

# **BRISTOL CORE BOARD MEETING**

**Thursday, October 19 2023, 09:00 AM  
ZOOM Meeting**

## **MINUTES (DRAFT)**

**In attendance:** Ian Albinson , Meridith McFarland, Alicia Standridge , Taylor Welch, Maura Donnelly, Gary Barrows, Valerie Capels, Brad Cameron

### **I. Call to order: 9:00 AM**

### **II. Current Business**

#### **A. New Board Structure**

- Maura discussed her new role as Chair of the board and meeting with ED on Fridays.

#### **B. Holiday Events**

##### **1. Chocolate Walk**

- Confirmed for the 1st

##### **2. Lumen**

- Cirque De Fuego confirmed for 16th for Lumen

##### **3. Additional Event**

- Merchants prefer another shopping-focused event after Chocolate Walk, but December 8 this too close?
- Board discussed potential December event in downtown area, with some expressing reservations about scheduling it too close to holiday season.
- suggesting embracing last-minute shoppers and turning it into an event, with each business offering gift ideas or crowd-pleasers for quick purchases.
  - Scavenger Hunt for families who take part in Candy Cane Hunt
    - find a little toy in shops, has a chocolate or toy
    - “Procrastinators Paradise”

##### **4. Holley Jolly Market, Nov 25, 2023**

- Holly Jolly Market on November 25th in Holley Hall, with 18 vendors
- potential for Bristol CORE presence to guide people downtown
- create a sign with a map of downtown and a catchy phrase to direct people to the market
- Board agrees Alicia will design the sign with a 2x3 foot size and share it via email for feedback.

##### **5. Bristol Bucks**

- Bristol bucks are being used but not as quickly as before, and the marketing is ineffective

- Suggestion advertising Bristol bucks as a Christmas gift for procrastinators
- Would like to see a deeper dive into Bristol Bucks
  - Is there an incentive to use it?
  - Can retailers offer a discount if you use them?
  - Discussion on redesigning the Bristol Bucks currency to make it more accessible and user-friendly.
  - Bristol Bucks mentions throughout the marketing materials for the holiday season

## **6. Cool Yule Calendar**

- Suggestion on creating a fold-out calendar with all winter events in Bristol, including those from other groups, to promote the area and encourage tourism

## **C. Downtown Vibrancy Grant**

Downtown groups in VT will receive funding for vibrancy initiatives starting July 2023.

Alicia and Ian are working on a grant application for \$25,000 to support Main Street goals, with a focus on economic vitality, promotions, design, and organization.

Ian has filled out and submitted the required documents, including a budget with allocations for survey inventory, promotions, design, and organization, with some money left over for experimenting with new ideas.

Ian proposes doubling the executive director's hours to 20hrs a week and increasing their salary to \$25 per hour.

Ian suggested \$22.25/hr to accommodate budget.

Val asked if the increased hours for the executive director position would result in noticeable changes, and Maura suggested that the additional time would help rectify the current imbalance in workload.

Maura acknowledges the position's ebb and flow, estimating 20 hours per week is good

The executive director's salary will be a flat rate, without benefits.

Maura discussed the importance of tracking time in categories for reporting purposes rather than in minute-by-minute detail.

Maura and Val agree that this approach could be helpful for reporting on budgets and other tasks but may not be necessary for justifying the EDs role.

Board discussed potential additional 10 hours for a 20 hours/week position at \$25/hour job, calculating \$26,000 annually for ED position.

Alicia advocated for an hourly raise to \$25 for the executive director position, citing cost of living increases and the lack of a raise in the past.

Val recommends reallocating budget from line items to promotions and economic vitality to show more activity and planned events.

Ian suggested using a higher appropriation for the Bristol core, citing other organizations increasing their appropriations.

Val expressed hesitation, noting the potential for the town budget to be voted down and the risk of asking for more money from taxpayers. There will be a substantial increase in the Bristol Rescue's planned request, with other organizations also seeking increases.

**ACTION:** Ian made a motion to increase the Executive Director's hours to 20/wk at \$25/hr, starting when FY23/24 grant funding is available. Maura seconded. So voted (5-0)

**D. Fundraising Letter**

Val suggested revising language on economic vitality to include physical improvements

Taylor suggested adding social media accounts information

Maura suggested sending out fundraising letters in October or November to coincide with Bristol CORE winter activity and end-of-tax year deductibility.

Maura discussed the logistics of sending out donation letters and envelopes and offered to help with printing and mailing the letters.

**E. Treasurer's Report - Ian**  
- See docs provided.

**F. Executive Director's Report - Alicia**  
- Alicia to meeting with local photographer for pro-bono photo shoots of downtown businesses

**G. Board Meeting Structure**

Maura proposed meeting twice a month (1st and 3rd Thursday's at 9am) and keeping the meetings to 1 hour

**H. Roundtable**

- Nothing to report

**Next Meeting – 11/02/2023**

**III. Adjourn.**