

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

CALL TO ORDER: The La Junta Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, August 11, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers Room. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Miller.

Board Members Present

Joe Ayala
Christine Coffield
Daniel Horton – by phone
Justin Miller
Randall Roberson

Absent

Nancy Bennett
Trevor Herasingh
T. J. Martinez
Lily Sweikert

**Subject to approval at the
September 8, 2022
Urban Renewal Meeting**

Also present: Cynthia Nieb, Economic/Urban Renewal Director
Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Debra Fraker/UR Secretary
Bette McFarren, Rocky Ford Gazette

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

1. There was not any citizen participation.

MINUTES: June 9, 2022

Vice Chairperson Miller asked if there were any corrections or additions to be made to the June 9, 2022 minutes. Hearing none, a motion was made by Randall Roberson, seconded by Joe Ayala, that the minutes for June 9, 2022 be approved as written. The motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: July 2022

The July 2022 financial statements were not available.

MOTION TO TABLE THE 2023 BUDGET UNTIL AN ACCURATE BUDGET CAN BE PRESENTED TO THE BOARD: Roberson

SECOND: Ayala

DISCUSSION: There was no further discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Bennett, Herasingh, Martinez, Sweikert absent)

REPORTS:

A. Plaza Building

1. Nancy Bennett provided the following statement on the progress of the Plaza building read by Justin Miller:

Masonry work is continuing on the east side of the building and is expected to take another month, according to Juan, job supervisor. Bricks are being totally removed, one course at a time, between soldier courses, each brick is being examined, cleaned and washed, then stacked until they are replaced. When damage to a brick face is found, that brick will be turned so damage is to the inside of the wall.

A course of bricks is one row of bricks laid horizontally. The soldier course is laid perpendicular to the regular course, with short side facing out, which gives the wall a way to be tied into the inner wall for strength and stability. There are three layers of brick on the plaza building. The team has already worked out how to match the historic red grout that was originally used on the front of the building and a short distance around the corner. The rest of the side of the building will have the common gray grout because there was originally another building right next to the Plaza Building. Three different formulas of gray grout have been worked out to be used on the side. This is a much more extensive job than I realized. The difference in the reset bricks and areas where someone in the past smeared cement over everything in an effort to repair brickwork is remarkable.

This building is going to be beautiful when finished. SECCP and Urban Renewal are a credit to this community for taking on this project.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Urban Renewal Director:

1. Resignation: Thomas Martinez turned in his resignation from the Urban Renewal Board:

Over the past few months, I have noticed a change of atmosphere within the Urban Renewal Board as it has become more contentious, and less conducive to what I believe the board should be focusing on. I am proud of the work this board has done, and I believe Urban Renewal is an important part of the community. I am confident that the board will continue to be successful as long as each board member's opinions and efforts are treated with the respect that they deserve. Effective immediately.

2. The following is a memorandum to La Junta Urban Renewal from Cynthia Nieb regarding an invalid work session:

On July 14, 2022, an invalid work session occurred because of a lack of proper public posting, change of venue, and exclusion of the public. I take full responsibility for these mistakes. In the future, meetings will be held in Council Chambers at the listed start time of 4:30 according to the posted notice at the entrance to the La Junta Municipal Building.

Attached you will find an actual record of the matters discussed at the work session. Bette McFarren was interested in attending the meeting and indicated that she could not be there because of a conflict, but regardless I erred in telling her that this meeting was closed to anyone but commission members. I did that because I conflated an executive with a work session: since my bout with COVID-19 in mid-June, I have suffered from brain fog and have had difficulty making what previously were easy thought connections for me. Once I became aware of my mistake, I apologized to Bette, pulled together this record, and shared the record with Bette McFarren and Nancy Bennett at a luncheon on July 16, 2022.

I ask that the Board accept my sincere apology and review and make any corrections or additions as you would to the meeting notes, vote on the result, and have it made part of the meeting minutes of August 11, 2022.

Thank you.

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MOTION TO ACCEPT THE INVALID WORK SESSION MEMORANDUM: Roberson

SECOND: Norton

DISCUSSION: there was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Bennett, Herasingh, Martinez and Sweikert absent)

3. La Junta Urban Renewal Work Session – Matters discussed at the July 14, 2022 work session as follows:

In attendance: Nancy Bennett, Justin Miller, Randall Roberson, Trevor Herasingh, and Joe Ayala.

Staff Member: Cynthia Nieb

Budget

- *Suggested that we retain \$200,00 in easily liquidated assets with a potential draw down to \$150,000 if needed for grants/loans to projects*

Eligible Grant/Loan Applicants

- *Both new and established business/owners in the TIF District*

Grant/Loan Rounds

- *Twice a year, January and July*

Grants/Loans

- *We will pay of smaller percentage of a project than the owner – not the whole thing. Less than 50% of a project, but 6 most awards will be made at more at 25%.*
- *Grants or loans in amounts of \$1,000, \$2,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000; \$20,000-\$35,000 if the project merits and we have the monies available – applicant's choice of either a loan or a grant; Emergency Grants/Loans will be considered after insurance claims are made. The absolute maximum we will award is \$50,000 and that will probably be a rare occurrence*
- *Loans: 2% interest; loans to be paid over an extensive period (no rush)*
- *6 to 18 months to finish a project*
- *We will want to know how quickly the building can be activated*
- *Project must be completed by a professional contractor, not the building owner/business*
- *All projects MUST pull required permits*
- *Lesser grant amounts will be placed under more lenient requirements such as checking the work when the project is finished*
- *Exterior monies will be funded for blight and safety; interior monies will be funded for safety items*
- *We are aware that there will be exceptions*
- *Applications will be greatly simplified. If possible, the application will be two pages long.*

Rollout

- *To spread the word about grant/loan rounds, we will create posters, a video, and press release to traditional media outlets*

Consumer Education

- *We would like to educate grant and loan recipients on their expectations, rights, and responsibilities (perhaps with the Chamber of Commerce)*

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE NOTES FROM THE INVALID JULY 14, 2022 WORK

SESSION: Ayala

SECOND: Norton

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DISCUSSION: Randall Roberson wanted to make sure that the plumbing and electricity was included in the utility's discussion.

VOTE: The motion carried 5-0 (Bennett, Herasingh, Martinez and Sweikert absent)

4. Thanksgiving Lunch: The Senior Center will be serving Thanksgiving lunch on November 17, 2022. In attendance will be La Junta Rise and Colorado Main Street doing their annual review of La Junta. The Deputy Director of Colorado Creative Industries and the Colorado Governor have been invited as well. Following the luncheon, they will be touring the MSOB projects. Cynthia invited the Urban Renewal Board to go on the tour. More information to follow.

B. Governing Body Comments:

1. Joe Ayala asked about the new windows on the upstairs floor of the T.O.'s building.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Debra Fraker, Secretary

Justin Miller, Vice Chairperson

ATTEST:

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk