

## MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 18, 2025

FINAL

A Regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held on Thursday, September 18, 2025 in the Hal Fraser Conference Room, 140 W. Pine St., and via Microsoft Teams at 12:00 p.m. Those in attendance were as follows:

**Board:** Karl Englund, Tasha Jones, Ruth Reineking, Melanie Brock, Jack Lawson

**Staff:** Ellen Buchanan, Annie Gorski, Annette Marchesseault, Michael Hicks, Jilayne Dunn, Lesley Pugh

**Public:** Mark Sindell, Josiah Brown, Chris Behan, Slaven Lee, Tracy Campbell, John Adams, Karl Olson, Courtney Ellis, Dara Wilson, Travis Mateer, Chris Zahas, G. Hoppe, Jennifer Shuch, Carrie Schreiber, Griffen Smith, MCAT

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

12:00 p.m.

#### **INTRODUCTIONS**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

[August 21, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes](#) were approved as submitted.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chris Behan and Travis Mateer made public comment on items not on the agenda.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **[MRA Bylaws – First Reading on Proposed Amendments – Request for Approval and Recommendation to City Council for Approval \(Englund/Buchanan\)](#)**

Englund said MRA is proposing to make changes to the bylaws both in reaction to the recently passed legislation that requires having someone from the County and someone from the School District on the Board, and to clean up some items. Buchanan said MRA does have to amend its bylaws to add members to the Board. State law previously stipulated that if you have an authority with an appointed Board of Commissioners that manage Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or Urban Renewal Districts (URD), the Board was limited to five members who have to reside in city limits. With the new legislation there are two ways for how URDs are administered. One is by having an advisory board that advises the entity that is going to make decisions, typically a City Council, for instance. The other

structure is what MRA has where a City municipality creates an Agency with an appointed Board of Commissioners. The new law requires adding two people to the Board, one that represents the County and one that represents the School District. The Mayor will make the appointments.

Buchanan said she and Dunn worked with Courtney Ellis, Dorsey & Whitney LLP, to review MRA's bylaws and modernize them. Buchanan identified the more significant changes in her memo. Englund said he saw the redlined draft and there were many outdated things that needed to be changed as well as cleaning up the language. He said they do need to discuss the number of votes it takes to pass something when there is a quorum but not a full Board present. Buchanan noted the stipulation has been changed that only the Chair or a Board member can pose an amendment to the bylaws. It now includes Board member, Director or MRA staff. They also need to discuss the affirmative vote required for something to pass, as Englund pointed out. This was discussed several years ago and the bylaws state that it requires three votes to pass any item on the agenda regardless of how many members of the Board are present. If the Board is expanded to seven and only four are present, it still requires three to have an affirmative vote. They could also revert to making a majority of the Board having to approve it regardless of how many are present. Englund said he doesn't feel strongly one way or the other. The Board discussed and chose to leave the voting as a majority of the voting Board members present required for something to pass.

**LAWSON: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE AMENDMENTS TO THE MRA BYLAWS AND DIRECT STAFF TO PLACE THE AMENDMENTS ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT BOARD MEETING TO BE HEARD ON SECOND READING AND, IF APPROVED BY THE BOARD, REFER THE APPROVAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE AMENDED MRA BYLAWS.**

**Reineking seconded the motion.**

Griffen Smith asked if the school district is just Missoula County Public Schools. Englund said it is any school district that is within any one of MRA's districts.

**No further discussion. No further public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).**

**Missoula Public Library Living Roof Project – 455 East Main Street (Front Street URD / Ward 1) – TIF Request for Partial Grant Match (Marchesseault)**

Marchesseault said MRA received a request from City Stormwater on behalf of the Missoula Public Library for a matching grant in the amount of \$75,000 for an award through the Showcase Green Stormwater Infrastructure Program which is sponsored through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Upper Columbia River Basin Toxics Reduction Grant Program. The local match would be one of several for the grant and will be for a living/green roof on the Library. It will include all of the roof surfaces at the Library including the third floor, fourth floor and top of the building totaling approximately 1/3 acre. It will contribute toward habitat for critters and help cool the spaces. Right now the surfaces are

stone which absorb, hold and radiate heat. Putting living plants there will benefit the spaces. Marchesseault said the request is for \$75,000 to be paid out over a two-year period. She said there is a fair contingency in the Front Street URD and it could be paid out over one year, but the program is set up to be paid out over two years.

Tracy Campbell, Stormwater Superintendent, was present to speak to the project as well as Karl Olson and Slaven Lee from the Library. Campbell said Stormwater Utility's goal is to prevent flooding and protect water quality. One of the ways they can do both of those things is by implementing green infrastructure and using plants, soils and nature to mimic the natural hydrological cycle. Green roofs are a way they can do that. She said she approached the Library a couple of years ago to see if they were interested. They were and said a green roof was proposed in the initial design but it got value engineered out because of costs. There was a grant done for a technical narrative through the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) and through that they were able to apply for additional grants. They were awarded a \$1 million grant through the Showcase Project Grant and right now it is going up the chain through DNRC before they get their final approval letter. Campbell said the City contributed \$30,000 in match from the Renewable Resource Project Grant. The Library Foundation is applying \$75,000 over two years and they got a match of \$75,000 committed from the County. The last match they are looking for is from MRA to complete the 25% required match for the project. Lee said it will be a publicly accessible living roof with huge educational opportunities for the community.

Jones asked for a timeline of the construction. Campbell said it depends on how fast they can get the contract awarded. She said planning and design could take one year and ideally they could complete it within two years. Brock asked who will take care of it. Campbell said the Library has maintenance folks that will be responsible for it and Stormwater has an Operations Maintenance Manager that can offer support. She said there is a small demonstration project utilizing the same materials in Whitehall. They have a project at the Butterfly House and the folks there have learned tips and tricks and can offer support.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD AUTHORIZE THE USE OF UP TO \$75,000 IN TIF FUNDS, TO BE PAID OUT OVER TWO FISCAL YEARS, AS PART OF A LOCAL MATCH FOR THE GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FOR THE MISSOULA LIBRARY LIVING ROOF PROJECT AND AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIR TO SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE CITY STORMWATER UTILITY.**

**Brock seconded the motion.**

**No further discussion. No public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).**

**Caras Park Outdoor Recreational Ribbon – Feasibility Study (Front Street URD / Ward 1) – Request to Issue a Request for Proposals (Marchesseault)**

Marchesseault said staff presented the Fiscal Year 2026 Community Investment Program (CIP) to the Board in June. It included an item in there for a recreational ribbon feasibility

study in Caras Park. The recreational ribbon was proposed in the North Riverside Parks and Trails Master Plan that was completed and in 2020. The feasibility study will dig into space requirements, infrastructure requirements, proforma, etc. The request today is for authorization for staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP). Once MRA receives that, a scope and fee will be negotiated with the consultant and it will come back to the Board for authorization.

Dara Wilson, resident, spoke against doing a study or recreational ribbon in Caras Park. She said Glacier Ice Rink (GIR) has been asking for help and money for a long time. She said the recreational ribbon in Spokane isn't used very much and she thinks this is a waste of money.

Buchanan said it was fair to point out that the North Riverside Parks and Trails Master Plan has been officially adopted by City Council as part of the Downtown Master Plan. This recommendation came out of that Plan. It has history and has been recognized as a way to activate the Park into a year-round facility.

Reineking said she thinks preparing the feasibility study is important and thinks the infrastructure it will have to look at is going to include whether or not it is feasible.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD AUTHORIZE STAFF TO PREPARE AND ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS, DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES TO PREPARE A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR AN OUTDOOR MULTI-SEASON RECREATIONAL RIBBON IN CARAS PARK, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT STAFF WILL LATER PRESENT A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE PREFERRED CONSULTING TEAM TO THE BOARD FOR APPROVAL.**

**Brock seconded the motion.**

Englund asked for a ballpark on the cost. Marchesseault said the CIP includes \$150,000. Staff won't know until they have negotiated with a consultant. The Parks and Recreation Department have estimated it will be around \$100,000, but that was based on numbers from five years ago. Staff will be looking for a consultant that has a team that would have marketing and proforma ability as well as engineering services to dig into the facility and infrastructure requirements. The team will also ideally include a design professional who will look at the space requirements. A ribbon may not be feasible but there may be another option that is configured differently. It needs to be studied for feasibility. There will also be long-term maintenance costs. Marchesseault said GIR serves a very important function in this community and the intention of the recreational ribbon in Caras Park would not be to compete with GIR. The real intention is to provide something that will bring year-round activity to Caras Park. In the winter it can be used for ice skating and the rest of the year it can be used for roller blading or other activities.

**No further discussion. No further public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).**

### **Property Contiguous with Southgate Crossing – Acquisition (URD III / Ward 4) – TIF Request (Marchesseault)**

Marchesseault said the request is for due diligence and then approval of funding for a property purchase. The intent is to bridge a purchase of a parcel of property that is contiguous to the northwest corner of the Southgate Crossing property previously purchased by the City. It is 2.25 acres and the intention is to include the property with the balance of the Southgate Crossing property for sale to the developer. The request for due diligence is \$50,000 and includes appraisal, survey, and Phase 1 and possible Phase 2 environmental. For efficiency, staff is requesting Board authorization for funding of up to \$1.3 million in TIF funding to cover the purchase price. Marchesseault said that amount is based on the price that the seller is offering it. If it doesn't appraise for that amount the City will negotiate with the seller. If the Board does approve this, staff is also requesting the Board recommend to City Council to proceed with the purchase and accept ownership of the property.

Buchanan noted this property is being offered to the City at a lower per square foot price than what was paid for the Southgate Crossing property and is the same price the developer paid for it last year. There is a significant easement on it that can connect to the roundabout on Mary Avenue and in the future can extend Johnson Street all the way to Brooks Street.

Lawson asked for a timeline on the due diligence and appraisal and if it was important to do all three steps today. Buchanan said they don't want to delay or extend the purchase any more than necessary. The pieces are in place and they have a developer that is anxious to own the piece of property. She said under the Director's spending authority she approved the expenditure for the appraisal which is underway for the environmental Phase 1.

Marchesseault said the appraisal will be done by October 5<sup>th</sup>. She said starting in mid-September they run into a lot of holidays that disrupt City Council's calendar. Once they sign a buy-sell agreement it starts the clock ticking with regard to due diligence and getting to purchase. They have 90 days with an option to extend it another 90 days, but the developer and the seller are both quite motivated and staff wants to have the maximum flexibility to get on City Council's calendar amongst the holidays and is the reason staff is making the requests. She said if the Board is uncomfortable and would like to see the due diligence results, staff can come back in October with a request for the purchase price. Lawson said he was not uncomfortable, but wanted to understand it. Buchanan said she and the Mayor's office and will decide if the due diligence is satisfactory and she is working with Dale Bickell, Chief Administrative Officer, as the executives in this.

Jones said she is in favor of this and thinks it is lucky the City has this opportunity. She said it was an awkward, missing piece to the redevelopment of the area. The property would have remained and outlier, undeveloped property or subject to some other sort of planning. She said it is a great opportunity and fully supports and endorses the motion. Buchanan said the City's relationship with the Missoula Economic Partnership (MEP) was essential in putting this together.

**JONES: I MOVE THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE THREEFOLD RECOMMENDATION WITH REGARD TO THE 2.29 ACRE PARCEL OF REAL PROPERTY CONTIGUOUS TO**

**THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE PROPERTY CURRENTLY KNOWN AS  
SOUTHGATE CROSSING AND INDICATED IN THE ATTACHED DIAGRAM 1:**

- A) THE MRA BOARD MOVE TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF UP TO \$50,000 IN UNOBLIGATED URD III TIF FUNDS TO COVER THE COSTS OF DUE DILIGENCE FOR THE PARCEL;**
- B) THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE USE OF UP TO \$1.3 MILLION IN UNOBLIGATED URD III TIF FUNDS TO COVER THE PURCHASE PRICE OF THE PARCEL, CONTINGENT UPON SATISFACTORY APPRAISAL AND OTHER DUE DILIGENCE FINDINGS; AND**
- C) THE MRA BOARD RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL PROCEED WITH THE PURCHASE AND ACCEPT OWNERSHIP OF THE PROPERTY, IF APPRAISAL AND OTHER DUE DILIGENCE FINDINGS ARE SATISFACTORY.**

**Lawson seconded the motion.**

Englund asked if the Board will see the due diligence and appraisal. Buchanan said staff can report to the Board regarding them. She said typically staff would bring back a request for the purchase, but are asking for that today for efficiency. The City will not move forward with the purchase if due diligence says they shouldn't. Jones said the same thing was done with Ravara where the Board would get an informational report on some of the contingent areas of previous motions. Englund asked what happens if due diligence shows further work is needed beyond the \$50,000 approved today but the parties remain interested. Buchanan said it would come back to the Board. If something of concern is found during Phase 1 it might be back on the seller to modify the sales price to cover whatever remediation is needed.

Carrie Schreiber, resident, said she agrees with Jones that it would be really awkward to not have this piece of property and try to connect it in with the Mary Avenue roundabout. She said she is confused how the soil testing will work and function because there is a large, man-made hill and runs the length of the property. It was built about 10 years ago and she said she doesn't know how they will do soil testing under it. She said from what she can see it would need to be removed in order to use the easement of the road and connect in with Mary Avenue. Schreiber also said she is a bit disappointed that Tollefson isn't going to be the one to develop the property because they do affordable apartments. She said she has heard their apartments are actually more affordable than Missoula Housing Authority (MHA) apartments. She said Miramonte doesn't have an affordable housing aspect to their plan at this time and wondered if it will all be market-rate or if there will be some affordable housing in the Southgate Crossing plan. She said the neighborhood is still hoping they will have a quality neighborhood park that will engage some of the natural features. She mentioned having a walkway along the irrigation canal from the bike path.

John Adams, City of Missoula, said usually with Phase 1 there is no soil sampling done. They will look at the history of the property and try to figure out how the site was used. He said soil sampling isn't done unless there is an indication to do so. Phase 1 will direct whether additional sampling and investigation will be needed.

**No further discussion. No further public comment.**

**Motion passed unanimously (5 ayes, 0 nays).**

**North MRL Triangle Property – Deconstruction of Buildings (URD III / Ward 4) – TIF Request (Buchanan)**

This item was pulled from the Agenda.

**NON-ACTION ITEMS**

**North MRL Triangle (URD III / Ward 4) – Consultant Presentation of Redevelopment Concept**

Mark Sindell and Josiah Brown, GGLO, presented the redevelopment concept for the North MRL Triangle property. Sindell said GGLO held three public workshops over the last several months to help get them to a desired concept. There were also three online surveys with over 1,000 respondents. There were also meetings held with stakeholders, service providers, working groups, potential development partners, etc. Key takeaways for redevelopment of the site from the workshops, surveys and meetings included housing that is affordable, mixed-use for neighborhood activation, safety and “making it Missoula”. Sindell said the plan was presented to City Council yesterday and there was a lot of acceptance and positive feedback. Brock said the slides in the Power Point are so important to drive this conversation with the community that keep saying they want more affordable housing.

Brown said the site plan includes 150-300 housing units including 200 apartments and up to 56 townhomes. Sindell said the townhomes could be for sale or rentals. He said not to get too caught up in the numbers, they are a ballpark to outlay the site and can move around. Brown said the townhomes would be self-parked garages, surface parking would serve the apartments and street parking would serve the retail. He said they are also counting on a lot of people being able to use the trail and bus to get around. Sindell said it is consistent with where Our Missoula Code Reform is going, state mandates and generally where you land on market. Buchanan noted there will also likely be some naturally occurring shared parking that will go on. Brown also spoke to open space and connectivity features.

Englund asked if the site will be developed in phases. Sindell said it could be all in one phase over several years and it is possible that one developer would come in and do all of it. He said usually when they have projects like this it is phased and done in chunks over time. He said GGLO’s work over the next three months will help sort that out, and they set up the plan where it could work in any one of those ways. Buchanan said it is hard to find a developer who will do market rate and income qualified and for sale and for rent all in one bucket. Sindell said they heard from the community that townhomes would be coveted and could happen relatively quickly and easily. Once you start deed restricting it gets more complicated.

Jones asked how the timeline can be accelerated as a community and when numbers will come into play. Buchanan said the numbers will come when there is a developer or developers. The work done to date sets up the City nicely to move forward into that process. One of the things they are hearing is that some of the developers that were considered for the Southgate Crossing property have interest in this property so there is already a pool of candidates.

Reineking asked what the plan is for the buildings on the site that are currently occupied. Buchanan said fortunately the two buildings being used are not slated to come down immediately and are on the edges of the property. The City is working with them and they understand they will not be there forever.

Lawson asked what is next for public engagement. Buchanan said the City has work it has to do to be able to build there. The next thing that will come to the Board for approval on the site from staff is a request for deconstruction of the vacant buildings. In the meantime, staff will work with MEP on what the best process forward is to identify a developer or partners. Sindell said GGLO's public engagement work to date has been extensive and they have captured the community priorities. Englund asked if there is more that needs to be done to get the neighborhood comfortable and make sure all of their concerns are dealt with. Sindell said they are really excited right now with the opportunity. Keeping momentum in progress and keeping them informed of the progress is key.

Brock said GGLO listened so well to the neighborhood and there is so much excitement now. Also, GGLO incredibly incorporated not taking away their views. She said everyone is looking forward to the existing Montana Rail Link (MRL) Park being fully open and safe again. Parks and Recreation had to close various pieces of it this summer and it hasn't reopened, so there are incremental steps that she is hoping to stay in touch with the City about to make it again a safe space for the community. She said her heart is bursting with happiness. She said it has been five years of trying to explain how one good deed changed the course of the neighborhood and now it feels like they are once again changing that neighborhood. She said 38% of the 15,000 people that live in Midtown own their homes and she hopes the home ownership piece is made possible and it was a top priority that came out of the master planning. Brock thanked Hicks for jumping in and getting this done.

Sindell noted that vision is important and they did the images to convey a vision. He said they realize the work has to pencil, but they have a vision and the more they can have a vision the more successful it will be. Jones asked who figures out the money. Buchanan said it will be a back and forth negotiation between the developers and MRA and City staff. Englund said it will be similar to what was done with the Ravara project. Buchanan said it will be an interesting test project because it is in a district that has a lot of capacity. Ravara, in the North Reserve-Scott Street URD, does not. Jones said there is a track record with Ravara which should help. Brock said for the first time in five years she had a business call her saying they were looking at relocating to North Avenue. She said it's been nothing but people wanting to get out of that neighborhood for the last few years. Hicks thanked GGLO for helping to present the possibilities for the property and trial testing it for feasibility and potential. Reineking thanked Warren for her work on communications and getting the word out to the neighborhood. She said in the same way Brock said it would be good for the MRA Board to have the school districts represented on the Board, she is really thankful there is someone on the Board representing Midtown.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Director's Report**

#### **Ravara Contingency**

**FY26 Budget Status Reports**

**FY25 Staff Activities Reports (5/31/25 – 6/28/25)**

**FY26 Staff Activities Reports (7/26/25 – 8/23/25)**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**OTHER ITEMS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 1:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lesley Pugh