

MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 24, 2020

FINAL

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Monday, August 24, 2020 via Zoom in the Council Chambers, 140 W. Pine, at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

Board: Nancy Moe, Tasha Jones, Melanie Brock

Staff: Ellen Buchanan, Chris Behan, Annette Marchesseault, Tod Gass, Jilayne Dunn, Lesley Pugh

Public: Dale Bickell, City of Missoula Chief Administrative Officer; Ginny Merriam, City of Missoula Communications Director; Spider McKnight, Six Pony Hitch; Jason King, Dover, Kohl & Partners; Rob Piatkowski, Dover, Kohl & Partners; Missoula Access Community Television (MCAT)

CALL TO ORDER

12:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 20, 2020 Regular Board Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moe announced the numbers to be shown to call in for public comment. There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEMS

MRA Communication Plan – Request for Approval (*Buchanan*)

Buchanan said there have been past discussions at the previous two Board meetings regarding a Communications Plan for the Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA), the City and other City departments. She said there are a lot of misunderstandings in the community with respect to what MRA does, how it does it, what Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is and how it can and should be used, and how it is used in Missoula. Staff and Board have talked about the need to create a Communications Plan for the Agency. At the last Board meeting, staff made the Board aware that the City's Communications Office had put out a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to create a pool of firms that have various skill sets in the world of communications. Various City departments can pick and choose firms which have the skill sets that best suit their particular needs without going through multiple RFQs.

It is something the City has done in the past with architectural and engineering firms and other disciplines the City uses on a fairly regular basis.

Buchanan said at July's Board meeting she asked that the Board direct staff to look at the ten firms that had been shortlisted and had been chosen to be that pool that the City departments can access and narrow down the firm that best suited MRA needs, and bring a scope of services and proposal back to the Board at a subsequent meeting which is what is being done today. Buchanan said staff looked at all of the firms' skill sets and strengths. Staff believes Six Pony Hitch, LLC (6PH) has the skill sets MRA needs as an Agency. The firm, and in particular Spider McKnight, are very familiar with what MRA does, MRA history, and have worked together on the Downtown Master Plan and other projects that involve how TIF and the MRA might play a role in implementation of the plans. Buchanan said the learning curve is pretty shallow in terms of what the Agency would have to do to hit the ground running.

Buchanan said she included a Scope of Services with her memo from 6PH. It will result in a Communications Plan which would also include strategies for how to best utilize the MRA website and social media, which staff is not particularly strong at right now. She said the MRA website has a lot of information on it, but is not necessarily as digestible as it could be. As she pointed out last month, MRA does a lot of things really well as a staff and are technical writers, technical communicators, and project managers who get complicated projects done, but are not necessarily the ultimate communicators.

Buchanan said along with the proposal creating a Communications Plan for the Agency, it may well point out the need for additional pieces that are not included in this Scope of Services. Those could include additional graphics, videos, animations, etc. She said if that is the case then those items would come back to the Board for approval on a case by case basis or as a second package. The proposal today is for \$46,500 and staff is requesting that the Board approve the staff recommendation and agree to award a contract not to exceed that amount with 6PH.

Spider McKnight, 6PH, said the approach they want to take and what they bring to the party is focusing a lot on community engagement because that has been an issue around TIF. She said they have taken a two-prong approach. One is to do a deep dive inside with staff, MRA Board and City Council to see what people think they need to communicate. The second is to look at the other side of that and talk to the community to see how they feel about TIF right now, what kinds of things do they need, and what opportunities there are to co-create with MRA, and how to have participation much like they did with the Downtown Master Plan where 6PH went out into the community and said it is the community's process too, to find out a way to talk to each other that everybody feels good about.

Ginny Merriam, City of Missoula Communications Director, encouraged the Board to embark on this communications enterprise. She said it fits in with what the City has been trying to do in the past year to professionalize its communications and to realize that outside help is needed. She said this is similar to how the City engages engineering and planning firms such as Dover, Kohl & Partners (DKP). She said the City cannot do everything and has been talking about this seriously for a year and it is time to start, particularly in view of the Legislative Session coming up.

Brock asked for a break down of the interview process and costs associated with it. She said the proposal shows a discounted rate from \$1500 to \$1000 per interview and asked if that is a one-on-one for an hour long interview. McKnight said the cost includes the interview pre-work for the questions and a report. 6PH breaks it down, codes it and puts it into a report with excerpts from people. She said it may be one-on-one or group interviews. She said they certainly want to talk to all City Council members and they will have people they want 6PH to talk to. They will talk to many people, and they need to because part of developing a plan is understanding the people they are trying to reach. They have to do a lot of listening to understand what is going on. Brock asked Merriam if the cost is industry standard because she has never seen it cost that much before. Merriam said she hasn't seen this before because the City is just starting to do contracts like this. She said she can't actually speak to individual "in particulars" in the Plan. She said the City can ask for more explanation of that from McKnight. Brock said she just participated in the Midtown Master Plan process and just the Board members did an hour interview. She said it seems like a very high cost, but doesn't know industry-wide if that is typical.

Brock also asked about deliverables. She said it appears that the Plan will come up with suggestions, but it would be the existing MRA staff that will actually do the implementation. She asked whether there will be any actual deliverables where 6PH would be the one doing Facebook posts and things like that. McKnight said in reference to Brock's first question, it is not just an interview. It includes all of the time spent figuring out who 6PH is going to interview, chasing them down and getting interview times set up, doing the actual interview, transcriptions, and then taking that information and coding it so they can try to find common themes. Those themes are then taken and spelled out in a report with anonymous excerpts from people, and then form recommendations and analysis of all the information. She said all of that is included in the interview costs.

McKnight spoke to the deliverables. She said for social media and the website, 6PH will make suggestions and give examples of what it would look like with designs, tones and sample posts along with a sample calendar. She said it does not include 6PH doing social media in perpetuity.

Buchanan said she thinks MRA needs someone besides staff or Board (although the Board can participate if they want) to do interviews. She said she has been involved in numerous interviews with various firms, primarily non-profits, who are either getting ready to embark on a capital campaign or who are trying to evaluate their role in the community and where they best fit, and finding out if what they are doing is what the community perceives as being the need in the community. She said typically a facilitator or entity like 6PH, or others on the list, is really helpful in terms of eliciting very frank, honest and candid responses, particularly from those not on the Board, City Council or staff, but more from citizens who are interested in what MRA is doing and would like to know more and understand better. Buchanan said she thinks it is really important for an agency like MRA to have that neutral voice out there trying to put this information together. She said people will respond to McKnight and 6PH a lot differently than they will respond to Ellen Buchanan, Nancy Moe or Melanie Brock.

McKnight said the goal of this is really to define the problem correctly. There is a lot of work in trying to get to that and a lot of digging that has to happen. A lot of the interviewing is trying to gain the bigger picture – not just going out and getting some information. It is trying to see it as a whole and then making it recursive. She said as they learn from one person then they can change their questions because they see a theme emerging and want to know more. She said there is a lot more to the process than just going out with a tape recorder.

Moe said what the Board is used to seeing in other consulting contracts is an hourly rate for a consultation, up to a maximum number for that category. She asked if that is what the \$24,000 amount for the interviews is. McKnight said it is based on the amount of time and number of interviews. She said she wanted to give a project rate because there may be one or two extra interviews added. She said the way 6PH figured that rate was based on 12 Council members who would each have one or two others they want 6PH to talk to. They felt that was a fair number based on that scenario.

Brock asked Buchanan if she foresees being able to implement the Plan with staff in-house. She asked if it makes more sense to hire someone because when you put money towards a plan and a tool, the next step is who will be implementing it. She asked if there will be another proposal down the road saying MRA needs another part-time staff person to help with communications or if it is something the Communications team at City Hall will handle. Buchanan said staff has discussed this and think there is some capacity with the current staff. She said a lot of it will be dictated by what the Communications Plan requires. She said staff may be able to take care of all or most of it, but needs to see the Plan and discuss it. Buchanan said she personally does not see that MRA is in a position of needing a full-time communications person. She said there may be others that disagree with that and the Plan may prove her wrong. However, she said she may be open to that should that be what the Plan recommends.

Jones said from her perspective the interview process will be helpful. She said MRA needs the consultants to have a deep understanding of what concerns exist out there and how the MRA operates. She said she sees the interview process as necessary so they understand the problem and can work on solutions, education and outreach as MRA works on better communication going forward.

McKnight added that their proposal isn't just doing interviews to figure out whether a billboard is needed, for example. She said some of what will come out of the interviews will be informational and educational materials. She said she looks at it like what are some informational and educational things they can put together, what will those be, and what do people need. She said 6PH will look at what the deeper problem is. She said there are already ways for the community to participate with MRA, but maybe they don't know about it so that is another thing she really wants to dive into. McKnight said she wants to find out why those avenues aren't being utilized or people feel like they can't utilize them. Also, she said there is a lot of frustration in the community and a lot of horrible things being vetted around cronyism, and she wants to find out what the opportunities are to engage the community and find ongoing engagement. She said maybe the community has an idea of how they want to participate that isn't already available. She wants to bring that to the table, too, and once and for all figure this out and find a way to work together.

Moe asked McKnight to elaborate on how discovery is different from interviews. McKnight said one is internal and one is external. Discovery is talking to staff and the Board to understand how they see the problem and what materials they wish they had. It also includes doing research in communities around the country who have been in similar situations to find out what they are doing and what their models are, both for communication and for engagement. McKnight said it could include her reading about it and finding articles, or it could involve her making a phone call and having a long conversation to see what was going on and what they did about it, and find out what worked and what didn't.

Moe said the other part of this is the contract. She asked Buchanan if Jim Nugent, City Attorney, has reviewed it. Buchanan said he has not. She said he will review any contract that evolves out of this if the Board approves it. Moe asked if he will review the contract before MRA signs the proposal. Buchanan said yes. The contract will have to take a form that is acceptable to the City. She said she doesn't know if this form will be acceptable to the City and she views it as a proposal. Moe said there are a number of items in it that need Nugent's review. She said it mentions confidentiality and since MRA is a public body its proceedings are not confidential. Buchanan concurred and said that will be covered in whatever form the contract takes if the Board approves it. Moe said there is also a section called "Rights" saying that MRA as an agency is responsible for insuring various items. She said some of those items look to her to be the responsibility of 6PH. She said she would like Nugent to review it so it conforms with how the MRA actually operates as a public body. Buchanan said she suspects that section is tailored to both private sector contracts as much as, if not more so than, public sector contracts, and every contract is a negotiation once Mr. Nugent gets involved. He has the things MRA can and cannot say.

Moe said she hoped that what is produced will be an improvement on, for instance, the description of the Scott Street project on the City's webpage under the "Engage Missoula" tab. She said that information does not convey the continuity of what has transpired. She said the posting should be presenting what is happening with the Scott Street proposal, but it does not have continuity of what has been reported in the press. She said without a person subscribing to the project it is not as user-friendly and does not reveal as much information and is not as educational on the initial screens as it could be, unless one becomes a subscriber to the process. Moe said that web posting also was not updated in a timely manner. She said it doesn't show the process where MRA actually approved the proposal, it doesn't show when City Council looked at it, and it took a couple of weeks before it was updated to say that the City Council actually approved the project. She said it wasn't as engaging as it could have been.

Moe said the proposed motion is that the MRA Board approve the award of a contract to Six Pony Hitch to develop a communications plan as described in their proposal dated August 19, 2020 in an amount not to exceed \$46,500 and authorize the MRA Board Chair to sign the contract documents.

JONES: SO MOVED.

Brock seconded the motion.

Moe said she will vote in favor of this motion because she thinks MRA needs to get started on this and needs to get focus on the public education part and she is in favor of that.

Moe asked for the numbers to be shown for public comment.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (3 ayes, 0 nays).

West Broadway Master Plan – Request for Approval (Buchanan)

Moe asked if there was a termination deadline for the Opportunity Zone (OZ) and what the term for Urban Renewal District (URD) II is. Buchanan said when the City bought the Sleepy Inn property at the corner of Broadway and Russell Streets it was bought for a short-term purpose which was to provide a non-congregate shelter for folks who don't have a place to shelter safely should they be exposed to COVID-19, waiting for test results, be symptomatic or actually have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Buchanan said the motel created the opportunity to provide the non-congregate shelter which is being operated by a combination of City/County resources, with the County leading the Emergency Response staff. Buchanan said it has served its purpose well. There have been people in there consistently since some of the rooms were ready, and rooms continue to become ready as time allows. The funding for operating the shelter and for modifying it to accept the non-congregate folks that need a place to stay will all be reimbursed, as far as they know, through Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding that has been made available to cities for responding to the virus.

She said the City took a long view when it bought the Sleepy Inn property. The City has been looking for a long time at properties in the West Broadway area that might be prime for redevelopment, to take advantage of the fact that there are a few years left in URD II. She noted that the City's recent purchase of the 19-acre Scott Street property will allow Missoula Water to look at relocating from its very valuable and large piece of real estate on West Broadway, just down from the Sleepy Inn, and consolidate their operations into a newly reconfigured Public Works complex on Scott Street. That would free up a substantial development parcel on West Broadway where there is TIF funding available to assist with addressing the need for housing for all income levels.

Buchanan shared a map of the West Broadway Plan area. She said the City decided that it at the Sleepy Inn property in a broader context. There are a number of properties in that area that are currently on the market, are soft, and could be purchased by private developers and/or the City, plus there is the opportunity with the Missoula Water property. She said the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) had to purchase an entire parcel that used to be an old gas station in order to get adequate right-of-way (ROW) for the Russell Street Bridge project. They now have excess ROW that they have no need for, and the City could consolidate it with the motel property. She said the large building that used to house Adam & Eve has been on the market for quite some time. She said the owners of the properties on either side of Missoula Water are willing sellers at this point.

Buchanan noted that the Downtown Master Plan, developed by Dover, Kohl & Partners (DKP), extended to Russell Street, and it paid some attention to the West Broadway area,

but a lot has changed since that Plan was done. The City now controls both the Sleepy Inn and Missoula Water, with Missoula Water being in a position in a few years to relocate out of that area. She said it makes sense to take a closer look at the area between California Street, Russell Street, West Broadway, and the Clark Fork River.

Buchanan said the City knows it will need a fairly robust public process around development in this area. There was a lot of angst among property and business owners on the north and south sides of West Broadway about what the ultimate plans were for the Sleepy Inn property when the City purchased it for the non-congregate shelter. There were rumors that this was going to be another permanent homeless shelter, which was not true.

Buchanan said the Westside neighborhood is very engaged. They have concerns about what will happen on West Broadway. They have seen some impacts from the Poverello Center having been built on West Broadway and have a keen interest in finding ways to house the less fortunate population who work and provide services in Missoula, but right now can't find adequate housing here.

Buchanan said this property is in an Opportunity Zone (OZ), in addition to being in an URD. Those two tools are powerful tools to entice private development. There are incentives through the use of TIF funding. There are tax advantages through the use of the OZ. To go back to Moe's question, Buchanan said she does not know how long the OZ will last. She said it has been an evolving thing with a series of regulations that have come forward. Missoula Economic Partnership (MEP) have been keeping up with that. Right now the OZ is still viable and will be for the foreseeable future. Buchanan said the way she understands it, the advantages diminish with time. With respect to URD II, it is scheduled to sunset in 2031. The clock is ticking and there is a limited amount of time left in URD II, which is one of the reasons to go ahead and get this process started even though it is unknown how much longer COVID-19 is going to be an issue in the world, the United States and Missoula County. The City Does not know how much longer the Sleepy Inn will be needed for the purpose that it is serving right now, but if they know where they want to go once that need no longer exists they will have done the public input process and gone through a planning process that provides a road map to begin to start talking to investors and developers who might want to invest in this area.

She noted the City has a contract with DKP to do the Downtown Master Plan which has been completed and adopted as part of the City's Growth Policy. That Plan was amended to do the North Riverside Parks & Trails Plan, which is looking at the parks on the north shore of the river, from Lions Park off of California Street to Kiwanis Park, with an emphasis by DKP on the east Caras Park area. That Plan is nearing adoption. The Downtown Master Plan contract also was amended to engage DKP to do a master planning effort for the Payne/Library block - an entire block in the middle of downtown. As an aside, Buchanan said that is on hold for a bit due to a Big Sky Trust Fund Planning Grant that has some time constraints associated with it. She said it seemed apparent that City really needs to understand what post-COVID-19 looks like before deciding what the highest and best uses are for that really important block. She said there are some things that have been suggested that they think will come out of the public planning process that may look very different post-COVID-19 than they looked pre-COVID-19.

Buchanan said the Payne/Library Block planning is on hold for now, but the City would like to move forward with the planning process around the West Broadway property from Russell Street to California Street. DKP submitted two proposals to do that, per Buchanan's request. One had more public involvement than the other. The less expensive one really built on the process that the City went through when they did the Downtown Master Plan. After looking at the two proposals and giving it a lot of thought, Buchanan said the City needs to do the more engaged process for the reasons she stated. The neighborhood and the property and business owners on Broadway need that kind of public engagement. Also, things have changed since the Downtown Master Plan was done in terms of who owns what.

Buchanan said the staff recommendation is that the Board approve a recommendation to the Business Improvement District (BID) that they amend the Downtown Master Plan contract to encompass this area, with funding coming solely from the MRA in an amount not to exceed \$65,000.

Jason King, DKP, said Buchanan gave a great overview. He added that DKP's proposal includes what is called a virtual charette. DKP will engage a lot of people online and in meetings. They will have a website which will have polls and surveys so people are able to give input and interact with DKP. He said it will be like the work they did on the Downtown Master Plan, only it will be a virtual version with maximum public engagement. King said they have had a lot of success working virtually on the Mullan Neighborhood and Northside Parks. King said they have talked to a lot of people and put many people at ease and got them excited.

King said DKP will be working with a local engineering firm so they can create a vision to attract investors and potential developers. He said that vision would be based on an understanding of the site, which has some tricky parts. He said they will also be working on the land and owner regulations for this area, so that means there will be a code for this spot which would help it. It's good for investors and developers because it means there is a speedy path to approvals. It is good for the community because there's predictability and they know what would be coming. King said DKP understands the code really well from working on the Mullan Neighborhoods. They have come to know staff as well. King said there is always the problem with the out of town consultant, as was voiced, with people asking if it would be better to just spend the money on a staff member. King said a lot of times it would be, but he thinks this time DKP can create a compelling and interesting vision, code and land development regulations. He said the Plan will then largely implement itself. It will be true to the vision created by many hands working on the Plan.

Brock said she was curious if there is any reason not to include one block north of West Broadway instead of focusing just on the parcels south of Broadway. King said West Broadway is a big divide. He said the question of how the street should be designed is its own big question. However, he said it is up to Buchanan and staff. He said it could be helpful to include the north side because it is an area that could use investment. He said it often is a good planning principle to design both sides of the street simultaneously. Buchanan said King's lead-in comments are the crux of that decision. She said Broadway is a formidable street. Broadway is also a state route. She said by looking at both sides of Broadway it forces the issue of what do you do with Broadway. She said the City could

spend all of its time, energy and effort on that alone. She said she looks at the amount of energy and effort that has looked at what to do with Higgins Avenue for the last 15 years. Broadway is the same sort of thing, especially when you look at the downtown end of it. Because of time frames around the life of URD II and time frames around OZ maximization, Buchanan said she doesn't know if they want to get into a two-year discussion about what to do with West Broadway as a street. She said the decisions that are made with what to do on the south side of Broadway will certainly inform what happens to those commercial properties on the north side of Broadway. Buchanan said she personally does not think they're ready to tackle Broadway today. She said she does not know how to avoid it if that study area goes up to what looks like the absolute logical spot which is one block north of Broadway. Brock said she just wanted to make sure an opportunity isn't being missed, but if including the north side of Broadway makes a much more cumbersome project then it absolutely makes sense to leave it out.

Jones said she supports this proposal. She said the Clark Fork River is at the heart of this community and she believes it is in the public's best interests that there be a redevelopment of this area to maximize the public's use of the River in addition to having a seat at the table of the redevelopment of this area. Many of the buildings are in desperate need of renovation, upgrade and redevelopment. She said she likes this proposal also because it can lead to redevelopment in a way that maximizes the public's use of the continuation of the Riverfront Trail. It can improve access and safety to the public recreation area on the island that MRA has discussed in other proposals. It can also allow MRA to be prepared to assist private investors and partners when the opportunity presents itself for redevelopment in this area, given its location in an OZ. Jones said she very much supports this proposal.

Moe asked what effect the COVID-19 pandemic has on the proposal. She asked whether the planning will take into consideration the amount of time the community will need to recover and to implement the plan, which could be maybe four or five years. King said a lot of times their work is focused on what should happen. The time it takes is always the harder question. The proposal takes into consideration COVID-19 in terms of a virtual charette. He said he likes the idea of maximizing the public's use of rivers and trails as a major goal, and he likes the idea of taking into consideration recovery time to implement the Plan, as well as some strategies to reduce potential stall.

Buchanan said she and Dale Bickell, City of Missoula Chief Administrative Officer, had a conversation last week about what happens if MRA goes through this process and there is someone who comes in ready to move tomorrow to redevelop the corner where the Sleepy Inn is. She said she thinks there are options for the City to relocate the current uses there to another location in order to take advantage of an opportunity like that if it were to come along. She said the folks in charge of the COVID-19 operation are thinking about those things all the time. She said there are two questions here: How long does COVID-19 tie up that particular piece of property and how does post-COVID-19 world change in terms of how this area might redevelop.

Bickell said back to Brock's comment on Broadway and discussion of the street, one other piece of information is that the City is engaging in a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update now. He said that process really sets the Federal funding priorities and this is an eligible state route. Those types of things will be considered related to the process of

making sure there is a connection between this planning process and the LRTP update. Bickell said with the revisions of Russell Street, it becomes a really nice, new gateway to downtown.

Moe asked what the time period is for this project. King said DKP is able to start immediately. The proposed contract recommends a charette and public event in a couple of months. He said projects like this usually go six to eight months before they have a fully vetted plan, code and consensus. Moe said she expects a calendar will be given to the Board to keep them up to date. King and Buchanan said yes.

BROCK: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE CONTRACT WITH DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS TO CONDUCT A PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS AND CREATE A WEST BROADWAY MASTER PLAN FOR THE AREA BOUNDED BY BROADWAY, CALIFORNIA STREET, RUSSELL STREET AND THE CLARK FORK RIVER FOR A FEE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$65,000 AND AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SIGN THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS.

Jones seconded the motion.

Moe asked for the numbers to be shown for public comment.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (3 ayes, 0 nays).

MRA FY21 Budget – Update – Request for Approval (Dunn)

Moe said Dunn sent out an email earlier in the day with some comments on some of the taxable values. She said there is a significant decrease in TIF in the Riverfront Triangle URD. She asked Dunn to comment on the taxable values and other items in the Budget.

Dunn said this iteration of the Preliminary Budget includes the updated taxable values MRA received on August 3rd from the Department of Revenue (DOR). It also includes the changes incorporated with the Board's approval of the purchase of the Scott Street property and the bonds sold to pay for those. When MRA received the taxable values from DOR she plugged them into a spreadsheet and did a comparison. She said her memo details a decrease in most of the URDs. The Front Street District shows a variance of taxable value between last year and this year of \$13,747. There were additional appeals that came in that were not completed by the time values were certified for this year, and so there are additional appeals in the Front Street URD and MRA will see a loss of taxable value in that District. Dunn said MRA staff met with DOR staff and discussed some things that are going on, and there were a lot of appeals. She said that really explains most of the loss being seen in the District. She said central assessment was generally up.

Moe asked if there was any reasonable factor that considers the possible decline in collections other than appeals because of COVID-19 and the decrease in income when the mill levy is applied to the taxable value. Dunn said not that she is aware of. She said she doesn't know if the taxing jurisdictions consider that when they set their mill levies. Bickell said he is also not aware of a slow down in collections related to this. He said he thinks a

lot of it is that for the May property tax receipts most people already have those escrowed and have the ability to pay. He said state-wide there has been a very slight increase in uncollectables, but everybody is watching the November collections very closely to see if that is going to be an impact. Moe said MRA will have to be cognizant of that as they go through the year.

BROCK: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE UPDATED MRA FY21 PRELIMINARY BUDGET DATED 8/20/20.

Jones seconded the motion.

Moe asked for the numbers to be shown for public comment.

Dunn said MRA is still wrapping up FY20 and there are a lot of journal vouchers that need to be done. She said there will be one or two iterations of the Budget before a final one is complete in October.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (3 ayes, 0 nays).

URD II Inez 1st and 2nd Sidewalk Project – Request to Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) (Gass)

Gass shared a map of the project area. He said this project was included last month in the Capital Improvement Projects that the Board approved. Gass said today's request is to authorize staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Inez 1st and 2nd Sidewalk Project. It is the next phase in sidewalk construction related to the URD II Sidewalk Program. Since MRA began work under the sidewalk program in 2009, there have been over four miles of sidewalks constructed and about \$3.5 million invested in that program in URD II. Gass said MRA is on track to complete the sidewalk network in the District within the next eight years, which is the overall goal – to have it completed by the time the District sunsets. Gass said some of the other things MRA accomplishes through the sidewalk program are identified in his memo. They include reducing a blighting condition as defined by State Urban Renewal Law, providing basic sidewalk safety infrastructure, particularly along school routes, connecting neighborhoods, and helping support healthy and active transportation.

Gass said this sidewalk project involves building out the missing sidewalk segments identified by blue lines on the map. Those are generally 1st and 2nd Streets between California and Russell Streets. It also includes Inez Street between 1st and 2nd Streets and an outlier near the railroad tracks. Gass said the outlier was pulled from a previous sidewalk project for this year because property owners to the north and south of that street petitioned the City for a street vacation. That process took longer than what the timeline was for the sidewalk project this year and so he included it in this one for next year. There will also be a trail connection there if the City determines it is something they would like to have.

Gass said the land use in the south central part of the District is generally characterized as single-family and multi-family residential. He said the completion of this phase of sidewalks, in addition to future phases to the north, will help create pedestrian connections to the downtown via the Milwaukee Trail. It will also provide them to commercial and professional services along the Russell Street corridor. Gass said the staff recommendation is that the MRA Board authorize staff to issue an RFP to engineering firms for design, engineering and contract administration services for the URD II Inez 1st and 2nd Street Sidewalk Project. This is with the understanding that staff will later present a Professional Services Agreement and related budget to the Board for consideration.

Moe asked if the sidewalk includes both the red and blue map designations. Gass said the blue sections are the Inez 1st and 2nd Sidewalk Project. The red lines are missing segments that will be in future phases of the sidewalk work. He said the red lines are what remain to be completed in the District. Today's request is only for the blue lines.

Moe asked for the numbers to be shown for public comment.

BROCK: I MOVE THE BOARD AUTHORIZE STAFF TO ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FROM ENGINEERING FIRMS FOR DESIGN, ENGINEERING, AND CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR THE URD II INEZ 1ST AND 2ND SIDEWALK PROJECT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT STAFF WILL LATER PRESENT A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT AND RELATED BUDGET TO THE BOARD FOR CONSIDERATION.

Jones seconded the motion.

Buchanan said one of the things staff discussed was whether or not it was necessary for staff to ask for authorization to issue an RFP once the Board has already approved an item in the CIP. She said it seems like a redundant step before staff bringing back a Scope of Services and cost for approval. She asked for the Board's thoughts. The Board concurred it was unnecessary to both approve it in the CIP and approve an RFP.

No further discussion. No public comment.

Motion passed unanimously (3 ayes, 0 nays).

NON-ACTION ITEMS

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report

Buchanan said she approved an expenditure on the Sleepy Inn in the amount of \$2,650 to improve the fencing to something more aesthetically pleasing.

Brock asked what the Board meeting schedule looks like. Buchanan said as far as she knows, all of the equipment that was required to transition the Hal Fraser Conference Room to a Zoom Room was supposed to have arrived last week. She said she has not seen a schedule for installation. Staff will be in touch regarding future meetings.

Budget Reports

Dunn said she was working on budget updates last week and has not had a chance to update the Rainbow Reports.

Staff Activities Reports

Moe asked what the issue is with the Montana Rail Link (MRL) Park that is taking time. Marchesseault said the surface of the multi-use playing court had a small ridge that was affecting the play of the court. In addition to that, the line striping on the court was striped as 4-inch wide lines rather than 2-inch wide lines which are standard for pickle ball play. She said this all came about because the pickle ball players were not using the court and the Parks and Recreation Department asked the community why. Staff has been working with the contractor and landscape architect to resolve those items. She said even if there had not been a ridge on the court, the striping would have to be sandblasted in order to get smaller lines in there. It is a warranty item and it is on the docket with a contractor to fix it in October. There is not any action required by the Board and since it is a warranty item there is no cost to MRA. Buchanan said there were a couple of other things of concern by Parks and Rec that have taken Marchesseault's time to work through with the contractor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OTHER ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lesley Pugh