

Business Improvement District  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Submitted by Blake Opal-Wahoske

Business Improvement District Board of Directors met on Monday, August 28th, at 8 a.m. in the Birch room of Wausau City Hall.

Directors present: Mark Craig, Mary Gallagher, Robb Shepherd, Rebecca Bearjar, Gizo Ujarmeli, MaryAnne Groat and Blake Opal-Wahoske.

Directors absent: Mark McKinley

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:01 am by Mark Craig (Ch)
2. Wausau River District update on approved 2023 workplans
  - I. Presented by Blake Opal-Wahoske, Executive Director of the Wausau River District
  - II. Organizational/Executive Committee
    - a. Update on organizational funding
      1. The organization is projected to break even by year-end
    - b. Update on community outreach
      1. Multiple meetings have been hosted since the last bid meeting, including a retailers roundtable, a neighborhood meeting with the police department, along with meeting with its four standing committees.
    - c. Update on the board of directors
      1. Looking to fill the junior youth board member spot. Counselors from area high schools will be asked to nominate a junior for our board program. Selection is made after a full interview two year commitment.
    - d. Update on organizational items
      1. Wausau was selected along with 8 other main street programs in the nation to pilot an inventory tracking tool that will not only track inventory, but occupancy, historical facts, and maintenance status. New tool will be rolled out to all main street programs in late 2024.
  - III. Placemaking Committee
    - a. Update on Festival of Arts theme and notice of street closure for festival set up.
    - b. Update on the History Trail map, routes have been identified. When completed it will be available on the WRD website and a limited amount of paper copies will be distributed to the Jefferson Street Inn, Stewart Inn and Onora Suites.
    - c. Update on Memorial Street Bridge, collecting letters of support before the fundraising effort in late 2023 for completion in early summer 2024.
    - d. Update on umbrella display, the display will be coming down this week.
  - IV. Business Development Committee
    - a. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter News You Need Newsletter will be sent out early next week. Noting a small delay due to staff shortage.

- b. Update on the Sign Grant program: Forward Beverage is the latest recipient.
  - c. Update on the future of retail events: At the retailer's roundtable, it was discussed that summer retail event funds be diverted to the night market to maximize the potential benefits of that event and cross-over sales with brick-and-mortar businesses.
  - d. Update on business-related events:
    - 1. Exhibitour had an estimated attendance of 180, a 30% increase from the previous year. The event is under evaluation due to the attendance level and the cost of producing the event.
    - 2. Update on Holiday Programming
      - a. Small Business Saturday on Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>
      - b. Holiday Window Display Contest Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>-Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>
      - c. Visit with Santa and Giftwrapping Station, Saturdays Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>-Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>
      - d. Holiday Children's Choirs
      - e. Holiday Ale Trail Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>
    - 3. General District marketing
      - a. Shop Local Holiday Campaign
- V. Residential Development Committee
- a. Update on the status of projects, including the inventory of residential listings in a walkable distance located on the WRD website and the upcoming Live Downtown campaign, that will focus on the storytelling of people living downtown.
  - b. Discussion among BID members about upcoming openings for residential units, including 4 townhome units above Lemongrass.
3. Discussion and approval of the 2024 BID Operating Plan
- I. Presented by Blake Opal-Wahoske, Executive Director of the Wausau River District
  - II. BID members were provided with the formal operating plan, along with work plans for each committee and a full budget for the main street organization, Wausau River District.
    - a. Changes to work plans include the elimination of programs such as dining on the street, employee appreciation week, and sidewalk sales due to performance and the addition of new projects and programs such as the restoration of the memorial bridge and the creation of a new summer retail event.
  - III. The 2024 BID Operating Plan was motioned with the amended changes to the year dates on the budget and adjusted dollar amounts on the appx. B of the operating plan
    - a. Motioned by Shepherd, seconded by Ujarmli and unanimously passed (7/0)
4. The meeting was adjourned by Craig (Ch) at 8:52 am, motioned by Shepherd, seconded by Ujarmli

Respectfully submitted,  
 Blake Opal-Wahoske  
 Executive Director