

**BIA Committee of Rate Payers Meeting
November 14, 2019 – 1:00 PM
Auburn City Hall Council Chambers
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm by Chairman DiQuattro.

Roll Call:

Committee Members present: Chairman Giovanni DiQuattro; Members Kelly Gordon, Bob Klontz, Ronnie Roberts, John Rottle, Megan White

Committee Members absent: Vice Chair Bill Cowart; Members Darren Jones and Ruth Neil-Stover

City staff present: Josh Arndt, Economic Development Senior Officer; Tanya Carter, Economic Development Officer; Holly Ferry, Committee Secretary

ADA Board Members present: Brittiany Karlson, President; Kristina Driessen, Treasurer; Cheryl Rakes

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Gordon moved and Member Rottle second to approve the October 10, 2019 meeting minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. 4-0

III. FINANCIAL REPORT

Economic Development Senior Officer, Josh Arndt, reviewed the data on the Financial Report with the ending fund balance through September 2019. Business licenses will start going out, first by email, periodically, between now and the 9th, depending on the business. Who the BIA fees are charged to is being looked at. The calculations will remain the same.

Member Klontz joined the meeting at this point.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Marketing and Branding

Economic Development Officer Tanya Carter gave a report on the Buy Local decal program, explaining that businesses will be given decals that they can place in the window of their business. She encouraged Committee members to get the word out.

B. BIA Newsletter

A copy of the October newsletter and analytics was provided. A request for proposal was put out to give the BIA business owners opportunity to submit ideas.

C. Update on Priority Projects Presented to City Council

1. Additional Security Lighting

Concern was raised again about the many lights that are out in the Safeway parking lot. Officer Arndt explained that any light in the right-of-way is easily fixed because there are already funds assessed for fixing those lights.

Regarding the lights in the Safeway parking lot, Officer Arndt explained that they were looking for funds to maintain the lights in the last budget cycle.

City Council cut a \$50,000 proposed budget. Instead, they provided a capital improvement source of funds. The issue is that capital improvements have to be used for capital type projects, not routine maintenance. There has been a request asking if lightbulbs could be replaced as a capital improvement. The idea was raised about doing a retrofit to LED lighting. Officer Arndt said that it is an option that the City has already identified and could be a possibility, but in the meantime, one of the Committee's seven identified things that they can spend funds on is routine maintenance, if that is something they would like to consider. The Committee was informed of the City's See Click Fix app where they can report lights that are out.

2. Christmas Decorations

The question was raised about whether there could be brighter lights on the Christmas tree in front of City Hall. Officer Arndt said he would talk to the department to see if that were possible.

3. Banners

This topic was discussed in the Sub-Committee Update below.

D. Update on 2019 Façade Grant Program

Officer Arndt reported that the building owner on the NE corner of Main and Auburn Way is applying for a façade grant to redo the entire corner, and there were several other businesses who are also interested.

E. Heritage Building Update

There was nothing new to report on this topic.

F. Unpaid BIA Fees

There was no update on this topic.

G. Bike Racks

Officer Arndt reminded the Committee that they had approved a motion to allocate \$5,000 toward the purchase and installation of bike racks. The question was whether or not there is a design standard, and there is not. Now it needs to be decided on where to put the racks and then go through the proper channels with Public Works and the right-of-way use so that everything gets approved.

Officer Arndt reported that there is no identified budget to fix the racks that are broken. It was asked whether the City would install racks that a business owner would purchase. Officer Arndt explained that the City is not against putting the racks in, but it is just a matter of getting it on their schedule. The question was raised about whether permits would be waved. Officer Arndt replied that if the BIA were to purchase the bike racks, the permit would be waved, but if a business owner were to buy a rack, the owner would have to go through the permit process and would most likely have the responsibility of installing it.

Member Roberts volunteered to be the sole member on a Bike Rack Sub-Committee to research the designs and locations for the racks to bring back to the Committee.

H. LED Light Project

This topic was discussed earlier in the meeting under Additional Security Lighting.

I. Businesses Doing Small Things Outside Their Business

Officer Arndt informed the Committee that A Little Knitty owner, Jen Reeves, is open to putting together a work party to knit something similar to what she did on the light pole outside her business for other poles in the downtown area if the BIA could purchase the materials for it. She was asked if she would like to come to the BIA Committee meeting in January and give a proposal on how many people would participate and how much the materials would cost, and she agreed to it.

There was a concern raised that not all the areas of the BIA would be benefit from it. It was suggested that the focus of this project would be on the areas of the BIA off Main Street that are not currently being represented with banners, flower baskets or LED lighting around the poles.

The ADA members present brought up the idea of the ADA working with A Little Knitty to have a community event such as a Sip and Knit, which could be done quarterly. Officer Arndt will check to see if the City will give the go-ahead to move forward.

There was also discussion about purchasing flowers for businesses on the side streets, and there was some concern about liability and cost. It was decided that the project should be started on the outskirts of the BIA and work in toward Main Street. There was another comment that whatever is done, it should exhibit consistency and cohesion all throughout the BIA.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Sandwich Boards in BIA

Office Arndt reported that he talked with the Community Development director, and he is willing to push along the idea of developing design standards for sandwich boards. He also thought that it was something that the BIA and ADA should push and champion. He is willing to assign this to a planner. There was some discussion that when developing the standards, they should not be too strict. Chairman DiQuattro recommended that after determining the standards, it should be put in the BIA Newsletter to get feedback.

The Committee agreed that they would like to work with a Planner. A sandwich board sub-committee was created including BIA member Ronnie Roberts and ADA members Cheryl Rakes and Kristina Driessen.

B. Role of the BIA

Chairman DiQuattro recommended that the Committee would look at the BIA's ordinance where it specifies the purpose of the BIA and Special Assessment Expenditures. The question was raised about who set the guidelines. Officer Arndt explained that Business Improvement Areas are mandated by the State. Cities that wish to adopt them can narrow the focus, but they cannot broaden them any wider than what is mandated by the State RCW. There is an advisory board that is appointed. In Auburn, it is the BIA Committee of Rate Payers, who can advise the City Council on what they would like to do, but the City Council has the authority to do something else with the funds. It has been the policy of the City to value the advice of the Committee and allow them to use the funds that were given to them to appropriate in the way they choose. If the Committee were to decide that they would like to narrow the focus, they could recommend to City staff that the ordinance be amended to narrow the focus. Officer Arndt suggested that if Committee members would like to review the City's ordinance regarding the BIA, it is City Code 2.98. It was decided to table the discussion until another time.

At this point in the meeting, Officer Arndt requested that the Committee email him with their top concerns that fall under Public Works, and he can present them to Director Gaub so that she can come prepared. The Committee then discussed and agreed that they would like to meet with Mayor Backus.

Chairman DiQuattro reminded the Committee that new chairs will be elected in the January meeting. There will be no meeting in December.

C. Bell Bollard

There was no discussion on this topic.

VI. BIA SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

A. Banner Sub-Committee

Officer Arndt reported that the City is would like to work with the Committee in placing new banners in the downtown area but are somewhat limited in their capacity as to what they can do because there are only eight City employees on the street crew that cover 40 square miles. Director of Public Works, Ingrid Gaub, requested that a proposal be put together of different spots that might be looked at. A map of poles that were identified by the sub-committee was provided to the Committee for review. The poles identified are located off Main Street, on well-traveled corridors, and on poles that people will see on their way into downtown. Sub-committee member Rottle added that the intent was to add banners in phases, for example a five year program that would add 12-15 banners a year. He remarked that the sub-committee noticed a lot of existing broken or damaged brackets, and some of the banners are dirty. He stated that he thought it was important to also identify which poles would be included in the following phases. Officer Arndt will submit the proposal to Director Gaub prior to when she attends the meeting.

Member Rottle left the meeting at this point.

VII. AUBURN DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION UPDATE

ADA Treasurer, Kristina Driessen, reported that when the ADA secretary talked with the businesses down Main Street about whether they wanted to bring Trick-or-Treating back to downtown this year, many of the business owners were angry about the homeless in downtown, that things are not being done, there are lights out, and that the bike cops are gone. They also had frustration that the garbage cans are missing because they have been told that the City can't afford to pick up garbage and garbage is being piled on the sidewalks. They said they didn't want to buy trick-or-treat candy because it was all they could do to keep their doors open. They don't want to participate in activities because they have bigger concerns. Committee members agreed that there has been a spike in vandalism and more of a homeless presence since the bike cops left.

Member Klontz left the meeting at this point.

Chairman DiQuattro suggested that maybe the Committee should give another update to the City Council and make them aware of the concerns that they have.

Officer Arndt pointed out that one of the seven areas where the Committee can spend their money is on security.

ADA President, Brittiany Karlson, reported that they are planning smaller holiday events this year, including giving wreaths, Santa photos, and the Santa pub crawl.

There is a transition of the ADA Board, and Cheryl Rakes will take over the position of president starting January 2020. Kristina Driessen will stay on as Treasurer until April. The secretary will stay on for another year. There is someone potentially looking at the position of vice president. Two new board members joined at the last meeting, which puts the total at eight. The decision was made to keep the event planner.

VIII. CHAMBER BOARD UPDATE

Chairman DiQuattro gave the update for Janice Nelson, the BIA representative to the Chamber Board, who was not able to make the meeting. The Chamber is willing to work with the ADA on events. Treasurer Driessen said that the ADA's event coordinator works per event, so she could do other events, and she already knows how to work with the City, and that could be helpful to the Chamber. President Karlson responded that they would be happy to talk to the Chamber about it.

IX. TOURISM BOARD UPDATE

There was no update.

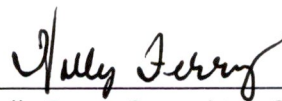
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.

APPROVED this 9th day of January, 2020.



Giovanni DiQuattro, Chair



Holly Ferry, Committee Secretary