

CITY OF LEBANON  
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Downtown Business District Advisory Board of the City of Lebanon, Missouri, met on September 1, 2021, at 8:00 a.m., in the Lebanon City Hall located at 401 South Jefferson Avenue.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

Upon roll call, the following board members were present: Melody Allen, Gay Boston, Michelle Boyer, Ed Brackett, Amy Dent, Steve Hite, Jamie Johansen, Ginger Johnson, and Chris Walters. Absent: None.

A quorum was declared.

Staff members and others in attendance: Downtown Business District Executive Director Cynthia Coffman; City Administrator Mike Schumacher; Administrative Assistant to the City Administrator Ashley Sicard; City Tourism Director Rebecca Rupard; Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Laina Starnes; Melinda Fries; Kim Light; Pam Weaver; Donna and John Karch.

Minutes were taken by Downtown Business District Executive Director Cynthia Coffman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chris Walters moved and Michelle Boyer seconded that the Board approve the August 4, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION ITEMS

Hite presented former Downtown Business District Executive Director Ashton Light with a plaque honoring her service from 2020 to 2021. Hite spoke about Light's accomplishments leading Downtown in a formative period, helping secure a pivotal Community Empowerment Grant from Missouri Main Street Connection. Board members joined in applauding Light for her efforts and commitment to the Downtown Business District.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Budget Update

Hite noted that there were no new expenditures in August and that the board would be receiving the second installment of \$200,000 in donated funds during September.

Design Committee Report

Brackett reported that plans are proceeding for the installation of benches and planters on Commercial Street. The Design Committee is awaiting a mockup of the planned arches to be placed on the east and west sides of Commercial at the Jefferson intersection. Brackett relayed that the committee debated a proposal for donated bicycle racks for Commercial. He commented on concerns that people might ride bikes on the sidewalks

and that the availability of a place to easily lock up a bicycle might encourage this. Johansen opined that she hoped to encourage people to ride their bikes to Downtown and observed that the DTBD can create the demand for what it would like people to do. Walters stated that placement of the bike racks would be key to the project's viability. It was further suggested that one rack be placed on East Commercial and one on West Commercial, preferably on side streets, and that their use be monitored for a period of time. The board also discussed the placement and design of future building signage. Boston recommended façade grants be the vehicle for encouraging some consistent design for signage.

#### Promotion Committee Report

Boyer reviewed topics discussed at the August Promotion Committee meeting. The Downtown Business District has announced that District-wide Fall Open House will be held September 11, while some merchants have moved their events to September 4. Plans are proceeding for this year's Christmas on Commercial event on December 10. City Administrator Schumacher told the board that the City has purchased a Christmas tree and it will be displayed on the Jefferson Street end of The Market. The board expressed its thanks to the City for the addition to Downtown's decorations. It was noted that the final Food Truck Friday of the summer is scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup>. No Saturday food truck event is scheduled at this time.

#### Organization Committee

Hite reported that the Organization Committee studied the existing bylaws for the DTBD Advisory Board that were adopted to meet state statutory requirements for special business districts. Revisions to these bylaws must be carefully drawn to stay within state law. If the DTBD proceeds with discussions to operate as an independent body, another set of bylaws would be created to govern the nonprofit organization. This governing structure was recommended by Missouri Main Street Connection in part because it increases a local main street organization's flexibility and opportunity for grant funding. Hite said the Organization Committee created a subcommittee to draft proposed nonprofit bylaws; Hite, Johnson, and Assistant City Administrator/City Clerk Starnes, along with Coffman, recently met to move the project forward. New bylaws could include new and/or revised provisions on terms of board service, board officers, attendance requirements, board training, conflicts of interest, and other topics. The Organization Committee has discussed the need for limited terms to allow for the appointment and cultivation of new Downtown business representatives. The same members would serve on both the Downtown Business District Advisory Board for the City's special business district as well as the core §501(c)(3) board. The nonprofit entity would enter into a service agreement with the City.

Other newly formed subcommittees of the Organization Committee include fundraising strategies; promotion of the mission and vision statements; strategies to build a volunteer network; and newsletter & financial reporting.

Hite noted that each board committee should be recruiting constantly and be strategic in bringing people in from outside the DTBD to broaden its support base. Lebanon Area

Foundation Director Fries offered a suggestion that the board consider assembling an advisory committee of different subject matter experts to assist with issues such as accounting, historic preservation, and legal matters. These individuals might serve without term limits in order to provide ongoing support and institutional memory.

#### Economic Vitality

Walters reported that work continues on the DTBD database now that the building inventory is complete (with the understanding that it is a living document). Next steps include producing a color-coded map indicating the type of business(es) occupying each building. This would facilitate planning and business recruitment efforts and serve as a resource for partner organizations. Walters explained that members of the Economic Vitality Committee plan to take responsibility for oversight and assistance to individual blocks in the DTBD. Among other things, they will track renovation and construction efforts as well as money invested in improving Downtown. Not only will this be helpful for required reporting to Missouri Mainstreet Connection, the information gathered will demonstrate to the community that positive things are happening Downtown, and also will aid in fostering support for Downtown Lebanon. Hite reminded board members to keep up with tracking their volunteer hours. The executive director calculates board hours spent in official meetings and trainings; committee chairs collect and transmit to Walters any other hours volunteered. These data are compiled and reported quarterly to Missouri Main Street Connection. Hite asked that Economic Vitality maintain an estimate of rent per square foot Downtown.

#### POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

The board scheduled a follow-up meeting on the DTBD Transformation Strategy for Monday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 A.M., at First Community State Bank.

#### New Business

Hite reminded board members to complete Main Street 101 training. Allen briefed members on her experience taking the video class and passing the required test afterward.

Hite made the board aware of two additional Missouri Main Street Connection trainings, Main Street Boot Camp on September 24<sup>th</sup> in Trenton and the Quarterly Workshop on November 12<sup>th</sup> in Warrensburg. The board was encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

John Karch asked when Downtown banners would be changed. They currently promote the Route 66 Festival on Father's Day Weekend. Coffman responded that Back the Blue banners go up in September. Historic Downtown banners should follow, and then Christmas on Commercial banners and decorations.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:23 A.M.

ATTEST:

  
Secretary-Treasurer Ginger Johnson

  
Chairman Steve Hite

Minutes Approved October 6, 2021