

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
140 WEST PINE STREET
MISSOULA MONTANA
September 28, 2011, 10:35 am

Members present: Stacy Rye, Chair; Ed Childers; Renee Mitchell; Pam Walzer; Jason Wiener; Dick Haines; Jon Wilkins; Bob Jaffe; Cynthia Wolken; Lyn Hellegaard.

Members absent: Dave Strohmaier.

Others present: Chris Behan, Dee Andersen.

I. Administrative Business

A. Approve committee minutes dated: September 14, 2011-approved as submitted

B. Public Comment on items not listed on the agenda-None

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approve claims (accounts payable). -Consent Agenda (Brentt Ramharter)

MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council approve claims totaling \$264,641.25 (Detailed claims) 9/27/11

B. Approve City acquisition of the “island” parcel located south of West Broadway near Burton Street. (memo)—Regular Agenda (Chris Behan) (Referred to committee: 09/26/2011) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council approve the City acquisition of the parcels legally described as Plat B, Parcel XXX, in the Northeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of Section 21, Township 13 north, Range 19 West, commonly referred to as the “West Broadway Island” parcel from Ke-Do-Ma Investments with the understanding that the source of the acquisition funding will be Tax Increment Financing funds from Urban Renewal District II.

Chris Behan, Assistant Director, MRA said historically they use the word island in quotations when referring to this property because even though it is surrounded by water, in reality it's been created by a man made ditch. Portions of it are in the flood plain or flood way. It's notorious for noxious weeds and the build up of dead shrubs and tall grasses, which is a fire hazard. Currently, the primary human use is by the homeless and tubers floating down the river. Large amounts of trash and debris collect there which volunteer organizers recently cleaned up and have a future interest in adopting the area to continue to clean it and remove the brush. See photo and map.

He said MRA has had an interest in the property since the 1990's, but faced many challenges in attempting to acquire it. There were two separate entities that had property descriptions overlapping this parcel and both had been assessed taxes for many years. It took a title investigation in order to straighten that out and only recently has the insurable owner been willing to sell to the City. The preliminary plan for the “island” includes construction of a second bridge to link it to the pedestrian facilities on the east end to West Broadway. The main uses of the ‘island’ would be fishing, swimming, and tuber take-out. It has a zero entry beach, the only one on the riverfront. Landscaping would be primarily removing noxious weeds and encouraging riparian plants. It would also be designed to increase public safety over its current state and make it much less comfortable for overnight stays. The purchase price of \$25,000 given by the owner is very firm. The amount is considerably more per square foot than other City purchase of riverfront or flood plain land.

In August, the MRA Board recommended the City approve the acquisition of this ‘island parcel. The MRA Board also approved up to \$25,000 plus any required closing costs using Tax Increment Financing funds from URD II in the event the City Council approves the purchase.

Stacy Rye asked who the current owners are.

Mr. Behan said a local man named Ken Hayes and his out-of-state partner Mr. Moss.

Jon Wilkins said the owners are getting paid a good price for never maintaining it.

Dick Haines suggested a low profile crossing he had seen in Oregon for the second bridge.

Pam Walzer said several years ago, the Parks and Recreation Department came in and discussed this property. They were in support of acquiring this land. Their intent was very minimal development. She said she has gone down to this area and observed the people who use it. In the mornings it’s the homeless who leave and come into downtown. In the afternoons people hang out and swim their dogs and in the evening the homeless come back for the night. She said this would be a great asset to the community to have a recreation area on the riverfront. She said she is very supportive of this and moved to approve the acquisition.

Lynn Hellegaard asked Mr. Behan if we are putting off other projects in URD II in order to buy this land.

Mr. Behan said no.

Renee Mitchell asked what plans we have in the future to connect the “island” trail path to Broadway Street.

Mr. Behan said we have always wanted to do that but we would need an easement. The other way to do it would be to cross the 2 bridges

Ms. Mitchell said so for \$25,000 we get to spend a lot more money.

Mr. Behan said we are buying access to state land and a recreation area for the community.

Ms. Mitchell said the insurance will fall on the City and the cost right now concerns her. She doesn’t think she can support this.

Mr. Jaffe said he supports this even though it is more than we are accustomed to paying for, its a huge community asset. We get a trail and a beach.

Ms. Rye said she bikes through this area to go to work and currently it is very unpleasant. She has seen suspicious “trading” activity and doesn’t feel very safe.

Ms. Mitchell asked how much land are you are buying.

Mr. Behan said 5-6 acres.

Ms. Walzer cant emphasize enough how great this place could be if people knew they were allowed to be there. Once we get this as park land, this place will be full of people in the summer season. There is no current making it an easy place to swim. It’s a better place for tubers to take out and we have volunteer partners who want to maintain it. Currently it’s a blighted area and taking it over will increase its value and benefit our community.

Upon a voice vote, the motion passed with Ms. Mitchell voting nay. The item will be placed on the consent agenda as requested by Ms. Rye.

III. Held in committee

- A. Approve claims. (Ongoing) (Consent Agenda)**

- B. Approve journal vouchers. (Ongoing) (Consent Agenda)
- C. Approve budget transfers. (Ongoing) (Consent Agenda)
- D. An ordinance amending the municipal code as it relates to bike licensing. ([A&F](#)) (Returned from council floor: 12/15/08) (Tabled 8/3/2011)
- E. Amend Council rules to change the Council's regular meeting schedule to two meetings per month ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Marty Rehbein) (Referred to committee: 06/07/10)
- F. Discuss the disposition of surplus city land. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (John Newman) (Referred to committee: 10/25/10)
- G. Discuss outstanding third-party contracts. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Lyn Hellegaard) (Referred to committee: 11/08/10)
- H. Review the city's current policy for charging the public for various city-produced documents ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Dave Strohmaier) (Referred to committee: 12/06/10)
- I. Review Missoula's insurance experience, particularly work comp; propose improvements if warranted. ([memo](#))—Regular Agenda (Ed Childers) (Referred to committee: 05/09/2011)

IV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 am

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Andersen

Administrative Secretary