

Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Virtual Meeting

Present: Laura Skaggs, Mary Coonce, Lisa Rivard, Cornelia Sawle, Biff Warren, Jim Eastman, Scott Firle, Eric Bergeson; Bruce Rabeler

Guests: Jocelyn Rowley, Kathy Trauner, Kristin Alger, Linda Klueber, Chuck Klueber, Kendal Lew

Staff: Mark Ruzzin

Call to Order:

Laura called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The advisory committee considered the June 2, 2020 meeting minutes:

ACTION: On a motion from Biff, seconded by Mary, the committee voted unanimously to approve the June 2, 2020 meeting minutes, as presented.

Treasurer's Report:

Bruce presented the monthly Treasurer's Report to the committee and walked through the various financial reports he prepared for the meeting.

Bruce noted that year-to-date revenue collections through May are 1.4% above 2019, despite COVID. April and May collections in 2020 were very similar to the revenue collected in April and May 2018. Retail remains strong, and now comprises 52% of total collections, up from 42% in 2019, as food service and accommodations collections continue to decline; food services and accommodations now comprises 23% of total collections, down from 33% in 2019.

To date, the committee has approved funding requests totaling just over \$106,000, which leaves just over \$43,000 remaining in the 2020 annual budget. About 60% of the funding request approvals have gone to Marketing and Advertising, 28% for Maintenance, 6% for Events, and 6% for Infrastructure.

Bruce noted that if the advisory committee approves the funding requests that are on the meeting agenda as proposed, the LID will have approved nearly \$220,000 in spending, or about \$70,000 more than the 2020 LID budget. Bruce noted that the LID came into 2020 with an estimated reserve amount of \$220,000.

On the reimbursement front, \$36,282 has been reimbursed to date in 2020, with \$69,887 approved but not yet submitted for reimbursement. Bruce suggested that it is fair to assume that not all of the spending authority the advisory committee has approved will, in fact, be utilized.

The committee had a short discussion about the LID reserve, or fund balance, and the steps that have to be taken to spend reserve monies. Mary noted that, in respect to the NBA's parking lot proposal, it will not be possible for the NBA to pay for the parking lot construction and then be reimbursed for the

expenses after the fact; rather, the LID will have to figure out how to advance monies from the reserve to cover the construction costs.

Funding Requests:

1. Niwot Business Association: Sidewalk Sale - \$2,380.00

Kathy Trauner presented the funding request for the NBA. Kathy clarified that the event was held on July 11; the event idea came together very quickly, and while a funding request was submitted on July 1, the July LID meeting had already been cancelled, so the request could not be considered before the event was held.

Kathy provided some detail of the event and its impact, noting that the retail store owners she has talked with felt the event was a huge success, and they have been asking to hold more events like it. Eric noted that there was significant pedestrian and shopping activity both in Cottonwood Plaza and on Second Avenue.

The committee discussed various aspects of the event – which aspects worked well, which didn't, and the work that is being done to evaluate the event and replicate it in a way that builds on the momentum created by the first event. The committee spent some time discussing ideas for improving the event.

Kathy walked through the specific line item costs of the event, and spent some time discussing the marketing efforts that were conducted. These efforts were Niwot-focused, through social media and the Left Hand Valley Courier, and also leveraged the email and other customer lists of Niwot retailers. Laura noted that marketing costs increase significantly when these efforts are expanded outside of Niwot.

ACTION: Jim moved, seconded by Eric, to approve the funding request for \$2,037.00. Upon further discussion, a friendly amendment was offered and accepted, to approve the funding request for the submitted amount of \$2,380.00.

The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.

2. Niwot Business Association: Enchanted Evening/Holiday Parade - \$6,750.00

Linda Klueber and Kristin Alger presented the funding request for the NBA. Linda explained that increased costs for the carriage rides and Banjo Billy account for the budget increase of \$500 in comparison to the 2019 budget; with some cost cutting in other aspects of the event budget, this results in a funding request that is just \$250 more than the 2019 approval. Linda explained in more detail the rationale for the request of \$6,750.00.

The committee discussed in some detail with the sponsors the steps that will be taken to address and adhere to the COVID public health requirements that may be in place come the holiday season. The sponsors indicated that they have brought this request forward this month because they need some certainty that funding will be available to pay for the event as they begin to make commitments to musicians and others who will play a part in it. At the same time, the sponsors recognize that public health requirements may force the event to be cancelled, as was the case with the Fourth of July Parade. The sponsors plan to revisit the question of cancellation in October.

Laura asked the sponsors if they feel a need to advertise the events in the Daily Camera and Times-Call, as this may have the effect of bringing more people to the event than can be safely managed per public health requirements. The sponsors agreed that the broad advertising of the event that is contemplated in the funding request proposal may not make sense, and indicated that they will revisit that aspect of their plan in October. The committee discussed the importance of this event as a kick-off to the holiday shopping season. Bruce mentioned that broad advertising of the event, even if it doesn't bring many people to the event itself, informs Daily Camera and Times-Call readers that Niwot is a place to go for holiday shopping.

ACTION: Scott moved, seconded by Mary, to approve the funding request for \$6,750.00. Laura noted, per the committee's discussion, that the approval will be subject to any Boulder County Public Health COVID requirements that may be in place at the time of the events, with the sponsors to return to the October advisory committee meeting to discuss their plans for meeting the requirements.

The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.

3. Niwot Business Association: Murray Street Parking Lot - \$101,512.00

Chuck Klueber and Biff Warren presented the funding request for the NBA. Chuck provided an overview of the funding request, to construct a 14-space parking lot on the Murray Street property that was purchased with LID funds several years ago. The property is owned by Boulder County. The parking lot will be constructed in phases, with the first phase to include 14 parking spaces and two electric vehicle charging stations. The building of future phases, up to a maximum of 50 parking spaces, will be determined by how much the parking lot is used and if funding is available for construction. The goal is to begin construction of Phase 1 in November.

A bid process, to be administered by Boulder County, will be utilized to identify a vendor to construct the parking lot.

Maintenance will also be a component of the project, including ongoing maintenance of the electric vehicle charging stations, lot grading, snow removal, landscaping, and other items.

The NBA has applied for two grants to support the project: Xcel Energy has approved a nearly \$45,000 grant to construct the infrastructure necessary to bring electric power to the parking lot to supply electricity to the chargers. The Colorado Energy Office is currently reviewing a Charge Ahead Colorado grant proposal to provide about \$18,000 towards the purchase of two charging stations, which in total may cost about \$26,000. Chuck is hoping to hear any day about the status of the Charge Ahead Colorado grant proposal. Chuck provided the committee with a fair amount of detail regarding the electricity infrastructure and charging stations.

Chuck walked the committee through the various design aspects of the parking lot, including fencing, sidewalks and paths, bike racks, handicapped parking, dark sky-compliant lighting, landscaping, the walking path, vehicle screening, and other details.

Bruce noted that the hedges that will be included in the landscaping should not be watered daily.

Bruce asked why the NBA is starting with the 14-space lot rather than building out the 50-space lot. Biff replied that building the lot in phases, as parking need is demonstrated, reflects the

commitment made to the Murray Street neighbors, and the cost of the 50-space lot – at approximately \$200,000 – made phasing the only realistic way to secure funding from the LID.

Chuck walked through the cost estimate that was prepared for the funding request, explaining in detail the various components of the construction project and their costs. Biff explained that the cost estimate of \$101,512 was prepared with the best cost information that the NBA could find at this time, but the LID should expect that proposals that will be received in response to the bid request will likely differ from this cost estimate.

Mark noted that it will be necessary for the LID to open up a conversation with the county's Office of Financial Management to address the issue of the LID advancing money to the NBA to pay for the construction project. Laura explained that, should the request be approved, the LID will be over budget in 2020, which will require a budget supplemental to be approved by the county commissioners in the fall.

ACTION: Jim moved, seconded by Eric, to approve the funding request for \$101,512.00, conditioned upon approval of the land use application pending in front of the Boulder County Commissioners, scheduled to be heard on August 6.

The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.

4. Niwot Cultural Arts Association: First Fridays Music - \$2,500.00

Biff Warren presented the funding request for the NCAA. The NCAA has evaluated the current Boulder County Public Health guidance in respect to events, and feels confident that it can hold a socially distanced event that meets the BCPH guidelines. The event will be scheduled for the first Friday in September. As it has in past years, the event will host musicians in Old Town and Cottonwood Plaza. The goal is to have music serve to create a festive atmosphere in town, not to gather crowds the way that Rock and Rails does. The NCAA sees the event as a way to support the arts, the business community, and the community-at-large, in partnership with the efforts being organized by the Niwot Business Association and others.

The \$2,500 will be used for at most two First Fridays Music events, and to also provide music for events that may be sponsored by other organizations, for example a second Sidewalk Sale. Eric explained that experience has shown that outdoor-oriented events that allow people to walk around and mingle while socially distancing are the most successful, and music is a key draw to make those events successful. This funding request will provide the flexibility to both the NBA and NCAA to ensure that music is incorporated into future outdoor events, whatever they may be.

ACTION: Bruce moved, seconded by Mary, to approve the funding request for \$2,500.00.

The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.

New Business:

Eric informed the committee that the NBA has been focused on planning and organizing events to bring people to Old Town and Cottonwood Plaza. Examples include additional sidewalk sales, a classic car show on Friday nights, music on weekend mornings, etc. A goal is to modify the traditional events that Niwotians have grown accustomed to for the current COVID circumstances that we are all dealing with.

Jim noted that Eddie Running Wolf, the artist who created the Niwot Road tree carvings, has been hospitalized with serious health issues. A GoFundMe page has been set up online to help Eddie's family address the costs of his hospitalization.

Old Business:

Biff noted for the committee that the NCAA is formally withdrawing the funding request it had submitted earlier in the year for Rock and Rails, as it will not be possible to hold the concert series this year.

Public Comment:

No members of the public were present for public comment.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:05 p.m.