

Urban Renewal Authority Meeting

July 22, 2021

Called to order at 9:32 a.m.

Present: Katy Brown (president), Rob Graham, Ken Dugas, Ryan Whitehead

Not Present: Chet Halverson

Non-Committee members present: Mike O'Donnell, Jacob Brady, Andy Worshek, Mayor Patrick Collins, Sam Crowley, Charles Bloom, Councilman Bryan Cook, Councilman White, Matt Kim-Miller, Bob Jensen, Mike Scholl

Audience Business: none

Old Business: none

New Business:

- a) **Presentation by Mike Scholl of Ayres Associates:** Mr. Scholl, Ayres Associates, gave a presentation which detailed Urban Renewal, Tax Increment Financing, the powers of an Urban Renewal Authority, and Urban Renewal recommendations from Ayres Associates. Mr. Bloom commended Mr. Scholl on his presentation. Mr. Whitehead commented that loan value depends on the project (hospitality is higher risk) – capital contribution would have to come first depending on the type of project to meet loan-to-value guidelines.
- b) **Discussion and Adoption of By-Laws:** Mr. Bloom commented that there was a change to the by-laws amending the top of page 2 clarifying the initial appointment process: members are appointed based on the Mayor's selection and appointment by the governing body. He let the members know that they could entertain a motion to accept the by-laws as presented by staff. Ms. Brown commented that she would like to include something in the by-laws outlining how meetings will be conducted. Mr. O'Donnell recommended adopting the by-laws and then amending them. Ms. Brown motioned to adopt the by-laws. Ken Dugas seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Ms. Brown moved to amend to include a paragraph which outlines the procedures to be used during meetings. Mr. O'Donnell asked for a conceptual amendment and specific language to be determined later. Mr. Bloom confirmed. Ms. Brown motioned, seconded by Rob Graham. All in favor, none opposed.
- c) **Election of Officers:** Mr. Bloom clarified that the President and Vice President are required to be members of the Authority, while the Secretary and Treasurer are not required to be members of the Authority. He then asked for nominations. There was discussion on who to nominate for President. Mr. Bloom detailed the responsibilities of the President, which include running the meetings. He emphasized that staff would support the president with agendas, minutes, and financial operations. Ms. Brown nominated herself. Mr. Dugas motioned to appoint Ms. Brown as President, seconded by Mr. Graham. All in favor, none opposed. Mr. Graham nominated himself for Vice President. Ms. Brown motioned to appoint Mr. Graham as Vice President, seconded by Mr. Dugas. Mr. Bloom detailed the role of Vice President as support to the

President. All in favor, none opposed. There was discussion regarding the Secretary position. Mayor Collins asked if the Secretary could be a staff member. Mr. Bloom answered that the Secretary could be a staff member and recommended Mark Christensen for the position. There was more discussion. Ms. Brown nominated Mr. Christensen for Secretary. Ms. Brown motioned to appoint Mr. Christensen as Secretary, seconded by Mr. Graham. All in favor, none opposed. Mr. Bloom recommended Sam Crowley for the position of Treasurer. Ms. Brown motioned to appoint Ms. Crowley as Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Graham. Mr. Bloom added that the Authority can make amendments if, upon further evaluation of roles, they decide to change positions.

- d) Discussion and Adoption of Hitching Post Urban Renewal Plan:** Mr. Bloom presented a staff report on the Hitching Post Urban Renewal Plan. There was discussion on the closing date for the Hitching Post. Mayor Collins clarified that as soon as the plan is adopted by Council, the developer will close. Mr. Bloom requested that on pages 1 and 8 the word “franchise” in front of “utilities” be struck from the document to avoid confusion. He wants to be clear that all utilities are included. Mayor Collins emphasized that the City has been in contact with a buyer, Robert Chamberlain, and the closing is contingent on the passing of the Hitching Post Plan to fund infrastructure improvements. He excused himself from the meeting as he had another meeting to attend. There was discussion on the area of the Hitching Post Plan. Mr. Bloom explained that the area was chosen based on development interest and barriers to development in those areas. Mr. Dugas asked if there were any residences in the area. Mr. O’Donnell answered that there was not. Mr. Dugas moved to approve the Hitching Post Urban Renewal Plan as presented by staff to remove references to “franchise” within the document and authorize submission to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the Governing Body. Mr. Graham seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Ms. Brown asked for clarification that the plan was approved with the amendment. Mr. O’Donnell confirmed that the motion made approved the plan and amendments.
- e) Future Possible Projects:** Mr. Bloom summarized other areas identified for possible Urban Renewal Plans, which included the Hynds Building and the Hole as well as the Reed Rail Corridor. He explained that staff would have those plans ready for the Authority’s consideration at future meetings. Mr. O’Donnell gave an update on both project areas. He discussed a possible buyer for the Hynds Building. He also talked about possible solutions in negotiations for use of the railroad right-of-way regarding the Reed Rail Corridor. Mr. Bloom also mentioned that future project plans would be drafted in-house by staff and they are open to guidance on these plans from the Authority. He stated that the Authority is authorized to go beyond city limits with permissions from County Commissioners as well as amending the Urban Renewal Plan, and this is something that could be considered in the future. He went on to talk about the Urban Renewal Authority’s website.

Other Business:

Ms. Brown asked for further discussion. Mr. Dugas asked what the Authority’s challenges are. Mr. O’Donnell answered that legislators are generally supportive of the URA to his knowledge.

Mr. Jensen added that the main challenge is that this Board is setting the precedent in Wyoming for Urban Renewal. Mr. O'Donnell gave an anecdote about misunderstandings of this process. Mr. Jensen emphasized that it is important to be transparent with the public. Mr. Ames commented that to his knowledge, on the state-level there is positive sentiment. Mr. Scholl added that it is necessary to maintain a good relationship with the County as well. There was discussion on the TIF process. Mr. Bloom talked about how the taxing district is established; when the increment is captured, there will be growth on the edges of the area during redevelopment. Mr. O'Donnell agreed that on the front end they will need to do plenty of public outreach as well as a marketing strategy. Mr. Bloom mentioned the Frequently Asked Questions that have been posted on the website. Ms. Crowley added that this topic is complex, and staff intends to continue making information accessible and educate the public as much as possible. Mr. Bloom added that they will go above and beyond what State Statutes require for public outreach. Mr. O'Donnell asked if there were other community public outreach models to look at. Ms. Crowley answered that staff has modeled its website after communities in Colorado, including Fort Collins and Loveland. Mr. Bloom mentioned smaller communities in Nebraska and Montana that are similar to Cheyenne as well. Ms. Crowley added that staff is open to recommendations from the Urban Renewal Authority members for what should go on the website. Ms. Brown requested that a contact person be added to the website. Staff agreed.

Ms. Brown made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Sam Crowley, Planner I, Planning & Development Department