

Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 5, 2023

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

Guests: Angela Hudgins, Kate Head, Pat Murphy, Deb Fowler, Biff Warren

Staff: Mark Ruzzin

Call to Order:

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

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The advisory committee considered the June 6, 2023 meeting minutes:

ACTION: On a motion from Mary, seconded by Eric, the committee voted unanimously to approve the June 6, 2023 meeting minutes, as presented. Keith abstained from the vote as he was not in attendance at the meeting.

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 June 2023, LID collections were down 2.1% in comparison to the first six months of 2022. Remote sales tax revenues have decreased 18% over 2022, suggesting that revenues from brick-and-mortar retailers are flat, with the overall decrease in LID revenues being driven by the decline in remote sales.

Through June the committee has approved 101% of its 2023 budget, and thus is nearly \$3,000 over-budget. If the committee approves all of the funding requests on the September agenda, the LID will be about \$47,000 over-budget for 2023. Mary noted that the committee has approved over \$37,000 in one-time funding requests, and also stated that she is not expecting any additional funding requests to come forward before the end of the year.

The committee discussed the decrease in revenue in comparison to past years, and the fact that spending has generally been down in area retail centers over the summer.

Funding Requests:

The advisory committee considered the following funding requests:

1. Niwot Business Association: Niwot Out and About - \$2,085.00

Kate Head presented the funding request proposal for the NBA. Based on the positive response from local businesses to last year's event, the NBA would like to repeat the Out and About event for a second year, to be held on September 23. All district businesses – from restaurants to retailers to service businesses – will be encouraged to showcase their services and products in a fun way all around town, with the goal of raising awareness in the community of the wide variety of products and services offered by the Niwot business community. Examples of activities could include restaurant specials, food and drink sampling, book readings, service demonstrations, activities for kids and adults, or an open house.

The LID funding request will be used to pay for an advertising and social media campaign, carriage rides to connect Old Town and Cottonwood Square, and musicians and entertainers. The 2023 funding request is about \$1,500 less than the 2022 event. The NBA intends to contribute \$500 to the event.

ACTION: On a motion from Eric, seconded by Mary, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$2,085.00.

2. Niwot Business Association: Great Pumpkin Party - \$5,700.00

Pat Murphy presented the funding request proposal for the NBA and described the plans for the event. The event has been a Niwot tradition for over 25 years, and typically brings over 1,000 people to Old Town. Pat noted that as in past years, the event will include hayrides, music, a parade, a haunted house at the old feed store, and a magic show.

The addition of a petting zoo explains the \$1,500 increase in the funding request in comparison to 2022, though in general, costs have increased.

ACTION: On a motion from Mary, seconded by Jeff, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$5,700.00.

3. Niwot Business Association: Pumpkin Walk - \$3,828.00

Deb Fowler presented the funding request proposal for the NBA and described the plans for the event. The proposed fourth annual Pumpkin Walk is designed to kickstart the holiday shopping season and to encourage people to frequent the retail businesses of Niwot. Deb noted that Pumpkin Walk is a Passport program: The 100 participating households will receive a passport and a shopping bag; as they visit the participating businesses their passport will be stamped and they will receive a pumpkin-themed gift. If participants make at least 4 total purchases from different stores, they will be entered into a raffle for a prize.

One benefit of running the event for the fourth year is that much of the advertising and social media content from previous editions can be reused, reducing the overall cost of the event.

Because it is a passport program, Pumpkin Walk lends itself to the collection of data when the passports are returned – where the participants reside, are they aware of Niwot events, and

other information can be obtained from participants. For example, in 2022, of the 100 participants, 58 were from Niwot, 24 from Longmont, and the remaining 18 were from neighboring towns.

Deb noted that the funding request has increased by \$328 over the 2022 funding request.

ACTION: On a motion from Eric, seconded by Keith, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$3,828.00.

4. Niwot Business Association: Holiday Magic - \$16,033.00

Deb Fowler presented the funding request proposal for the NBA and described the plans for the event. Based on the positive feedback from the last two years from both businesses and restaurants, the NBA is proposing to continue the four November/December holiday events under the all-encompassing title of "Niwot Holiday Magic." Niwot Holiday Magic will include Enchanted Evening on Friday, November 24; the holiday parade on Saturday, November 25; and the Holiday Fayre market in the Left Hand Grange on Saturday, December 2 and Saturday, December 9.

Deb noted that one goal for Holiday Magic is to include festive music and activities all around town, both on Second Avenue and Cottonwood Square. New in 2023 is a luminaire walk to be included in Enchanted Evening, whereby 1,000 luminaire lamps will be placed in town to visually connect Second Avenue and Cottonwood Square. For the holiday parade, the music and events will be paced throughout that day to encourage people to stay downtown to shop and eat after the parade; to date, 70 businesses are expected to participate in the parade, up from approximately 50 in previous years.

Deb noted that in addition to the luminaire lamps, 2023 will see the return of the ice sculpture, and Santa will be at all four events.

ACTION: On a motion from Heidi, seconded by Eric, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$16,033.00.

5. Niwot Business Association: Holiday Lighting - \$8,873.00

Angela presented the funding request proposal for the NBA. The NBA is proposing to repeat the holiday lighting installation using the same company that has been hired over the past several years, Colorado Christmas Lighting. Angela noted that the lighting plan proposed to be installed is consistent with past years, with a small increase in cost due to both inflation and the fact that the trees in town have grown in size, requiring more lights. The NBA currently owns the snowflake lights that are installed on the light poles in town; the rest of the lights are owned and maintained by Colorado Christmas Lighting.

ACTION: On a motion from Mary, seconded by Lisa, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$8,873.00.

6. Niwot Business Association: Additional Holiday Lighting - \$3,125.00

Angela presented the funding request proposal for the NBA, noting that the request is for additional “starburst-type” holiday lighting to be placed in the taller trees of the Niwot sculpture park. The work would be completed by Colorado Christmas Lights, the company that has handled holiday lighting for Niwot for the last several years.

Several committee members expressed interest in expanding the presence of holiday lighting throughout Niwot, but preferred to plan for this expansion more intentionally before committing funds to additional lighting.

ACTION: The motion from Keith, seconded by Eric, to approve the funding request for \$3,125.00 FAILED, with three advisory committee members supporting the motion and five advisory committee members opposing the motion.

7. Niwot Business Association: Small Business Shopping Bags - \$1,745.00

Angela presented the funding request proposal for the NBA, noting that the request is for the purchase of cotton canvas reusable shopping bags to be customized with the Town of Niwot artwork. The bags will be distributed over several dates, including Small Business Saturday (November 25) and both Holiday Market Days (December 2 and December 9).

The request proposes the purchase of 1,000 bags, 500 to be distributed on Small Business Saturday, and 250 to be distributed on each day of the Holiday Market. The bag will be provided free of charge.

The committee discussed the size of the bags, the artwork to be printed on the bags, and other details of the proposal. The committee also discussed turning the bag into a yearly “collector’s item” that might include different artwork every year or a contest to design the artwork for the annual holiday bag.

ACTION: On a motion from Mary, seconded by Sarah, the advisory committee unanimously APPROVED the funding request for \$1,745.00.

New Business:

The committee discussed its upcoming meeting schedule, in light of the November 9 all-organizations meeting and other committee member and staff commitments. The committee agreed to postpone its October meeting to Tuesday, October 17, and cancel the November regularly scheduled meeting. The Connectivity Subcommittee agreed to meet in advance of the November 9 all-organizations meeting to prepare for the meeting.

Old Business:

Eric provided an update on the connectivity planning project. The previous week, Dave and Chad Fletemeyer provided an update to the Connectivity Subcommittee on the status of their work. Eric provided some examples of the concepts that the plan is exploring. Heidi noted that there are 10 different areas and concepts that Fletemeyer and Lee have identified that build off each other and work together to improve connectivity in and around the business district. Jeff added that Fletemeyer and Lee have identified the “problems/challenges” in each of the 10 areas, and “opportunity projects” that the community could take up to address them.

Scott clarified with Eric that Fletemeyer and Lee will be prepared to attend the October 17 NLIDAC meeting to provide a preview of the presentation that will be made at the November 9 all-organizations meeting.

The committee discussed the cost of the planning work and the total financial commitment the committee is making to the effort. The committee discussed the NLID reserves and the fact that the reserve is designed for projects like this effort that lay out strategies to support infrastructure investments that advance the committee's strategic priorities.

Heidi, Jeff, and Eric described in more detail the "10 area" concept that the plan is built around and how the organization of the plan will advance the community's strategic priorities.

Jeff mentioned conversations that are happening in respect to community interest in developing pickleball courts in the Niwot area. The committee noted that this is an excellent example of the need to complete the community master plan so that the committee can be prepared when ideas like pickleball courts and other uses come forward from the community.

The committee spent some time discussing steps to take to prepare for the November 9 all-organizations meeting, including confirming the Grange as the meeting location, ensuring that the key organizations and people are invited to the meeting, managing the meeting, tracking key talking points and ideas that are shared, and other items.

Heidi noted for the board that she has emailed the committee members a first draft of a data collection tool that the committee could use to evaluate the success of the events and other activities that the committee funds. The goal is to create a tool to collect data across events and over time to help the committee make strategic funding decisions. Heidi asked committee members to review the draft tool and provide her with comments and feedback to improve the tool and ensure it meets the needs of the committee. Heidi also noted that the goal is to create a web-based tool that submits reports to Angela and the NBA.

Public Comment:

Biff Warren suggested that committee members reach out to the Boulder County Public Works department to get clarity on the financial contribution that the county made to the development of the 2012 Transportation and Connectivity Plan.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 PM.