

DOWNTOWNfrom A1

ects such as the hanging of high school graduation banners, downtown holiday events and Art Walk.

“It’s a great concept, but it was always a chicken or the egg,” said Linoz of the program. “How do you find the money to support the programs that will benefit the community, and who’s going to do the work? Because you’re a volunteer board and it was full of already busy people.”

Members initiated a stopgap measure by working with the University of Oregon’s Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) Program to establish a Main Street coordinator, allowing them to get a lower cost, but higher skilled staff person full time.

The latest coordinator, Molly Murai, has recently finished her term with the program.

EBID, on the other hand, was launched in 2001 and, as the name suggests, focuses on both economic and business improvement projects be-

yond a purely downtown focus.

The nonprofit mainly gains revenue for its projects through a fee system akin to a tax district drawing from property and business owners within its jurisdiction and has been a partner in improvement projects such as the archway welcoming people to downtown, the All-America City Square, Opal Whiteley and Buster Keaton murals and Bohemia Park’s amphitheater saddle span.

It generates the rest of its finances from fundraising events, donations and grants.

Within its jurisdiction, there are three types of fees. Two are based the location of property owners within a two-tier system and the other is a flat fee of \$50 for businesses.

The district’s tiered fees are based on the square footage of property owners. Tier 1, which essentially encompasses the Historical District, charges five cents per square foot with a cap of \$500 while Tier 2, which covers the rest of the busi-

ness improvement district, bills at two cents per square foot with a cap of \$300.

EBID’s Tier 2 jurisdiction extends its influence beyond downtown to include the rest of Main Street as far east as Gateway Boulevard and north and south along Highway 99 and Ninth Street, roughly spanning from Knecht’s Auto Parts to Dairy Queen.

The precise boundaries of the district under the Downtown Cottage Grove umbrella were still being worked out as of *The Sentinel’s* press time, however.

Payment is optional for those within the district, but contracts, once signed, are binding.

EBID’s revenue has often been funneled into Main Street Cottage Grove projects, but the group has also partnered with the Chamber of Commerce or the City of Cottage Grove.

“So we had these relationships, but it was hard to tell whose project it was and people in the community couldn’t tell what their money was paying for and what programs

had value,” explained Linoz. “So it was interesting that while we were struggling with EBID, realizing they had the funding but lack staffing, here was Main Street Cottage Grove with staffing, but didn’t have consistent, meaningful funding in order to do programs.”

The Merger

In September last year, the two entities formally merged to create Downtown Cottage Grove, bringing the full scope projects and missions under one roof, with EBID serving as a sort of parent organization to Main Street Cottage Grove.

“We had to actually change the registration of Main Street to dissolve as its own entity and then be under the listing of EBID doing business,” Linoz said.

As the two groups already shared many of the same goals and values and even some board members, the merger now allows for the ability to expand the boundaries of impact and access more resources to realize shared

visions.

EBID’s original district boundaries have recently expanded, for instance, to include businesses along 10th Street across from Bohemia Park.

Most of the original members of the two groups have stayed on as well, shifting duties as redundancies were identified. By reducing the number of meetings, the group is hoping to work on shared goals more efficiently.

Following the decision to merge the programs, Danny Solesbee was initially appointed chair of the nonprofit.

“Main Street, now, is bigger,” Solesbee told *The Sentinel* last September after the merger. “It allows the people east of [Highway] 99 and Ninth Street to be part of programs nationwide — education and grants and so forth — so we increased that footprint.”

This in mind, maintaining both Main Street Cottage Grove and EBID as listed entities allows for eligibility to a broader spectrum of grants and

programs.

A business such as Covered Bridge Brewing Group, for example, which is situated technically outside the Historical District yet still nested prominently on Main Street, may be unable to apply for a particular grant, but now could have access to it under the expansion.

Among elements of the broader Main Street America program, seminars and educational tools are provided to businesses and its hoped opportunities such as these may be extended to more business owners in the area.

Operationally, the nonprofit is revising its approach as well.

Downtown Cottage Grove’s bylaws state that there are 11 board of directors, five from Tier 1 and four from Tier 2, and two at-large directors.

The organization has a long list of objectives including increasing its collaboration with other local organizations, encouraging physical improvements to downtown and developing strategies

see RENEWAL on A11



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AUGUST

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Featured Events

August 4

6:30 p.m. Concert in the Park at the Bohemia Park Amphitheatre featuring Calvary Creek

August 6

5:00 p.m. American Legion BINGO! 826 W. Main Street For additional info call Jerry Kerns at 541-942-0234

August 7

12pm South Lane Mental Health - Dia de La Familia, Bohemia Park
12pm Sol Path Music Festival, All America City Square

August 11

6:30 p.m. Concert in the Park at the Bohemia Park Amphitheatre featuring Annie Mae Rhodes Band

August 13

5:00 p.m. American Legion BINGO! 826 W. Main Street For additional info call Jerry Kerns at 541-942-0234

August 17

7:30 p.m. Third Tuesday Poetry Night at Axe & Fiddle, hosted by Kalapuya Books at The Cottage Events Venue 2915 Row River Rd, Cottage Grove

August 18

6:30 p.m. Concert in the Park at the Bohemia Park Amphitheatre featuring Dusty Herd Band

August 19

5:30 p.m. Dementia Support Group for Care Givers ~ Spouses ~ Family members First Presbyterian Church 216 S 3rd St, Cottage Grove. Please call to reserve your seat! Ruth Tracey 541-942-0054

August 20

9am W.O.E. Fair at the Fairgrounds
5pm – Meet the Lions Cottage Grove High School

August 21

9am W.O.E. Fair at the Fairgrounds
9am KNND’s Rock Roll and Rumble, Downtown Cottage Grove

August 22

9am W.O.E. Fair at the Fairgrounds

August 23

5:00 p.m. American Legion BINGO! 826 W. Main Street For additional info call Jerry Kerns at 541-942-0234

August 24

9:30am Cottage Grove High School 10th Grade Registration
1pm – Cottage Grove High School 11th Grade Registration

August 25

9am Cottage Grove High School 9th Grade Registration
1pm Cottage Grove High School 12th Grade Registration
6:30 p.m. Concert in the Park at the Bohemia Park Amphitheatre featuring The United States Air Force Band

August 27

5:00 p.m. American Legion BINGO! 826 W. Main Street For additional info call Jerry Kerns at 541-942-0234

August 31

10am Lincoln Middle School Student Registration & Picture Day
2pm Lincoln Middle School Student Registration & Picture Day

August 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11



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