



Item: B.I.D. 2008/2009 Budget and Work Plan
From: Lisa Kunz, City Clerk
Initiated By: Business Improvement District
Presented By: Tonya Jorgensen
Action Requested: Set Public Hearing for August 5, 2008

Suggested Motion:

1. Commissioner moves:

“I move that the City Commission set the public hearing for the 2008/2009 Business Improvement District Budget and Work Plan for August 5, 2008.

2. Mayor calls for a second, discussion, inquiries from the public, and calls the vote.

Recommendation: The B.I.D recommends that the City Commission set the public hearing for the 2008/2009 B.I.D. budget and work plan for August 5, 2008.

Background:

The Business Improvement District was established in Great Falls in 1970. Its overall purpose is to utilize tax dollars through the B.I.D. tax assessment and direct those monies back into the district to improve and revitalize the downtown. The current district has not changed in the areas of district boundaries or tax assessment formula since its origination date. Several attempts have been made for expansion to the west and support of this action has not been successful.

2009 will mark the third re-creation or renewal for the Business Improvement District in Great Falls. Efforts for expansion will follow once the district is renewed. A process for renewal is in full swing at this time and the current Board of Directors will be personally visiting with property owners in the next eight months as concurrence of more than 60% of the property owners is needed to renew. A timeline has been set with both the B.I.D. Board and the City of Great Falls Fiscal Services Department for the necessary public hearings and resolutions within the next eight months for the process.

According to State statute, the City Commission must hold a public hearing to hear any objections to the budget and work plan. Following the public hearing, the City Commission may approve the plan or request that amendments be made to it prior to levying an assessment on all

properties within the district to defray the costs. The assessment will be according to the formula approved with the creation of the district.

Concurrences:

The B.I.D. partners with several organizations to provide results and follow the overall purpose of the B.I.D.

Fiscal Impact:

The B.I.D. receives approximately \$156,000 per year in tax assessment dollars. These dollars are received in two larger and several smaller checks throughout the year. This dollar amount is NOT the total amount of tax assessments paid by property owners as a portion of the assessment received from property owners is taken out to pay for the Special Lighting District. The remainder of the funds is directed to operating the B.I.D. office, grant programs, tree maintenance, beautification efforts and additional projects for streetscapes and economic growth.

2007-2008 marks the first year that the B.I.D. received excessive grant requests and awards. That resulted in a limited budget for approving additional awards. The B.I.D. currently has \$140,000 that has been committed to projects that are still in progress and have not yet been paid out. The B.I.D. holds a minimum operating balance in the checking account and all other revenue received in excess to that is invested into short and long term certificates for access of funds according to completion of projects for payout.

A cleaning program for sidewalks and alleys is currently being developed for the district. This program is not available for funding within the operating budget; therefore, the B.I.D will look for a sponsor organization to assist in its operation.

Alternatives:

The City Commission could request the B.I.D. Board for changes to either the Work Plan or the Budget.

Attachments/Exhibits: (Not available online; on file in City Clerk's Office.)

B.I.D. Renewal Report

2008/2009 Work Plan

Revised Budget

Façade Grant Status Report

By-Laws of the Great Falls B.I.D.