

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
CITY OF COOS BAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY WORK SESSION**

May 11, 2010

The minutes of the proceedings of a work session of the City of Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency, Coos County, Oregon held at the Coos Bay Public Library's Myrtlewood Room, 525 Anderson Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon immediately following a 6 p.m. special City Council meeting.

Those Attending

Those present were Chair Gene Melton and Board Members Jon Eck, Joanie Johnson, Jeff McKeown, and John Pundt. Board Members Mark Daily and Stephanie Kramer were absent. City staff present were City Manager Rodger Craddock, City Attorney Nate McClintock, Finance Director Rae Lea Cousens, Deputy Finance Director Susanne Baker, Public Works and Development Director Jim Hossley, Economic Revitalization Administrator Joyce Jansen, and Acting Police Chief Gary McCullough.

Discussion on the Virtual Business Incubator Grants

Economic Revitalization Administrator Joyce Jansen stated the Virtual Business Incubator program commenced June 2008 to assist small business owners located in the urban renewal districts to become more successful. To date the Empire Urban Renewal District awarded \$30,000 and the Downtown Urban Renewal District awarded \$262,344 through the Virtual Business Incubator program. Ms. Jansen consulted with Jeff Tashman to review the Virtual Business Incubator program and to assist in development of another program to further the goals of the Agency to encourage improvement within the districts. Ms. Jansen suggested the Agency could consider creating a Business Development Grant program using tax increment funds for signage and interior improvements. General maintenance such as a project of only flooring or painting would not qualify wherein a total renovation of the interior with capital project costs of \$10,000 or more would qualify for grants utilizing tax increment funds. Ms. Jansen suggested a matching grant similar to the Façade Improvement program would leverage the Agency's grant. Board Member Melton, McKeown, and Johnson suggested a match from the business owner would be prudent. City Manager Rodger Craddock proposed for staff to research what other urban renewal agencies were doing throughout the state as well as develop a budget.

Review of the Façade Program

Economic Revitalization Administrator Joyce Jansen stated the Façade Improvement program commenced November 2006 to assist commercial owners and businesses with funding to refurbish building facades. The Fiscal Year 2010-2011 budget included \$62,000 for the Downtown District and \$40,000 for the Empire District with no façade grants awarded to date. Ms. Jansen stated Mel Leshner and Jim Tarantino requested the Agency consider restructuring the façade program with the award criteria based on a preference for historic buildings, special consideration for larger buildings, consideration as to the impact to the local economy, to increase the grant award, and discontinue requiring proof of payment for the project before the grant funds were awarded. Ms. Jansen suggested additional research to see how other cities have developed their façade improvement programs. Chair Melton suggested a loan program could be developed to assist business owners wherein Mr. Craddock suggested the loan

structure could be developed as the Agency directed. Board Member McKeown suggested changing the structure to enable business owners to utilize the program to be more successful. Chair Melton asked for public comments. Mel Leshner stated he and Jim Tarantino purchased the Chandler building and were in the process of completing significant improvements to the building. Mr. Leshner stated the current improvements to the Chandler building include installing a replica of the original 1906 awning and engineering to repair the foundation. Mr. Leshner provided a synopsis of the planned improvements. Brian Menton, Coos Bay, stated the Virtual Business Incubator program was appreciated and encouraged continuance of the program.

Discussion of Options for the Old Downtown Fire Station

City Manager Rodger Craddock stated the existing downtown fire hall was originally constructed as a temporary facility. The cost to upgrade the building to current seismic and flood requirements was prohibitive. Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) offered a grant to purchase the structure, with covenants prohibiting construction of another structure. Mr. Craddock stated demolition of the structure would qualify for use of urban renewal funds and the vacant lot would be appealing to a buyer. Mr. Craddock estimated the demolition costs to be \$200,000 due to potential lead and asbestos.

Review of Downtown Parking Issues

City Manager Rodger Craddock stated Mr. Townsend, retired director of the League of Oregon Cities, stated most cities believe they have downtown parking issues; suggested researching what other cities have adopted. Mr. Craddock suggested opinions on parking were diverse with complaints not subsiding easily. Chair Melton suggested business permit parking spaces for the employees.

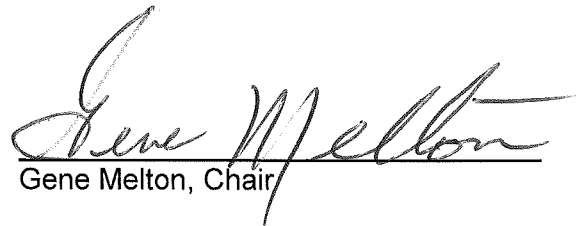
Public Comments

Mel Leshner suggested salvaging the awnings on the Lockhart Building wherein Mr. Craddock stated a legal opinion confirmed the City does not own the building and any salvage materials would need to be open for public bid. Steve Pickering, Coos Bay stated paid downtown parking lots were not customer friendly and would be costly. Paul Scott, Coos Bay asked if the building attached to the Lockhart building would remain or be condemned. Gino Landrum, Coos Bay suggested business owners pay for a parking spot in a parking lot.

Adjourn

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

Attest: 
Mark Daily, Secretary


Gene Melton, Chair