. With so many restaurants offering take-out, the park can be used as a safe outdoor seating area.

Commercial Kitchen/MACC Makerspace

The kitchen had been on hold because MU shut down all campus buildings but is now reopened. Extraneous fixtures have been removed and the plan is being reviewed by the Health and Fire Departments. Equipment purchases should start soon. MACC should have their expanded Mechatronics Lab open by fall and the makerspace sometime after that. Construction has continued over the last few months but it's a large space to reconfigure. Gartner and Adams are working with the folks at MACC to plan events, training, business counseling, etc. at the space.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.