



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
March 16, 2021 8:00 AM
BUP Conference Room

AGENDA

- 8:00** **Welcome** (*Greg Rooney*)
- 8:00** **Approval of Minutes**
- 8:05 - 8:15** **Marketing/Arts & Entertainment** (*Stephanie Coppola, Jane Fairweather*)
- 8:15 – 8:20** **Maintenance** (*Jeff Oyer*)
- 8:20 – 8:30** **Mobility** (*Kristen Blackmon*)
- 8:30 – 8:40** **Financial Report**
- Financial Statements – February 28, 2021 (*Brian Wynne, Jeff Oyer*)
- 8:40 – 8:50** **Executive Director Report** (*Jeff Burton*)
- 8:50 – 9:05** **Chairman’s Report** (*Greg Rooney*)
- Committee Updates
 - Planning Area Board Nomination
- 9:05– 9:15** **Other Business**
- 9:15** **Adjourn**

BETHESDA URBAN PARTNERSHIP, INC.
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
January 19, 2021

Board Members Present: Greg Rooney, Jane Fairweather, Brian Wynne, Marian Block, Debbie Michaels, Robert Donohoe, Katya Marin, Heather Dlhopsky and Ken Hartman

Staff Present: Jeff Burton, Stephanie Coppula, Kristen Blackmon and Jeff Oyer

Guests Present: Allie Williams – Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce
Derrick Harrigan – Bethesda Regional Services Center

Call to Order: Meeting called to order via Zoom at 8:00 a.m. by Greg Rooney

Minutes:

Greg Rooney asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous Board meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the November 17, 2020 Board of Director’s meeting. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Welcome:

Jeff Burton noted that Allie Williams who is the new President and CEO of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce was joining his first BUP Board of Directors meeting. J. Burton noted that A. Williams has hit the ground running and been a great asset to the community already. A. Williams then gave a description of his background, how he made it to the Chamber and noted that he was excited for the opportunity at the Chamber and looked forward to working with BUP and the community.

Marketing Report:

Stephanie Coppula reported that BUP is in the middle of planning some virtual programming and events. Facebook Live concerts started back up a couple of weeks ago on Thursday evenings and the Local Writers Showcase will be a virtual event coming up in March. The Arts & Entertainment District will also be holding the Bethesda Film Fest virtually in April. Filmmakers will be selected sometime in February.

The new downtown gift card “Bethesda Bucks” made around \$8,500 during the holidays. We are pleased with the amount since the program was only active for a few weeks before the holidays. The gift cards are being redeemed and used in local shops and restaurants in Bethesda.

BUP is also getting ready to start a “Shop & Dine Local” campaign. When patrons spend a certain amount of money at a local shop or restaurant, they will be able to email us their receipt and then be eligible for a drawing to receive downtown Bethesda gift cards.

Jane Fairweather reported that the next Arts & Entertainment mural project will be on parking garage #11 across the street from BUP on the corner of Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont Avenue. A&E is working with the County to determine exactly what part of the garage can be painted and to put a memorandum of understanding in place as was done with garage #35. Once those arrangements are in place, a call for artists will go out. J. Fairweather also noted that A&E was also asked by the developer of the property at the corner of Woodmont and Edgemoor to assist in picking an artist for a mural project they would like to do if development on that piece of property moves forward. This shows that A&E continues to get more cooperation from the development community. Marian Block made the assumption that the artwork on Garage #11 will only be on the Old Georgetown side of the garage which is correct. She asked if there was any interest to include the white space in the alley by the Lionsgate. S. Coppola noted that the budget to include that would be too high. J. Fairweather noted that A&E had considered approaching Lionsgate when it was first built to see if they would be interested in contributing funding to include the alley but that has been tabled for now. J. Fairweather noted that M. Block could take it to their board if she was interested in doing so and she said she would mention it. S. Coppola noted that all sponsorship contributions would be helpful at any level.

Maintenance Report:

Jeff Oyer reported that all fall sidewalk repairs have been completed and that brick repairs continue. There has only been one very small snow event so far this winter and everything was taken care of with no issues. Streetery operations continue. We have winterized the Streetery with tents, heater and lighting.

In mid-December BUP finalized a contract with Silver Spring to resume trash collection in that urban district seven days a week. We had provided this service five days a week a few years ago. We have had to make a few adjustments with staffing but we have the resources and things seem to be going well so far. We did not have to add any staff. There will be some additional direct costs in overtime, dumping fees, fuel and supplies. The contract will generate almost \$20,000 per month in revenue which will easily offset any additional costs. G. Rooney asked if that new service has any impact on our fleet, specifically the trash truck. J. Oyer noted that the trash truck is fairly new and although there may be a need for more maintenance, we are not expecting any significant impact but we will of course be monitoring it.

J. Oyer reported that BUP had its first Covid-19 case from the maintenance team over the holidays. We have had two additional cases since then. BUP made sure that everything has been disinfected and we have followed all County protocols for quarantining and getting individuals back to work appropriately. We also had the rest of the entire maintenance team tested and all results came back negative. M. Block asked if BUP employees would receive priority in regards to receiving the vaccine. J. Oyer noted that as a government instrumentality and due to the fact that BUP staff is considered essential workers, it is his understanding that BUP will be part of the 1B vaccination phase.

J. Oyer also noted that BUP assisted in delivering bags of food, clothing and toys to various low or fixed-income housing developments leading up to the holidays. This distribution was in lieu of the Goodwill Dinner which could not be held this year. J. Oyer noted that Shelly Belk from the Hyatt did unbelievable work in leading this effort and put a huge amount of time into making this distribution a huge success. Jeff Burton commented that the Goodwill Dinner has been a great success and it was disappointing it could not be held. Because of Covid-19, we were able to turn a negative of not being able to hold the event into a huge positive by impacting a much larger group of people this year than we have in the past.

BTS Report:

Kristen Blackmon reported that BTS had an advisory committee meeting last week. There was an update about the bike lane construction on Woodmont and Bethesda Avenue. They are working on storm drains, signal conduit and creating a larger bump out on the corner. There will be a pedestrian only signal phase. The completion date may come in May sometime.

K. Blackmon noted that she would be speaking about bicycling in Bethesda as part of Bethesda Greens sustainability series.

K. Blackmon mentioned that the County has a climate action plan draft. There are transportation items in it. All of the TMD's will be planning a meeting to discuss this draft.

K. Blackmon noted that she has been following 495/270 managed lane project. Most of the discussion concerned the widening of Cabin John Bridge and transit as part of that. There is draft report that looks at adding bi-directional transit between Northern Virginia and Bethesda.

Financial Report:

Brian Wynne presented the financial statements for the six months ended December 31 noting that things appear to be right on track. Revenue is \$15,000 over budget as of December 31. This is a result of trash collection. BUP had been collecting trash in Wheaton on weekends but started picking up trash in Silver Spring seven days a week in mid-December. This will result in \$20,000 of unbudgeted revenue every month and will be offset somewhat by additional direct costs. Promotions expenses are over budget due almost entirely to Streetery operations. There has been a large investment to winterize the Streetery but all of those expenses will be reimbursed by an appropriation from the County. Co-sponsored events and constituent communications line items are well under budget. The first is due to the cancellation of Winter Wonderland and the latter due to not publishing the events calendar. There are also savings in maintenance and administration. Total expenses for the year are \$27,000 under budget.

Debbie Michaels asked if any of the projected savings can be used to make a contribution from BUP to help with one of the mural painting projects. J. Oyer noted that is definitely a possibility. It may be a little too early to make a decision or allocate any money right now but we should have a much better picture of what might be available in another month or two. D. Michaels also suggested using any savings to help individuals around Bethesda that are hurting financially because of Covid-19.

Executive Director Report:

Jeff Burton reported that he participated in a call regarding security for the upcoming inauguration. They are not expecting any issues in Bethesda as most authorities believe Bethesda is too far out of DC. Preparations are still being made in case something does arise. BUP will be of assistance should there be a need.

BUP has an RFP out for bids for the design of a permanent closure of Norfolk Avenue for the Streetery. BUP would like to keep the two blocks on Norfolk closed permanently. Discussions continue with the County on this project. They see the success of the Streetery and seem very inclined to the possibility of making this permanent. They encouraged BUP to move forward with the RFP so they could get a better picture of what this permanent closure would look like.

BUP is working on our first quarter work plan. Due to Covid-19, we feel that the best course of action is to develop a work plan on a quarter-by-quarter basis right now instead of

annually since things are so fluid. J. Burton also noted that he is working on BUP's professional development plan for the year.

Chairman's Report:

Jeff Oyer reported that the revised By-Laws that were sent to the County Council did not make it onto the PHED committee schedule in January. It is now on their February calendar.

Debbie Michaels reported that the branding committee had a meeting earlier this week to review the goals and objectives of moving forward. S. Coppula has been the lead contact with Friendly Design and she will be going back to them with a few changes to the plan. S. Coppula noted that Friendly Design has reached out to a variety of constituents during the last month both with in person interviews and a survey to do a month of research. This was used to form the draft document that was reviewed by the committee. They definitely understand that after 25 years that BUP is looking for a fresh look. We have explained that we don't want to forget our past successes but want to be strategically positioned for the future. S. Coppula expects to have some new logos to be ready to look at soon and have more to look at for the next board meeting.

J. Oyer reported that the vacant board position had been advertised for a total of about eight weeks in 2020. The advertisement had been closed and the Western Montgomery Citizen's Advisory Board established an interview committee and interviewed six or seven different candidates. J. Oyer noted that he just received word late last week that the position is being readvertised by the County for another three weeks or so. Ken Hartman reported that he had met with the executive committee of the Citizen's Advisory Board and they determined to re-open the solicitation for the position to see if there were more diverse candidates who might be interested in filling this seat to add to the pool. All of the current candidates are still under consideration. There was a discussion of this decision and the possible ramifications. There was also a discussion of the importance of making sure the proper procedures are in place and being followed for advertising, interviewing and selecting all future BUP board candidates.

Other Business:

G. Rooney noted that there was information on two individuals in the packet who have been nominated by the Chamber of Commerce to serve on the BTS advisory board that need approval by the BUP board. There was a motion and a second to approve the two nominations. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: February 16, 2021