

## **BID updates Gallup Council**

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 18 November 2016 07:53

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### **Vacant buildings persist, official says**

Officials from the city's Business Improvement District gave the Gallup City Council an update on the organization at the Nov. 9 regular city meeting. Francis Bee, executive director at the BID, and Louie Bonaguidi, president of the BID's board of directors and the proprietor of City Electric along Coal Avenue, spoke to council members.

Both Bee and Bonaguidi noted some of the organization's successful programs and vowed to keep pounding the pavement to recruit new businesses and rectify delinquent BID accounts.

"A city's reputation rests in large part on its downtown physical attributes," Bonaguidi told council members from prepared remarks. "A beautiful and vibrant downtown can be a rising tide that lifts all ships," he said.

Bonaguidi and Bee referenced a recent trash can-painting beautification project done by area artists.

"These trash cans are a very good idea for downtown," City Councilor Yogash Kumar said. However, Kumar and Mayor Jackie McKinney took issue with BID making minimal contact with local businesses.

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“I talk to the businesses and I’ve been told at times that they don’t know who the BID is,” Kumar, who is a BID property owner, said. Bee responded that he makes an attempt to go into at least one business a month, drawing some criticism from McKinney. There are 173 businesses within the BID.

“When I was campaigning, I went into every single business in one day,” McKinney said. “It’s not that hard.”

City Councilor Allan Landavazo asked Bee about the amount of funds BID had in its bank account. Landavazo suggested an idea whereby business owners who close their doors during events like ArtsCrawl could receive a stipend for remaining open at such events.

Bonaguidi said there are several vacant buildings in the downtown area, naming five buildings between Second and Third streets that are rented but seldom open.

### ***What is the BID?***

The BID was established via city ordinance in 2009 and is based on a 2006 property tax assessment by McKinley County. The city of Gallup matches the amount that property owners pay into the BID.

Gallup’s BID includes a 35-block radius that encompasses parts of Historic Highway 66 and Coal and Aztec avenues.

Gallup is the second city in New Mexico to establish a BID – Albuquerque was the first. Gallup is the only city in New Mexico to have a BID, MainStreet, and an Arts and Cultural District designation. The presentation by Bee and Bonaguidi was for informational purposes and not an action item.

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