

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

May 5, 2011

The minutes of the proceedings of the City of Coos Bay Urban Renewal Agency Work Session held at 3:30 p.m. in the Training Room at Fire Station No. 1, 450 Elrod Avenue, Coos Bay, County, Oregon.

Those Attending

Those present were Chair Gene Melton and Board Members Jon Eck, Jennifer Groth, Joanie Johnson, Stephanie Kramer, John Muenchrath and Crystal Shoji. City staff present were City Manager Rodger Craddock, Deputy Finance Director Susanne Baker, Public Works and Development Director Jim Hossley, Operations Administrator Randy Dixon, Economic Revitalization Administrator Joyce Jansen, Fire Chief Stan Gibson, Library Director Carol Ventgen, and Police Chief Gary McCullough.

Discussion on the City Hall Seismic Retrofit Project

City Manager Rodger Craddock stated the \$2,500,000 City Hall Seismic Retrofit project was approved by a former Council/URA Agency which included a \$1,000,000 Urban Renewal fund grant match. The use of Agency funds was deemed appropriate by Urban Renewal consultant Jeff Tashman and the City did not have unencumbered funds for the grant match. Public Works and Development Director Jim Hossley stated the estimate to reopen Central Avenue to two way traffic from Hwy 101 to 6th Street was approximately \$8 million. To relocate and construct a new City Hall would be approximately \$11 million. The estimates were reviewed and affirmed by an engineer. The \$8 million to reopen Central Avenue would include removing the Firemen's Memorial, developing two full lanes of traffic, creating adequate parking spaces, removing electrical utility vaults/pedestals, shortening sidewalks widths, installing a traffic signal at 4th and Central Avenue, revisions to the traffic signal at Central Avenue and Hwy 101, and demolition of the existing Central Avenue streetscape. Additionally a re-evaluation of the downtown traffic circulation would be appropriate. Operations Administrator Randy Dixon stated the estimate for constructing a new City Hall included the same square footage as the existing City Hall with construction materials consisting of veneer siding, concrete block, and brick. Board Member Shoji asked if the Old Security Bank building could be utilized as City Hall wherein Mr. Craddock stated existing downtown structures were not included in the analysis and the parking demands required by the 24-7 public safety operation would have significant impact on downtown parking.

Board Member Kramer asked why the cost was so much as compared to the new Fire Station wherein Fire Chief Gibson stated the majority of the new Fire Station was open garage space which was much less per square foot to construct than finished office space. Board Member Shoji stated she was not in favor of rejecting the grant but would like to see a long term plan of where City Hall should be sited and many of the items in the \$8 million estimate needed to be made to make downtown viable. Board Member Muenchrath stated he was not in favor of the setup of the tables for the work session; suggested the size of City Hall could be reduced; stated a long term vision was needed in order to direct staff on what information to gather for the Agency to make a realistic decision; and Central Avenue must be reopened to bring life back to downtown.

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City Manager Rodger Craddock stated the current project was started from direction provided by the former Agency and other possibilities were not explored but could be if directed by the current Agency. Board Member Johnson stated the Agency does not like the location of City Hall however it was important to complete the seismic project to protect the public safety personnel and equipment and she supported formulating a long term plan.

Mark Daily, Coos Bay: Questioned the possibility of purchasing and retrofitting Old City Hall and asked if City Hall would be under water if there was a 9.0 earthquake. Fire Chief stated approximately 2'-3' of water would cover the downtown area, depending upon the elevation, in such an event.

Board Member Groth stated the Agency should move forward and was concerned with funding the project entirely from Urban Renewal Funds. Mr. Craddock stated an option was for the City to borrow \$500,000 from the Agency to fund the City's portion of the grant match with a 10 year repayment plan, with interest. Board Member Muenchrath asked the minimum grant match wherein Mr. Dixon stated \$375,000 however that amount would not address stabilizing the building adequately. Board Member Muenchrath requested to see a breakdown of the costs involved with the project.

Mike Vaughn, Coos Bay: Stated he agreed with the consensus of the Agency to continue the project, would like to see a long range plan, and supported a phased construction/relocation.

Mark Daily, Coos Bay: Suggested to look at the tax base for the city and the urban renewal district to formulate a proportionate share.

Board Member Eck stated he would support a 50% split because the plan area has not historically paid its share of the city taxes; a significant portion of the project was for the hvac system; and the Agency had a moral responsibility to the citizens and employees to ensure the safety of the City Hall structure. City Manager Rodger Craddock stated due to the structural changes needed inside of the building would necessitate new carpet, replacement of ceiling tiles, and lighting changes.

Review on Next Steps for the Egyptian Theatre and Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association

City Manager Rodger Craddock stated a successful grant writer advised the Agency to retain ownership of the Egyptian Theatre during the grant writing and construction phases. Many grants were available if the ownership remained with the municipality. Mr. Craddock stated this would not preclude deeding the structure to the Association after the upgrades were complete. To move forward through the process would require development of a sound business plan, board training, and a strategic plan. A technical assistance grant would provide the initial steps with additional components needed such as research on successful similar grants and fundraising. Board Member Groth stated the time lines should be clearly communicated to ensure that all involved understand the process.

Mike Vaughn, Coos Bay: Stated he was concerned the vision was not large enough and would like to see the building used for conventions, lectures, etc. and also linked to activities in the Pedway. Mark Daily, Coos Bay: Stated the Egyptian Theatre Preservation Association's main focus was on preservation of the structure not necessarily expanding to a civic center however

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that would be a benefit; suggested pledging future tax increment funds for the needed improvements; would like to see a two or three year plan to encourage those involved with the fundraising; suggested to involve the Home Builders Association regarding the convention center; and contacting the other theatre groups to expand the interest base.

Board Member Muenchrath would like to see a broader vision of the project, broken up into phases, to achieve success for the Egyptian Theatre and downtown area sooner.

Adjourn

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

Attest:



Jennifer Groth, Secretary



Gene Melton, Chair