

**MISSOULA REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**CONDENSED BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**February 11, 2014**

**FINAL**

A **Special** meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency was held at the MRA Conference Room, 140 West Pine, Missoula, MT 59802 at 12:00 PM. Those in attendance were as follows:

**Board:** Karl Englund, Daniel Kemmis (Skype), Ruth Reineking, Rosalie Cates (phone)

**Staff:** Ellen Buchanan, Chris Behan, Jilayne Lee, Juli Devlin

**Public:**

**CALL TO ORDER**

12:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS** - None

**ACTION ITEMS**

**South Reserve Street Trail Crossing (URD III) – Request to Approve Professional Services Agreement (Buchanan)**

At the January 2014 Board meeting Buchanan had intended to make a recommendation to the Board to engage the services of a consulting team to determine the best way to extend the Bitterroot Branch Trail across South Reserve Street to connect the Missoula to Lolo trail. DJ&A and Territorial Landworks were the two firms who responded to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) but, because these two firms scored so close, it was felt an interview process was necessary. The Board approved a request that staff select a respondent and negotiate a contract to develop a scope of work for a feasibility study. Buchanan said DJ&A was selected by the interview committee consisting of Kevin Slovarp, City Engineer, Donna Gaukler, Parks and Recreation Director, a member from Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and MRA staff. Buchanan said DJ&A has worked on past City projects and is also the firm who is working on the section of trail from Missoula to Lolo. She said after meeting with DJ&A they were able to narrow down the feasibility study which brought the price down to \$39,091. Buchanan said if the feasibility study recommends an on-grade crossing as the best

route across Reserve Street then the \$39,091 would be spent for the feasibility study and the TIGER Grant would take over for the rest of the project. If the feasibility study recommends a grade separated crossing as the best route across Reserve Street, then \$18,493 of the \$39,091 would have been spent as part of the preliminary engineering for the grade separated crossing. Buchanan said the RFQ was structured in phases where phase one was for the feasibility study and phase two through four was for the engineering piece, should the feasibility study recommend a grade separated crossing.

Kemmis said he understands if the \$39,091 is approved for the feasibility study and the feasibility study recommends a grade separated crossing, then \$18,493 of the \$39,091 would have already been used for preliminary engineering work for the grade separated crossing. He asked if it was fair to say that if the feasibility study determines an on-grade crossing as the best way across South Reserve Street, then MRA has spent \$39,091 for the feasibility study and the \$18,493 will have helped with the decision of an on-grade crossing but will not help in building the project. Buchanan said that was correct.

Kemmis asked what the decision process is for a grade separated crossing or an on-grade crossing and asked who makes those decisions and how those decisions are derived. Buchanan said DJ&A has a sub consultant called Alta Planning & Design which is one of the top firms in the country and is known for their expertise in designing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. She said Alta's role will be to identify and articulate the user groups who would use an on-grade crossing opposed to the user groups who would use the grade separated crossing. Alta will look at pedestrian and bicyclist behaviors in the area of South Reserve as well as national trends. Buchanan said if the grade separated crossing is the preferred alternative then the question is whether to go over or under Reserve Street. Buchanan said if the decision is to go under Reserve Street then utilities in that area need to be considered as well as determining the length of the crossing and understanding the right-of-way in that area. She said coordination with MDT and City Engineering will be required if a grade separated crossing is recommended. Englund asked who makes the decisions with the South Reserve Street crossing. Buchanan said if the grade separated crossing is recommended and the crossing, for example, goes over the street, and MDT concurs, then the decision should be up to the MRA Board how to allocate funds. She said if the Board decides to bond then City Council will need to approve the bonds.

Kemmis asked if there was a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator or advisory board who might be able to provide guidance on trails and their use. Buchanan said there is a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee that meets monthly.

**REINEKING: I MOVE THAT THE MRA BOARD APPROVE THE SCOPE OF SERVICES FOR DJ&A TO COMPLETE A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO DETERMINE THE BEST METHOD FOR THE TRAIL TO CROSS RESERVE STREET FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$39,091 AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE CONTRACT FOR THE STUDY.**

**Kemmis seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. No further discussion. (4 ayes, 0 nays) Moe absent.**

**NON-ACTION ITEMS** - None

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **Budget Reports**

Budget reports were provided with the Board packets.

Buchanan said a notice was received regarding a tax appeal from Bresnan Communications that did not succeed. She said the result is a windfall amount of about \$200,000 for URD II.

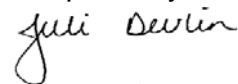
### **Other Items**

Kemmis said at one point in time there were discussions and questions relating to strategic planning and how MRA's tools could be used to help businesses. He suggested before going too far with recommending and adopting a FY15 budget, MRA should discuss a strategic plan and consider the bigger picture. Buchanan said she can coordinate with the Board members but asked for direction from the Board. She said keep in mind that MRA is in the business of good development. She said we can't pick and choose who goes into the development or what project is developed but MRA can ensure proper development. It was discussed that the strategic planning session be an item on the regular Board meeting agenda in March 2014. If the regular Board meeting agenda for March is too large then staff will coordinate a special Board meeting. Englund suggested the Board members and staff members solicit strategic planning ideas and refine those ideas via email prior to the March meeting. All that were present concurred.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Juli Devlin