

## **MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY**

**December 4, 2001**

The minutes of the proceedings of the regular meeting of the City of Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency, Coos County, Oregon, immediately following the City Council meeting held at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

### **Those Attending**

Those present were Chair Kevin Stufflebean and Board Members Joe Benetti, Anna Marie Larson, Jeff McKeown, Cindi Miller, Don Spangler and Judy Weeks. City staff present were City Manager Bill Grile, Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen, City Attorney Randall Tosh, Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs, Finance Director Janell Howard, Fire Chief Stan Gibson, and Police Chief Chuck Knight.

### **Approval of the Minutes from October 16 and November 6, 2001**

Board Member Weeks moved to approve the meeting minutes of October 16 and November 5, 2001 as presented. Board Member McKeown seconded the motion which passed with all Board Members present voting aye.

### **Request from Bay Area Rescue Mission to Lease the John Topits Building**

Chair Stufflebean reported the Bay Area Rescue Mission has submitted a request to lease the John Topits building. City Manager Bill Grile commented use of the building has not been determined by the Agency and a month to month arrangement with the Mission would be appropriate. He also noted the Foster Parents Association has requested use of the building for food storage at no cost. Board Member McKeown suggested before making a decision, staff present more facts to the Agency, and commented he is in favor of selling the building. Chair Stufflebean requested staff provide information on the fair market value of the property and look at putting it on the market. Pastor Bill Parham reported the Mission is aware of the foster parents' need for space and the Mission would be willing to include room for their use. Board Member Weeks inquired how much the Mission was willing to pay for leasing the building and Mr. Parham responded they could afford \$100 per month.

### **Review of the Empire Gateway Options**

Chair Stufflebean reported the gateway designs are displayed on the city's web site and the question now before the Agency is where to place the welcome sign. City Manager Bill Grile commented staff is requesting direction from the Agency on how they would like to proceed. The preliminary cost estimates for the gateway monuments range from \$15,000 to \$30,000. Mr. Grile suggested narrowing the choices of monuments to one or two and obtaining cost figures from architect Rich Turi. Community Services Director Shanda Shribbs commented the welcome sign located at the Y Intersection would require an easement from the property owner. Board Member McKeown inquired about the cost for the gateway monuments and Ms. Shribbs reported the numbers are purely estimates by the architect. The more intricate the design, the more expensive the monument, and they would include some lighting costs. Board Member Miller asked if the welcome sign would be visible coming from the west and Ms. Shribbs commented not as clearly as from

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Newmark Avenue and Ocean Blvd. Board Member McKeown suggested the Historic Design Review Committee review the designs and make a recommendation to the Agency.

Julia Spangler, Coos Bay, commented several meetings of the Empire Business Association have been held to discuss the designs. The association agrees with locating the welcome sign on the Devereau Center at the Y Intersection, and the design fits in with the waterfront historical theme. Ms. Spangler commented they would also like to see a sign at the wayside property, and there was little support for the monuments. Board Member Weeks recommended against including the Crowley and wayside property with the monuments and welcome sign project. Chair Stufflebean agreed and suggested moving forward with placement of the welcome sign. Duane Haught, owner of Allied Motors and a Devereaux Center board member, expressed concern about locating the welcome sign at the Y Intersection as it would cut off access to the center. Chair Stufflebean commented staff would meet with the Devereaux Center and report back to the Agency. Board Member Spangler reported at one time this was the location for the gateway and an agreement with the Devereaux Center had been reached. Mr. Haught commented an agreement had not been approved by the board. Dale Kinyon, Coos Bay, suggested moving the welcome sign closer to the downtown Empire area.

Board Member Benetti moved to direct staff to research placement of the welcome sign, have the Historic Design Review Committee review the designs, and bring a recommendation back to the Agency. Board Member Weeks seconded the motion which passed with all board members present voting aye.

**Review of the Empire Façade Program**

Chair Stufflebean reported of the 57 surveys mailed to Empire business and property owners, there were nine responses and of those three were in support of the facade program. Norma Frost, Coos Bay, commented she had received the survey as a building owner and the survey was too long so she did not respond. Ms. Frost reported other businesses did not respond because the survey was too complex and they were concerned about the 15 year easement. Board Member McKeown asked Ms. Frost what she would like to see the Agency do. Ms. Frost responded there is concern that the process is too long and perhaps an awning program would be easier.

Board Member Benetti commented \$1.9 million has been spent to date in the Empire area. The Agency did the survey to gather input from business and property owners, and the survey indicates they do not want to proceed with the project. Board Member Benetti suggested the Agency could move forward with other projects and come back to the facade program at a later date. He supported the downtown awning program and 30 different businesses participated in the program. Chair Stufflebean noted the City owned the awnings until transferred to the businesses when the program ended. Board Member Benetti commented the downtown program worked and perhaps something similar could be done in Empire, but the Agency should not move blindly and needs input from the public.

Julia Spangler expressed frustration with the amount of time it has taken to move forward with the program and many people did not answer the survey because they felt it wouldn't matter. Allan Kim—, 575 Newmark, expressed support for the facade program and had responded to the survey. He has delayed making improvements to his property until the program begins and would like to know how much funding would be available for the improvements.

Chair Stufflebean commented the funds would not be for new construction, but for improvements to existing buildings. Board Member Weeks suggested putting aside money to be used for low interest loans. Chair Stufflebean commented the money in the Empire urban renewal area is from bonds and there are restrictions

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on how the money can be spent. Board Member Spangler stated the urban renewal agency set up a vision for Empire to fix up the area and a lot of citizen input had been given in developing the plan. He supported the loan program and the awning program. Board Member Miller supported moving forward with making improvements to the area either with a low interest loan program or a facade program.

Board Member Larson expressed opposition to the facade program and suggested using the funds for improving Newmark Avenue. She commented several years ago she and her husband purchased property in downtown Coos Bay and they paid for their own improvements. Board Member McKeown noted the consensus of the Agency is to use the funds to make Empire look better and he supports the loan program over the facade program. The facade program is too expensive and he could not in good conscience approve spending the money. Board Member Spangler expressed support for the facade program and commented no one is concerned about the rising expense of the Pedway project in downtown Coos Bay. Board Member Benetti reported he had contacted some of the Empire property owners and they are happy with what has been done in Empire. He does not support the facade program, but would support a no or low interest loan program for make property improvements.

Chair Stufflebean inquired if the board members preferred moving forward with the facade program or a low interest loan program. He expressed support for both and noted there is \$750,000 available. Board Members Benetti, McKeown, Miller and Weeks agreed with offering a loan program. City Attorney Randall Tosh reported the opinion on the use of urban renewal funds in this manner is expected within a few weeks.

**Public Comments**

Dale Kinyon inquired if Empire is in a redevelopment zone and Board Member Miller responded an enterprise zone is different from urban renewal district. Board Member Benetti suggested he contact Shirley Liberante at the Chamber for information.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Agency Chair Stufflebean adjourned the meeting.

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Kevin Stufflebean, Chair

ATTEST:

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Anna Marie Larson, Secretary