

Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 6, 2021

Virtual Meeting

Present: Scott Firlie, Eric Bergeson, Laura Skaggs, Cornelia Sawle, Mary Coonce, Biff Warren, Heidi Storz, Lisa Rivard, Bruce Rabeler

Guests: Jocelyn Rowley, Chuck Klueber

Staff: Mark Ruzzin

Call to Order:

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

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The advisory committee considered the June 1, 2021 meeting minutes:

ACTION: On a motion from Eric, seconded by Biff, the committee voted unanimously to approve the June 1, 2021 meeting minutes, as presented; Scott abstained, as he was not in attendance at the June meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

Bruce provided the monthly Treasurer's Report, walking the committee through the report he prepared for the meeting. Bruce noted that through April 2021, the LID had collected about \$76,000 in sales tax revenues, a 24% increase over 2020 year-to-date. The Food Service and Accommodations sector continues to improve, seeing an increase of nearly 50% over April 2020 revenues, though still lagging 2019 and 2018 collections. Bruce also pointed out that the retail sector performed at plus 10% over April 2020, and the Manufacturing and Wholesale sector continues to see growth such that this sector now constitutes about 20% of total LID collections. Bruce questioned whether the increase in this sector is coming from remote sellers, meaning tax revenues that until recently were not being collected by the LID. Remote sales are now accounting for 16% of total LID collections.

Bruce noted that, year-to-date, the committee has approved over \$138,000 in funding requests, or 93% of the annual budget of \$149,000, leaving about \$11,000 remaining in the 2021 budget. If the committee approves the funding requests included on the July meeting agenda, about \$175,000 will have been committed in 2021, putting the LID about \$26,000 over budget for the year. The LID is still expecting approximately \$20,000 in additional funding requests to be submitted by the end of the year.

Heidi initiated a short committee discussion about 2021 revenue expectations, how the pandemic has impacted the setting of the LID's annual budget, and if the LID expects to collect enough revenue to meet the funding requests that exceed the annual budget. Bruce explained that the LID, per past policy direction, sets its annual budget at 80% of the last full year of revenue collections; with \$213,000 being collected in 2020, the advisory committee could consider setting its 2022 budget at about \$170,000.

The committee agreed to discuss the 2022 budget at its August meeting.

Funding Requests:

The advisory committee considered the following funding requests:

1. Niwot Cultural Arts Association: Why Not Niwot? - \$1,500.00

Biff Warren presented the funding request for the NCAA. The NCAA has sponsored the Why Not Niwot? juried art show for the past several years. Artists submit Niwot-themed art pieces which are displayed in various

retail outlets throughout town; 32 artists have submitted artwork for the show. The artwork is judged by a three-member jury, which awards prizes for first, second, and third place. Visitors can view the artwork and vote for the People's Choice award; by doing so they are entered into a raffle to win a print of the first place artwork. The award ceremony will take place at the First Friday Art Walk on September 3. Biff noted that the funds requested will be used to cover advertising costs, marketing expenses, and stipends for the winning artists.

ACTION: Eric moved, seconded by Mary, to approve the funding request for \$1,500.00. **The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.**

2. Niwot Cultural Arts Association: First Fridays Art Walk - \$1,600.00

Biff Warren presented the funding request for the NCAA. First Fridays Art Walk is making a return this fall, after being cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. The event resumed on July 2, and people were excited to be out and enjoying music and visiting the Niwot shops and restaurants. The funding request is for \$1,600, or \$400 for four events through October, and covers the cost of musicians, who set up on both Second Avenue and in Cottonwood Square. Bruce asked about positioning of musicians and the factors that go into determining where the musicians set up to play. Biff noted that the music locations are not set in stone, but that some locations have amenities such as access to electricity that make it easy for the musicians to perform.

ACTION: Eric moved, seconded by Cornelia, to approve the funding request for \$1,600.00. **The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.**

3. Niwot Business Association: Parking Lot Plant Watering - \$3,120.00

Chuck Klueber presented the funding request for the NBA. Chuck noted for the committee that landscaping was required to be included in the Murray Street Parking Lot as a condition of approval for the project. With no on-site water supply and a location that gets no shade, it will be critical to ensure that the 74 plants and grasses included in the landscaping are properly watered and maintained in order to preserve the financial and aesthetic investment in the parking lot. The team that waters the flowers on Second Avenue and in Cottonwood Square will manage the watering schedule, which will continue through the middle of October.

The committee discussed the proposed watering schedule and the likelihood that less watering will be needed; if this ends up being the case, the final expense may be less than proposed.

ACTION: Mary moved, seconded by Cornelia, to approve the funding request for \$3,120.00. **The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.**

4. Niwot Business Association: Additional Parking Lot Expenses - \$30,007.00

Chuck Klueber presented the funding request for the NBA. Chuck explained to the committee that as the parking lot construction progressed, it became apparent that the initial funding request approved by the committee in August 2020 was not going to be sufficient to meet the actual construction costs. Chuck walked the committee through the various changes that have been made to the initial design, the changes that were requested by Whitestone Construction, the company building the lot, and other components of the project that have increased in cost over the past year. In short, these design changes in combination with the increased cost of construction materials has resulted in an approximately 30% increase in the overall cost of the project.

Chuck reviewed a spreadsheet that he provided to the committee, which outlined in detail the increased costs of the project. He noted for the committee that the funding request includes a \$6,500 contingency, should the increases be more than he is expecting.

Chuck also noted for the committee that the increase in cost came about for a number of reasons, including: 1) increased costs for construction materials; 2) unexpected engineering and other reviews that were required by the Boulder County Community Planning and Permitting Department, including a drainage plan; and 3) changes to the actual design of the parking lot itself (e.g., a new requirement for a turn-around to be included in the lot).

Heidi and Mary noted that it should be expected that a construction project of this nature would see cost overruns, especially in light of the pressures being placed on the economy by COVID.

Biff provided additional detail on the permitting review process that the project team, led by Chuck and Chad Fletemeyer, has worked through and the challenges and time delays caused by the process. These delays also impacted the overall cost of the project.

The committee discussed future expansion of the lot, which will be determined by how much use the parking lot receives.

Mark clarified the distinction between the LID's reserve, as it is defined and considered by committee members, and the LID's fund balance, as it is defined and utilized by county finance staff.

ACTION: Eric moved, seconded by Heidi, to approve the funding request for \$30,007.00. **The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion. Mary abstained from the vote as Porchfront Homes will be installing the solar lighting that will be included in the project.**

New Business:

Scott asked committee members their preferences in respect to returning to in-person meetings, attending meetings virtually, or creating a hybrid meeting option. Committee members expressed their strong interest for meeting in person. In respect to location, Mark has checked in with Mountain View Fire District about using their community room for meetings, but the district has not yet made a decision on when the room will become available. Cornelia offered the use of the Niwot Inn's conference room should the community room not become available in the near future.

Mark reminded the committee that Biff's term will be ending with the August meeting, and that the county's recruitment process for the seat will begin later in July. He asked committee members to consider recruiting applicants for the seat, which must be filled by an individual who either owns or works for a business located within the district.

Old Business:

Scott led the committee through a short discussion on the upcoming process to update the NLIDAC's Strategic Plan. Mark noted that he has talked with Leslie Irwin about facilitating the update process, which would kick-off in September, utilize an in-person half or full day planning retreat in October, and conclude the work of the retreat at the November or December NLIDAC meeting. Committee members expressed general agreement with the proposed schedule, which Mark will continue to refine in collaboration with Leslie. Committee members discussed options for the retreat agenda and homework to be completed both during and outside of meetings.

Public Comment:

No members of the public spoke during public comment.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.