

Downtown Billings Partnership Attendance			
Present: Katy Schreiner	Meri McGlone	Dave Fishbaugh	Janna Hafer
Councilman Rupsis	Brandon Berger	J.R. Reger	Brandon Scala
Ethan Kanning	Matt Blakeslee	Wyeth Friday	Blake Wahrlich
Cherish Linse	James Chandler	Sean Lynch	Mehmet Casey
Nick Steen	Absent: Jock West	County Commissioner Chris White	Chris Montague
Steve Tostenrud	Mary Walks Over Ice	Guest: Fred Snodgrass	

1. **This board meeting was recorded and transcribed using AI software. In this document you will see online voting, motions, minutes, and board member updates.**
2. **Electronic Vote Meeting - October 6, 2025 - October 20, 2025 - Signage Incentive Grants**
 - a. **Request:** As noticed to the board, an electronic meeting was held to consider approval of two sign grant requests as listed below:
 - i. **406 Memories:** Purpose of this request is to be reimbursed for eligible expenditures affiliated with downtown business signage design and installation consistent with our Signage Incentive Grant criteria and guidelines. This particular unit’s awning has a metallic vinyl installed on top of the fabric awning. This was done by the previous tenant. This current tenant is going to sand the old letters and paint it to match the color of the awning then install new letters to reflect the current business name. The TIF Review Committee recommends approval. Based on a 1:1 matching basis, 406 Memories is eligible for \$400.

Design:



Before



After



Electronic Vote Results:

Board votes in favor	Board votes against	Abstentions
Meri McGlone Ethan Kanning Brandon Scala Chris Montague Brandon Berger Nick Steen Blake Wahrlich David Fishbaugh Matt Blakeslee Steve Tostenrud Sean Lynch J.R. Reger		Jock West Janna Hafer Chris Kukulski Chris White Mary Walks Over Ice

3. **Call to Order** – Introductions, Courtesies, and Public Comments (3 min. limit) - Mr. Lynch called the meeting to order at 7:32 AM.
4. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. **Approve Minutes -- October 24, 2025 meeting minutes** -- Mr. Scala first motion to approve the October 24, 2025 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wahrlich; all were in favor, none were opposed.
5. **Presentation**
 - a. Fred Snodgrass with Frontier Law Firm presented to the DBP board about their facade improvements to their building at 2923 Montana Ave. The board had some questions about the rest of the building and its tenants. Fred departed and the board took action to vote on the proposal.
6. **Action Item**
 - a. **Frontier Law Firm Facade TIF Request** -- Ms. Hafer made the first motion to approve Frontier Law Firm Facade not to exceed the amount of \$14,194.64. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reger; all were in favor, none was opposed.



7. Staff presentation on advisory committee & DBP

- a. Staff presented to the DBP board the powers and make up of the city's advisory committee as well as the powers and make up of the DBP board. Staff also explained the structure of the meetings of each entity and the option of having different board members on the DBP or having the same membership as the advisory committee. The rest of the meeting reviewed both structures and the conversation ended with the DBP board deciding to explore separating the advisory committee and partnership board while allowing some overlap between the two bodies, with further discussions in the near future. Mr. Scala made the first motion to move forward with all new members for the Partnership Board. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hafer; a couple members were opposed and wanted more time to digest the details. It was then requested to receive more information before making a decision. Mr. Scala and Ms. Hafer withdrew their motions.

7. Next Steps

- a. Mr. Casey shared that he plans to present the Frontier Law Firm Facade TIF ask to City Council on December 8th.
- b. Ms. Schreiner shared she'll bring back information on whether meetings can happen concurrently and if there can be crossover between advisory committee and partnership board and that she would explore the option of DBP seating a new board.
- c. Mr. Casey shared an update that there will be an all-boards meeting on December 16th, location is to be determined.
- d. Ms. Schreiner reminded the board to look out for two separate meetings in January - one for the advisory committee and one for the partnership board.
- e. Mr. Friday will follow up with the city attorney regarding legal concerns about crossover membership between advisory committee and partnership board, and if the meeting can be held at the same time like BSED.
- f. Mr. Casey stated that new bylaws will be created for the advisory committee whereas the partnership's bylaws will simply need to be updated.

8. Summary

a. Montana Avenue Facade Improvement Proposal

- i. Fred Snodgrass presented a proposal for improving the facade of a building at [2923 Montana Avenue](#), which includes creating a retail space from an old garage area and enhancing the west side of the building. The project involves replacing existing garage doors with new black doors, resurfacing concrete sidewalks to be ADA compliant, and repairing damaged curbing. The owners are applying for a grant to fund these improvements, and the retail tenant in the space is Blueprint, MT, operated by Lindsey Whitcomb.
- ii. The board approved a facade grant of \$14,194.64 for a property owner to smooth the sidewalk, level the entrance, and install new doors, with the work expected to begin soon. The grant program has a 3:1 match requirement and a maximum award of \$50,000, though applicants are not restricted from future applications. The board noted that while the property owner could have pursued a larger grant program, they preferred to use the smaller grant amount and save the bigger funds for other future projects.

b. Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Structure

- i. Mr. Casey explained the structure and powers of the Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, which serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council on urban renewal matters. He outlined two options for the future structure of the Downtown Billings Partnership Board of Directors, emphasizing that a board is required per the partnership's Articles of Incorporation and bylaws. Ms. Schreiner noted that while there might be other variations, these two options were presented as the simplest possibilities, and she promised to clarify the discussion as it progressed.

c. DBP Board Restructuring Options

- i. Mr. Casey presented two options for restructuring the downtown business partnership (DBP) meetings. Option 1 maintains the current 11-member advisory committee with minimal changes, while Option 2 proposes 9 at-large members separate from the advisory committee. Mr. Casey explained the pros and cons of each option, including potential conflicts of interest and meeting structures. The group discussed the Big Sky Economic Development Authority's model of concurrent meetings for two entities. Ms. Hafer brought up the fact that SD2 also combines elementary and high school trustees into one meeting but votes are sometimes voted on by the whole board of trustees and other times, votes are taken up by 7 members instead of 9. City staff and DBP staff will investigate further the legality and viability of these options and report back.

9. Partner reports

a. BID

- i. Mr. Wahrlich updated the board about having had three interviews with BPD officers and that one of them will hopefully start in January while the second may start in April or May. Once the BID is fully staffed with BPD officers, SK Security will be scaled back in their hours.

b. DBA

- i. Ms. Schreiner shared with the board that Ms. Linse has accepted the membership position so while we'll be hiring for a new front desk person, we're excited to welcome her to this position that hasn't existed since the pandemic.

c. BCP

- i. Mr. Blakeslee had no updates for the board other than gearing up for a summit next year.

d. BSED

- i. Mr. Berger updated the board that they'll be launching a new search for an ED and that their annual meeting was rescheduled to December 9th.

e. Public School District

- i. Mr. Hafer updated the board that the school is exploring the option to purchase the former Rocky Mountain Bank to move offices to and expand the Lincoln Center for career service and healthcare collaboration.



f. County

- i. Mr. Schreiner provided an update on behalf of the County that she & Kody presented at the County Commissioners meeting. We have been really challenged to hear from them if we will be funded for the next year. They will be funding what they have in the past for \$75,000. We did ask for a bit more to try and expand our outreach team. There is a huge benefit with them from the detention center to treatment programs. We hope they will consider the additional funding.

g. City

- i. Mr. Friday updated the board about the upcoming orientations with Council and the new TIF city advisory committees. He also extended an invitation to the City Hall Open House.

10. Adjourn by 9:00 a.m. - Mr. Lynch adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 AM.