

CITY OF ELKO
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
3:00 P.M., P.S.T., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017
ELKO CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
1751 COLLEGE AVENUE, ELKO, NEVADA

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chris Johnson, Chairman of the City of Elko Redevelopment Agency (RDA).

ROLL CALL

Present: **Reece Keener**
 Robert Schmidlein
 Mandy Simons
 Chris Johnson
 John Rice (*arrived at 3:15 pm*)

City Staff: **Curtis Calder, City Manager**
 Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager
 Cathy Laughlin, City Planner
 Jeremy Draper, Development Manager
 Bob Thibault, City Engineer
 Dennis Strickland, Public Works Director
 Shelby Archuleta, Planning Technician

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

There were no public comments at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 8, 2017 – Regular meeting **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

***** The minutes were approved by general consent.***

I. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review, consideration and possible approval to send the proposed letter to business owners in the area identified in the RDA Plan as the Central Business District, and matters related thereto. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

This letter was written by two of the members of the RAC and reviewed at their August 24, 2017 meeting. Discussion included convincing property owners to clean up their properties, paint, and pull weeds which was the intent of the letter.

Cathy Laughlin, City Planner, explained that it was the intent of the agenda item, which was requested to be on the RAC Meeting, to discuss the Nuisance Law and City Codes in regards to a few of the downtown properties that have been overburdened with weeds, boarded up windows, etc. At that meeting we had discussion in regards to that and how difficult that City Code is to enforce and to consider something a true nuisance. It was discussed on how we could make the property owners in the downtown area take more pride in their properties by encouraging them to clean up their properties. From the result of the discussion Lina Blohm and Catherine Wines volunteered to write a letter and bring it back to the RAC for discussion on having the RDA send this out to all the business owners within the Central Business District.

Mayor Chris Johnson thought it was a good letter. It shows the accomplishments and the goals of the RDA. He thought they should discuss being able to get property owners to get to where we want them all to be, as far as the success of downtown. The owners would love to have the properties as a return in itself. He would be a little cautious to send a letter that was direct, but this letter is not. The letter is more of the accomplishments of the RDA, it's subtle. He would be in support of sending it out, but wouldn't address it or title it as a letter to promote people to look at their properties but more along the lines of information about the RDA, hoping that it would prompt folks to see the vision of getting things organized.

Lina Blohm, RAC Member, said that Mayor Johnson was right in that kind and sensitive to the participants and people of the Downtown Business District was definitely the theme here, and an awareness of what had been accomplished. The Storefront was mentioned to encourage more to participate. They tried to subtly get a message forward.

Mayor Johnson thought the success of downtown, or the Central Business District, needed to run along the same lines as a shopping mall. What are the policies that a shopping mall puts in place when different storefronts are being renovated? When he was downtown last Christmas looking at the downtown, he envisioned himself as an outsider that just walked into Elko. What was he thinking about the things he was seeing? He picked up on that the Storefronts could be better and the sidewalks could be plowed. It's important that that image is there as a nice, proper, storefront. The challenge we have is that they are all different owners. If the DBA can continue on with their things, and take on specific roles as far as sidewalk cleaning and that kind of thing.

Reece Keener asked when Ms. Blohm wanted to send the letter out.

Ms. Blohm said as soon as the RDA ratified it.

Mr. Keener said he had a couple minor things. Rather than a generic photo, he wanted an actual photo of somewhere in the downtown.

Robert Schmidlein suggested a photo of an achievement or something that had been accomplished in the downtown.

Mr. Keener said maybe it could show Romero's strip center along Idaho Street.

Ms. Blohm was in agreement with using local pictures.

Mr. Keener pointed out that the first sentence of the letter didn't sound like Elko. The only other thing was in the last paragraph of the first page. He wanted to see dollar symbols inserted before the numbers.

Mandy Simons thought it was great too. Her only suggestion was to put it in a Christmas card or to say "Merry Christmas". She didn't know if it would do what they wanted it to, it's a very gentle nudge.

John Rice arrived at 3:15 p.m.

Mr. Keener asked if there was any value in reminding the property owners that Cleanup Greenup Day, with free tipping fees, will be coming up in April.

Scott Wilkinson, Assistant City Manager, explained that was restricted to residential use.

Mr. Schmidlein pointed out that he had mixed emotions when he first read the letter. You have to look at the positive side of this. This is encouragement amongst property owners in the corridor. If you see development going on in your surrounding area, or neighborhood, it's a great encouragement for the people. Plus, you have identified the return investment, established the projects that have been completed to date, and identified the future goals of the RDA, encouraging all the other business owners to continue to buy in. It doesn't come from the City, nor from the RDA, it comes from private investment. Mr. Schmidlein thought Mayor Johnson was spot on, on a lot of things he brought up. At the end of the day all we can do is continue to encourage people to do certain things.

*****A motion was made by Reece Keener, seconded by Robert Schmidlein to approve the letter as submitted, with a few minor tweaks including: on the header artwork, to be left to the discretion of staff with a message of "Season's Greetings", to insert dollar symbols on the last paragraph of Page 1, and leave it up to staff on the first sentence of the letter.**

****Motion passed unanimously. (4-0)***

- B. Review, consideration, and possible approval of an amendment to the storefront improvement reimbursement program application package, and matters related thereto.
FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

After the first year of the Storefront Improvement Grant Program, the program guidelines and application should be reviewed to consider any possible amendments.

Ms. Laughlin explained that after the first year of Storefront Grant Applications they looked at the process. She felt that they had a successful first year. They had a request for more money than what was budgeted, which is a successful first year. Some of the projects probably weren't of the magnitude that some of the individuals in the downtown wanted, but we are seeing progress with it, and the word is getting out. She was anxious to see what the next year would

hold. Looking at that, staff thought this would be the time to update and modify the forms. The changes are pretty minor technicalities and some of the changes were done by the City Attorney, RAC, and Staff. She went over the proposed changes to the Grant Application and Guidelines. There was great discussion regarding the 9 months that we allow for the projects to be completed, unless they are issued an extension by the Agency. We were trying to get it so that it was 9 months from the date that the Participation Agreement was signed, because they all have to sign a Participation Agreement. The RAC recommended to keep in the building permit portion, so it would be whichever is the later of the two. It gives it a little more complication for staff, but we are willing to accommodate that and make it work. There was great discussion last year regarding "Non-Taxed Entities", so we added: 7. Properties, with respect to which a portion of the property taxes are not allocated to the City of Elko Redevelopment Agency. If they don't pay into the RDA fund they are not eligible. We left it at three competitive bids, as it is a NRS requirement that anything with Redevelopment Funds that is over \$10,000 must be competitively bid.

Mayor Johnson asked if the NRS qualified it as three bids. (No) He asked the Agency if they wanted to talk about that. What were the struggles in getting the number of contractors?

Ms. Laughlin said everyone, but one applicant, turned in three bids.

Mayor Johnson said the resource is there.

Ms. Laughlin felt it was. She felt that the applicants are given three months to get three bids.

Mayor Johnson asked if one project was too specific in the work that they wanted. Was that where they were limited, or did they just not take the steps that were needed? Was the work that they were after a little different than the others?

Ms. Laughlin said no, it was painting, door replacement, and stone replacement. They just couldn't get the three bids put together.

Mayor Johnson asked if they were limited on contractors to a specific trade. (No)

Ms. Simons said they could get them, they just didn't.

Ms. Laughlin said that was personally how she felt.

Ms. Blohm explained that the applicant said because the project was an inexpensive amount. The applicant said she tried to reach out to get the three bids, but they weren't forth coming.

Ms. Laughlin continued to go over the proposed changes to the Guideline and went over the proposed changes to the Reimbursement Form. The process will begin January 1st, applications are being accepted, through March 31st, and in April the Review Committee will meet and review the application and bring it back to the RDA.

Mr. Schmidlein assumed advertisement would go out 30 days before, to really try to encourage other people. He knew word of mouth had really gotten around.

Ms. Laughlin explained that they mentioned it in the letter that would be going out to all businesses in the Central Business District. Last year we sent out 420 notifications, which was costly to the Agency, but we can do that again this year if you want us to. We also had it on the front page of the City Website. Ms. Laughlin did some Lori Gilbert interviews, and tried to get the word of mouth out.

Mr. Wilkinson added that there were quite a few PSAs in regards to the Storefront Program, during the open period. He thought if they continued doing that it should be as effective as it could be.

Mr. Keener thought it would be effective, and not very expensive, to put a flyer in the Chamber of Commerce's monthly mailing. And reach out to the DBA, so they can promote it to their members in their correspondence.

Mayor Johnson said there was a hiccup on one of the other projects. Is there some verbiage we need to firm up? He thought it was on Mr. Dalling project. It was something about reimbursement amount, bidding amount, or some portion of his project that raised some discussion.

Ms. Laughlin explained that he submitted three bids for his project, but two of them were complete bids from general contractors and the third was just for the windows. That bid was a lot lower than the other two and it was determined to fund the \$25,000 maximum, which was the general contractor bids, which were for everything not just the windows.

Mayor Johnson said the discussion was whether or not the RDA should fund up to 50% of the low bid, but the low contractor wasn't a complete bid, but they did have three bids.

Ms. Laughlin said the application was complete, but it was determined that the third bid was non responsive.

Mayor Johnson asked if there was a contractor verbiage of that, which would cover that. Would it be an issue if it happened again? Is that a way to get around three bids?

Mr. Wilkinson suggested that they could add language that it requires three responsive bids, and the responsiveness of the bids will be determined by the Agency. If the Agency determined that all three bids were not responsive, then the application would be deemed incomplete at that point in time.

Mayor Johnson pointed out that those were the things you talk about when you bid. He was leaning towards having one less bidder.

Mr. Keener said that was a lot to ask for on a small project. He thought two was sufficient.

Ms. Simons asked Ms. Laughlin if there was a reason she went with three.

Ms. Laughlin said they went with three to make sure it was competitively, and correctly, done.

Mr. Wilkinson thought that having three helped identify if a bid was truly so low that it would be deemed unresponsive. He thought if there were two other bids that were fairly close it would help determine the validity of the bid.

Mr. Keener agreed with Mr. Wilkinson, but said that when contractors are busy, it's probably difficult to get one bid.

Mr. Rice pointed out that they are using public funds. While it might be inconvenient, it is a standard number. Maybe we can stick with three for this go around and see if there's difficulty.

Mr. Keener asked if there could be a clause whereby if an applicant is having difficulty getting the prescribed number of bids that they can have an extension in order to help complete the process. He asked if they had 90 days.

Ms. Laughlin confirmed that they applicants had 90 days to get three bids.

Dennis Strickland, Public Works Director, reported that they've had difficulty getting two bids on a concrete job. They were told they weren't doing concrete until October, or even looking at quoting work, that was in the spring. This summer was a difficult summer for them to contact and get responsive quotes. You might want to consider if you reach out to a contractor and they are not responsive, that you could document the correspondence. That could be the caveat for going to two bids, if there are no other responsive quotes.

Ms. Laughlin said there was conversation, last year in the RAC Meeting, about the timing and not allowing enough timing for this entire process. Last year we sent out the 420 notices in November to property owners and business owners in the Central Business District, and let them know that applications were being accepted January. The whole reason for setting that timeframe was that January through March is the slower time of most contractors, which is when they would have more time to put together bids. Then they would be completely ready for spring construction. We received all of the applications on the last day.

Ms. Simons asked if that was because people were not bidding work in January.

Mr. Keener said if you wait until the last minute to do something, it only takes a minute to do.

Ms. Blohm liked what Mr. Strickland said. She said with that they could get bigger projects that would show the proof of the benefit of the program.

*****A motion was made by John Rice, seconded by Mandy Simons to approve the amendments as presented.**

****Motion passed unanimously. (5-0)***

II. REPORTS

A. Budget

Ms. Laughlin reported that they are moving ahead in all of their revenue. To date we are at \$125,000 in property taxes and \$1,600 in interest. There are Legal expenses. We have had minor cost towards the Centennial Tower, but we'll have invoices on that within the next month. We've had one completed project in the Storefront Program for \$5,776. The Alley work, so far, we have had \$24,420 in expenses. The Centennial Park expansion we've had \$50,555. Total expenses to date is \$82,590.

Mayor Johnson asked if they could move the budget to an agenda item. (Yes)

B. Other

Ms. Laughlin reported that Capriola's was completed with their Storefront and had been reimbursed. Gerber Law was supposed to be getting started any day. Western Folklife Center had a stucco issue, but would be finishing soon and submitting for reimbursement. Hesson Hardware is continuing to work on their project. They have 9 months from the date of their permit being issued. If they need an extension they will have to put that in writing and bring it to the Agency. We were hoping to keep all the project within that 9 months, so that it would stay within this year's Storefront budget, not being carried on for years. The Alley project is 90% complete. We are waiting on the solar light to be installed behind the trash enclosure. She then showed the before and after pictures of the project. The Centennial Tower is being erected today and Mr. Thibault can give an update on the underground electrical.

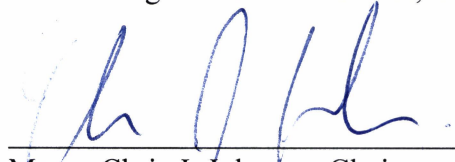
Bob Thibault, Civil Engineer, said they were wrapping up. They are substantially complete. All that is left is to stand up the light poles and an electrical pedestal, which have yet to arrive.

COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

There were no public comments made at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Mayor Chris J. Johnson, Chairman
Redevelopment Agency