

## Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee

### MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, May 2, 2023**

**Present:** Scott Firle, Eric Bergeson, Lisa Rivard, Sarah Cioni, Jeff Knight, Cornelia Sawle, Mary Coonce, Heidi Storz, Keith Waters

**Guests:** Deb Fowler, Kathy Koehler, Stacy Szydle, Catherine McHale, Biff Warren

**Staff:** Mark Ruzzin

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

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

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

No minutes were available for consideration.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Mary reviewed the Treasurer's Report that she shared with the committee members in advance of the meeting.

Mary noted that through February 2023, LID collections are down \$1,300 or 3.5% in comparison to the first two months of 2022. The decrease is primarily in the retail sector. Through April the committee has approved \$92,000 in funding requests, with \$122,000 remaining in the 2023 budget. If the committee approves all of the funding requests on the May agenda, it will have about \$25,000 remaining in its 2023 budget.

Mary walked the committee through a spreadsheet that lists expected funding requests remaining in 2023. Mary is expecting at least one fall-themed event to be submitted – Oktoberfest – along with the traditional holiday season events.

#### **Funding Requests:**

The advisory committee considered the following funding requests:

- 1. Niwot Business Association: 2023 Marketing Plan - \$40,490.00**

Eric and Deb Fowler presented the funding request proposal for the NBA. Eric noted that the NBA has shifted its marketing strategy beginning this year, making the decision to no longer hire an economic development director. Overall, the marketing plan looks to decrease print advertising with a growing emphasis on social media outreach, with the niwot.com website playing an increasingly important role in the overall marketing strategy. Eric noted that the funding request is about \$4,000 or 10% more than the 2022 marketing plan request, pointing out that EDD salary is no longer an expense that the LID will pay.

The committee spent some time discussing the transition from print advertising to a more social media-focused marketing campaign strategy. For example, a blog will be added to the website, as one tool for keeping the website fresh and getting people to visit the website regularly.

Eric explained that a key shift in the plan will be to advertise in a platform called The Scout Guide. The Scout Guide is a branding tool that will tell the Niwot story to a different set of prospective visitors around the area, through both a digital and hard copy format. The funding request proposes spending \$8,500 on The Scout Guide platform. The committee had a detailed conversation about The Scout Guide, the benefit it can bring to Niwot businesses and the business district, how the platform will work and engage with businesses, how the platform is different than traditional advertising approaches, the costs of participating in the platform, metrics for measuring the success and value of the platform, and other aspects of the platform.

The committee discussed other aspects of the marketing plan, including the Niwot map and opportunities to advertise on other platforms such as radio.

In general, the committee appreciated the innovative and new thinking that the NBA is bringing to the marketing plan and the marketing and advertising efforts of the community.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Heidi, seconded by Jeff, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$40,490.00.

**2. Niwot Business Association: Honeybee Festival - \$6,720.00**

Deb Fowler presented the funding request proposal for the NBA and described the plans for the event. This is the third year of the festival, and efforts are being taken to improve the event. At least 10 pop-up vendors will be featured this year, the advertising materials and banners will be redesigned, and other updates to program and marketing materials will be made. There will be activities for kids, and the horse and carriage will be back to shuttle participants between Second Avenue and Cottonwood Square.

The committee discussed several of the changes that are being proposed for the event, like moving the date to September to avoid the heat of August, and other steps being taken to improve attendance at the event and thus improve sales for district businesses.

Mary noted for the committee that while the 2023 funding request is \$2,720 more than the 2022 request, the overall cost of the event has not increased substantially – in 2021 and 2022, the NBA covered a large portion of the overall event cost. In 2023 the NBA will be contributing \$500 to the festival.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Mary, seconded by Keith, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$6,720.00.

**3. Niwot Business Association: Around the World - \$5,720.00**

Deb Fowler presented the funding request proposal for the NBA. This is the third year the event is being held. Deb described the event and the variety of artists and musicians that will be performing at the event. Deb noted that as in past years, the NBA will be contributing \$500 to cover the cost of the event.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Sarah, seconded by Keith, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$5,720.00.

**4. Niwot Community Association: Fourth of July - \$3,130.00**

Kathy Koehler presented the funding request proposal for the NCA. Kathy noted that the funding request is comparable to the request from 2022, at just over \$3,000, and that the NCA will be contributing nearly \$6,000 to the event. Kathy and the committee spent some time discussing the logistical challenges the parade faces given the timing of the other events that are happening on the morning of July 4. The committee noted that the event is a great community event, but given that most businesses are closed on the Fourth, it does not have an impact on the retail sales of the district. The committee expressed their interest in seeing better communication and collaboration between the parade and the running race in planning for future events.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Mary, seconded by Cornelia, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$3,130.00.

**5. Niwot Tavern: Cottonwood Concert - \$12,000.00**

Stacy Szydek presented the funding request proposal for the Niwot Tavern. After hearing that there will be no Jazz Fest this year, Stacy was inspired to sponsor a concert in Cottonwood Square. The event will be held in late August and will run from 2:00-9:00pm, with an expected attendance of 1,000 people. The concert will feature three opening acts and will be headlined by The Samples. The total cost for the event is estimated to be just over \$17,000, with the Niwot Tavern covering the costs above the \$12,000 funding request.

Stacy and the committee discussed various aspects of the event, including marketing, event logistics, parking, staffing, vendors, volunteers, and efforts to support the Cottonwood Square restaurants. The committee expressed concern about the possibility of attendance being significant, and steps that can be taken to manage a large crowd. Security for the event was specifically noted as a concern. The committee recommended that Stacy develop an event management plan for the concert.

It was noted that, like Jazz Festival and Rock and Rails, concert events are more about building the Niwot brand than about promoting retail sales. In the case of the Cottonwood Concert, it's likely that attendees will be new visitors to Niwot.

The committee discussed the NLID's budget and how this request fits in with expected historical requests, given that the Jazz Festival will not be held in 2023.

Keith asked the committee to consider approving a reduced funding request of \$10,000, which is equal to the NLIDAC's commitment in past years to the Jazz Festival and Rock and Rails.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Keith, seconded by Lisa, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$10,000.00. The committee asked Stacy to come back to the June meeting to discuss security, parking, and other aspects of the event.

**6. Niwot Business Association: Dancing Under the Stars - \$7,350.00**

Catherine McHale presented the funding request proposal for the NBA. Catherine provided a summary of the event, noting that this is the fourth year that the NBA has sponsored DUTS. The event is held on Friday nights in Cottonwood Square, runs for 15 weeks, and typically attracts 125-150 people per show, depending on weather. Catherine noted that costs for 2023 are higher than past years, so she is asking for more money from the NLIDAC, the NBA, and is seeking sponsorships to cover the costs. Cost increases are a result of inflation as well as a need to invest in the dance floor and other equipment necessary to support the event.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Cornelia, seconded by Mary, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$7,350.00.

**7. Niwot Business Association: Administrative Coordinator - \$14,400.00**

Eric presented the funding request proposal for the NBA. The proposal is to fund a contract administrator to be managed and overseen by the NBA executive committee. The position will work 40 hours per month at \$45 per hour. The administrator will be charged with supporting the projects and events that are funded through the NLIDAC, including maintaining a master calendar of events, submitting reimbursement requests to the county and completing other bookkeeping tasks, providing minutes for the variety of local organizational meetings, coordinating basic maintenance needs for the district, and other tasks.

Eric explained that the administrator's time will be available to other Niwot community organizations. The committee agreed that it will take some time to sort out how the administrator will interact with and support organizations outside of the NBA. The committee discussed the opportunity to fully define the position over the course of 2023, for example, as the local organizations better understand how they can utilize the administrator to assist them in their work.

The committee asked Eric to come back later in the year to discuss how the role is working and explore potential revisions to the role to ensure that the position is meeting the needs of the Niwot community.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Heidi, seconded by Lisa, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$14,400.00.

**8. Niwot Cultural Arts Association: Rock and Rails - \$10,000.00**

Biff Warren presented the funding request proposal for the NCAA. Biff noted for the committee that for 2023 there will be 14 events, and 23 nonprofit organizations have applied for funds from the Tip Jar. Biff described for the committee the changes that are in store for the 2023 Rock and Rails concert series; in particular, despite the changes to local composting rules, Rock and Rails will remain a Zero Waste event.

**ACTION:** On a motion from Mary, seconded by Eric, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$10,000.00.

**Old Business:**

Eric provided a high-level update on the connectivity master plan process and the Diagonal Highway/Niwot Road intersection effort. The county commissioners in April approved the Diagonal Highway project, and directed county staff to continue to explore opportunities to construct an underpass from the Diagonal Highway median east towards Old Town. Eric noted that the commissioners were enthusiastic about the underpass and the possibility of making the underpass a reality.

**New Business:**

There was no new business discussed by the committee.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 PM.