

## **Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, May 4, 2021**

Virtual Meeting

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

**Guests:** Jocelyn Rowley, Catherine McHale, Gene Hayworth, Keith Waters

**Staff:** Mark Ruzzin

#### **Call to Order:**

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

#### **Election of Committee Officers:**

Laura introduced the action item to elect new officers for the advisory committee.

Laura opened the floor for nominations for advisory committee chair. Eric nominated Scott to serve as chair, with Lisa seconding the nomination. Scott took a few moments to share his interests in serving as chair and taking on this leadership position for the committee.

**ACTION:** There being no additional nominations, the committee voted unanimously to elect Scott as the advisory committee chair.

Laura opened the floor for nominations for advisory committee vice chair. Laura took a few minutes to describe the role of vice chair as providing support to the chair and facilitating meetings when the chair is unable to attend. After some discussion, Cornelia nominated Eric to serve as vice chair, with Bruce seconding the nomination.

**ACTION:** There being no additional nominations, the committee voted unanimously to elect Eric as the advisory committee vice chair.

Laura opened the floor for nominations for advisory committee treasurer. She noted that Bruce had indicated his interest in remaining the committee's treasurer, which Bruce confirmed. Biff nominated Bruce to serve as treasurer, with Cornelia seconding the nomination.

**ACTION:** There being no additional nominations, the committee voted unanimously to elect Bruce as the advisory committee treasurer.

With the elections completed, Laura noted for the committee that she agreed to facilitate the rest of the May meeting. She also noted that Scott will not be able to attend the June meeting; Eric agreed to chair the June meeting in his absence.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

The advisory committee considered the April 6, 2021 meeting minutes:

**ACTION:** On a motion from Cornelia, seconded by Lisa, the committee voted unanimously to approve the April 6, 2021 meeting minutes, Scott recusing himself from the vote as he was not in attendance.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Bruce presented the monthly Treasurer's Report to the committee, walking through the various financial reports that he prepared for the meeting.

Bruce noted for the committee that through February the LID has collected just over \$36,000 in sales tax revenue, up about \$3,200 through February 2020. The food service and accommodations sector continues to be down in respect to 2020, and the retail sector continues to be up; 53% of LID revenues are coming from retail, and only 16% from food service and accommodations – in past years these percentages were much more in balance.

Year-to-date, the committee has approved just over \$94,500 in funding requests, or 63% of the annual budget of \$149,000, leaving about \$55,000 remaining in the 2021 budget. If the committee approves the funding requests included on the May meeting agenda, about \$118,000 or 79% of the LID's 2021 budget will have been committed.

Bruce reminded the committee that the LID's reserve sits at about \$196,500, after subtracting out funds committed to the tree carving repairs and parking lot construction, and the 2020 expenses that will be paid with 2021 revenues.

Laura spoke to the fantastic work that has been done over the past 14 months to bring in new events and activities to help the business sector remain strong and healthy through the COVID pandemic. The committee is now facing the challenge of these new events running up against and possibly competing against the more traditional events that the committee has funded over the years, which may place a strain on the LID's budget. Laura noted that Bruce has identified \$77,000 in additional activities that may be proposed for the rest of 2021, some of which, like the second half of the year marketing expenses, the committee will most certainly want to support. But if all of the funding requests on the May meeting agenda are approved, the committee will have just \$31,000 remaining in its 2021 budget.

The committee spent some time discussing the events that are expecting to submit funding requests in the months ahead. Eric spoke to the conversations that the NBA is having in respect to balancing its requests for new events with the community interest in holding the more traditional events. The NBA is also discussing seeking sponsorships and considering charging fees for vendors to participate in events, as a way to reduce reliance on LID funds to cover event costs.

Eric noted that he expects the traditional holiday events to take place, but that no decisions have been made about fall events, e.g. the Halloween-focused events.

Biff agreed that these are important conversations to have. He reminded committee members that the 2021 LID budget was set at 80% of 2018 revenue collections. Despite the pandemic, LID revenues in 2020 were strong, and early performance in 2021 suggests the same. In addition, the LID has a healthy reserve of nearly \$200,000. Bruce agreed with these points, and noted that while he had expected the

LID would have needed to utilize a significant portion of the reserve to cover 2020 expenses, including the parking lot construction, this ended up not being the case. With lower expenditures as a result of events being cancelled due to COVID and higher than anticipated revenues, the reserve declined by only \$24,000 in 2020, factoring in all the 2020 approved funding requests.

Committee members noted that it is possible if not likely that some of the events on previous year calendars may not take place this year. The committee took a few minutes to review the list.

**Funding Requests:**

The advisory committee considered the following funding requests:

**1. Niwot Cultural Arts Association: Rock and Rails - \$9,999.00**

Biff Warren presented the funding request for the NCAA. With COVID restrictions lifting, it is now possible to once again present Rock and Rails. This will be the fifteenth year of the concert series, which is co-hosted by the NCAA and NBA. The sponsors will encourage mask wearing, social distancing, and other protocols out of an abundance of caution, but will not be taking steps to require or enforce them. The number of events and the scale of the events will depend on several factors, for example interest in sponsorships from businesses and the willingness of the public to attend concert events coming out of COVID. The musical guests line-up will include a number of traditional acts as well as some new faces.

Biff noted that the budget shared with the committee is based on the 2019 concert series, as the series was cancelled in 2020. Biff explained that, like in past years, it is expected that any LID funds awarded to Rock and Rails will be spent on advertising and marketing activities, signage, and security expenses.

The first concert will take place on Thursday, June 3. This will be the first year that the event will utilize the new concessions building, which will be a big help to the 100 volunteers who assist with running the event. Revenues that are collected are split between the NCAA and NBA; the NCAA directs its revenue to paying for maintenance of Children's Park.

Biff reminded the committee that Rock and Rails typically contributes about \$1,000 back to the LID through sales taxes collected on beverage sales. Laura noted that the tip jar monies – averaging about \$1,200 per event – are directed to nonprofit groups that do work or are based in the Niwot area.

**ACTION:** Scott moved, seconded by Mary, to approve the funding request for \$9,999.00.  
**The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.**

**2. Niwot Cultural Arts Association: Niwot Jazz Festival - \$10,000.00**

Gene Hayworth and Keith Waters presented the funding request for the NCAA. Gene explain that the event will be a one-day jazz festival to be held on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend, to take place between 12 noon and 8:00pm. While there are many uncertainties with planning an event four months down the road, e.g. the state of pandemic recovery and not knowing how much interest people will have in attending live music events, the sponsors are hopeful the event can attract good attendance. Gene noted that the event is not associated with the Jazz on Second Avenue festival that was held in Niwot for a number of years.

The festival's main stage will be in the Cottonwood Square parking lot, with additional stages in Old Town. Attendees will be encouraged to walk between the two to hear the acts playing on the multiple stages.

The event will be free. The project sponsors are pursuing several options to help cover costs, including charging a fee to vendors to sell food, drinks, and other wares at the event; sponsorship opportunities for local and regional businesses; an online auction; sales of Niwot Jazz Festival-branded t-shirts and other gifts; and individual donations.

Regarding parking, the east half of the Cottonwood Square parking lot will be available, street parking on Second Avenue will be available as the street will not be closed, and the event will utilize the new Murray Street parking lot. Event organizers are considering utilizing a pedicab or shuttle service to assist event goers with getting from the Murray Street parking lot to Cottonwood Square.

Keith spent some time discussing the musical acts that will be playing throughout the day and the planning that is happening in respect to the artists and promotion of the event. A goal of this planning is to feature a variety of jazz musical styles throughout the day and design a musical program that will be of interest to a broad audience of jazz aficionados.

Gene spent a few minutes discussing the efforts the sponsors will take to encourage people to visit the Niwot stores and restaurants, opportunities for volunteering, and event goals to build community pride.

The committee spent some time discussing specifics of the event, such as locations of the stages on Second Avenue, length of the event, sponsorship opportunities and recruitment, vendor opportunities, community outreach and engagement efforts, and weather contingencies.

Gene noted that LID funding would be used to support advertising and marketing efforts, musician support, and equipment rentals.

Bruce and Laura pointed out the size of the request and the committee's ongoing interest in events and activities taking steps to become financially self-sustaining, especially as they become established over time. Keith noted that the LID request would constitute approximately fifty percent of the event budget, as currently planned. Other committee members noted their interest in supporting the event at the request level to help get it launched, with an expectation that future iterations may see smaller funding approvals as the event gets traction in the community. Biff noted that the NCAA will be providing assistance in planning the event, e.g. in securing the proper permits and licenses to host an event in Boulder County.

**ACTION:** Mary moved, seconded by Cornelia, to approve the funding request for \$10,000.00.  
**The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.**

**3. Niwot Business Association: Dancing Under the Stars - \$3,195.00**

Catherine McHale presented the funding request for the NBA. DUTS was a long-time Boulder standard that ended its run in 2018, and which the NBA revived in 2019 and hosted in Cottonwood Square. Upwards of 200 people attended the 2019 DUTS events. Local businesses and restaurants reported that the event increased activity at their shops and restaurants, with dancers coming early

for dinner and window shopping and even some stores and restaurants staying open late to accommodate the crowds after the event ended.

Similar to Rock and Rails, though COVID restrictions are lifting, DUTS will encourage people to wear masks, social distance, and practice standard COVID protocols, but these protocols will not be required or enforced.

The event will alternate between salsa and swing dancing, the two dance styles with the largest local following, and will take place on Friday nights throughout the summer. Fifteen events are proposed for this summer, beginning in June and ending on September 10. Also like Rock and Rails, DUTS had a tip jar, which raised \$1,300 in 2019 – these funds will assist with covering the expenses of the 2021 event, in combination with \$1,000 from the NBA and business sponsorships that Catherine is currently soliciting. In addition, Cottonwood Square will provide portable toilets.

Mary reiterated that many businesses felt the 2019 event was very successful. In response to a question, Catherine noted that each musical style brings its own distinct crowd or cohort of dancers. Cornelia observed that in addition to dancers, the event attracts people watchers who come to enjoy the atmosphere. The committee spent a few minutes discussing options for moving the event to other parts of town, for example along Second Avenue.

**ACTION:** Cornelia moved, seconded by Mary, to approve the funding request for \$3,195.00.

**The advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the motion.**

**New Business:**

In response to a question from Mary, Mark noted that as an entity of the county government, the NLIDAC will need to follow county requirements in respect to holding in-person meetings. He did not expect that a decision will be made in that regard by the time the committee meets again in June, but suggested that in-person meetings beginning later in the summer are a possibility. Until a decision is made, the committee will need to continue to meet over a virtual platform.

**Old Business:**

There was no old business considered by the committee.

**Public Comment:**

No members of the public spoke during public comment.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.