

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

CALL TO ORDER: The La Junta Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, April 14, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers and via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Bennett.

Board Members Present

Absent

Joe Ayala
Nancy Bennett
Christine Coffield
Daniel Horton – via Zoom
T.J. Martinez
Justin Miller – via Zoom
Lily Sweikert – via Zoom

Trevor Herasingh

**Subject to approval at the
May 12, 2022
Urban Renewal Meeting**

Also present: Cynthia Nieb, Economic/Urban Renewal Director
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk/UR Secretary
Aliza Libby, Director of Finance
Randall Roberson, La Junta
Bette McFarren, Rocky Ford Gazette

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY APPLICATION: Randall Roberson submitted the following application. Each Board member also has the opportunity to ask additional questions of the candidate.

RANDAL ROBBERSON

1. What do you know about urban renewal authorities?
 - a. *Their mission:*
 - i. *Remove blight.*
 - ii. *Promote revitalization of poorly developed or dilapidated areas within a city.*
 - iii. *Eliminate substandard housing.*
 - iv. *Restore economic viability to a given area within a city.*
 - b. *Their funding:*
 - i. *Primarily from revenues generated within the tax increment district (TIF). This district, a defined area, is the beneficiary of incremental property and/or sales tax increases within the district from a predetermined base year.*
2. What do you know about certified local governments?

It is a program jointly administered by the National Parks Service and the respective State Historical Preservation Offices. Once a community is designated a CLG, they have access to Federal and State resources for funding, legal protections, technical advice, and other benefits specifically for the restoration of historic buildings and structures.

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3. Why are you a good choice for this position?

My 30 years experience as a loan office in the La Junta area, in addition to running my own insurance agency since 2019, gives me a unique and insightful vision of the need for UR and CLG in La Junta. I have seen the difficulty of establishing available business both through analyzing the financials of numerous and varied types of businesses in the Arkansas Valley and experience that struggle firsthand. As such, I know how difficult it can be to simply meet the monthly variable costs associated with running a business and how difficult it is to have sufficient funds thereafter for capital investment, particularly in the startup phase of a venture.

I purchased my building, located at 401 E. 3rd Street in La Junta (the old A to Z Electric Building), on October 10, 2019, and for the next six months, totally remodeled the front portion of the building (exterior and interior, wiring and plumbing) into the office space for my agency. I lease the back portion to Eric Pulido for his electoral business, thereby utilizing the entire structure.

This experience will aid in my understanding of the complexity and complications that many of the UR applicants will have in front of them.

4. What would you like the LJ URA Commission to focus on in the future?

Its purpose as outlined in Question 1 above. Additionally, to continue forward with the completion of the restoration of the Plaza Building.

5. What would you like the LJ Certified Local Government to focus on in the future?

To establish a list of the most historic structures in La Junta, prioritize that list in order of significance, and then methodically approach each project with intentionality until completion and thereafter move on to the next project on the list.

Joe Ayala left the meeting

After further discussion amongst the Board members, the following motion was made.

MOTION TO NOT APPOINT RANDALL ROBERSON TO THE URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY BOARD/CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD: Martinez

SECOND: Coffield

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion.

VOTE: The motion carried 5 – 0 (Ayala and Herasingh absent, Miller abstained)

Christine Coffield left the meeting

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. There was not any citizen participation.

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MINUTES: February 10, 2022

Chairperson Bennett asked if there were any corrections or additions to be made to the February 10, 2022 minutes. Hearing none, a motion was made by T.J. Martinez, seconded by Daniel Horton, that the minutes for February 10, 2022 be approved as published. The motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: March 2022

The March 2022 financial statements were provided for the Board's review.

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

- Total cash at the end of March was \$345,408.21.
- Notes receivable was \$5,637.50
- There are no investments.
- Total assets are \$351,045.71 for the month ending March 2022.

LIABILITIES

- There were no outstanding bills at the end of March.

STATEMENT OF REVENUE/EXPENDITURES

BUDGET TO ACTUAL

Bank interest in the amount of \$2.21 was received. Tax increment of \$42,904.87 was received from property tax collections. The following bills were paid:

Paul Benedetti – Phone Conf./emails	\$ 510.00
Amazon – Notebooks/Dividers	\$ 169.58
SE Colorado Power – Welcome LJ Sign	\$ 42.30
JMP Holding – MSOB Grant	\$6,288.50

The 2022 budget is \$229,015.00 less \$23,361.21 in expenses and \$30,080.10 (MSOB PYMT #2) in encumbrances leaving a budget remaining of \$167,573.74.

Chairperson Bennett asked if there were any questions or corrections regarding the March financial statements. Hearing none, a motion was made by Justin Miller, seconded by Lily Sweikert, that the financial statements for March 2022 be approved as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

City Finance Director Libby shared information regarding the Colorado Local Government Liquid Asset Trust (ColoTrust). This information is attached.

MOTION TO ALLOW THE CITY FINANCE DIRECTOR TO INVEST URBAN RENEWAL FUNDS INTO COLOTRUST: Martinez

SECOND: Miller

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

VOTE: the motion carried unanimously.

MOTION TO MOVE \$200,000.00 INTO COLOTRUST: Miller

SECOND: Martinez

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously

REPORTS:

A. Plaza Building

- Almost ready to start by the end of the month.
- Will be starting the State Historic Fund grant.
- Have to have occupancy by the end of the year in order to recover some of the tax credits.
- Summit Sealants is going to put an office in the Plaza Building to have it occupied by the end of the year.
- On Tuesday, representatives of Colorado Creative Industries will be in town to look at the building. DOLA will also be there.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Revised By-laws.** Daniel Horton explained to the Board that “duty of loyalty” ensures that each Board member have undivided allegiance. Not working against the organization but towards it and keeping any personal interest outside of that and working only for the best interest of what the Board is trying to accomplish. Daniel went on to cover some of the different points outlined in the revised by-laws. By-laws are attached.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE REVISED BY-LAWS AS PRESENTED: Sweikert

SECOND: Miller

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 4-0 (Ayala, Coffield and Herasingh absent; Horton abstained)

B. Urban Renewal Director Comments:

1. **2022 Goals.** We need to come up with some goals for this year. One suggestion is to apply for an EPA grant to work on hazardous materials. This grant has no cash match. Please bring your ideas to the next meeting.
2. **2021 ED Review.** This is a list of items that have been done regarding Economic Development, Urban Renewal, Certified Local Government, and Main Street. This can be found on the Google drive.
3. **The Chestnut.** They are working on the roof and the windows. They also have their hazard report.
4. **T.O.’s.** Still trying to get a proposal we can work with.
5. **Michael Yerman.** We’ve been able to add a consultant for 40 hours per month over the next 18 months without any cost to the City or the citizens. We received \$49,900.00 from a REDI grant, \$35,000.00 from the Gates Family Foundation and \$15,000.00 from the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.
6. **Celebrate Main Street.** If you would like to submit a short video on two things regarding Main Street, Cynthia will forward information. The deadline is April 20th.

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C. **Governing Body Comments:**

1. Justin Miller: Drafting motions makes you understand what's happening on the Board. I am going to step back and see if others will take the reins. I encourage everyone to step up and let your voice be heard.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Melanie R. Scofield, Secretary

Nancy Bennett, Chairperson