CITY OF OREGON CITY
URBAN RENEWAL COMMISSION
MINUTES

Virtual Meeting
Tuesday, June 01, 2021 at 6:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING INFORMATION

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Denyse McGriff called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: 6 - Chair Denyse McGriff, Commissioner Doug Neeley, Commissioner Frank O'Donnell, Commissioner Rachel Lyles Smith, and Commissioner Rocky Smith, Jr.

ABSENT: 1 - Vice Chair Shawn Cross.

STAFFERS: 5 - City Manager Tony Konkol, City Attorney Bill Kabeiseman, City Recorder Kattie Riggs, Economic Development Manager James Graham, and Finance Director Matt Zook.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

DISCUSSION ITEM

1. Study of Urban Renewal – Disposition of Urban Renewal District

Tony Konkol, City Manager, described the Commission's prior vote in support Urban Renewal as a useful tool. Mr. Konkol outlined the questions for the City Commission's discussion, including what the vote on the charter amendment meant, how the City Commission would like to respond to that vote, and the vision for Urban Renewal. The answers to these questions would inform the discussion on the Tax Increment Funding (TIF) to be decided on June 2, 2021.

Commissioner O'Donnell felt the Urban Renewal Commission should establish the vision for Urban Renewal, the projects, and the order of events before re-engaging Leland Consulting Group and suggested waiting to extend the contract.

Chair McGriff felt updates to the Urban Renewal Plan should be completed first and that a process for vetting developers could be established.

Commissioner Neeley felt the first discussion should be about the change in District boundaries to possibly include the former Blue Heron site as part of the Willamette Falls Legacy Project.

Commissioner Smith felt the Commission needed to have a dialog and respond to the voters who told Urban Renewal to close. He felt that moving forward would be difficult without responding to the criticism of the Urban Renewal District. Commissioner O'Donnell suggested that the TIF should be paused to allow the Urban Renewal Plan to be updated.

Commissioner Lyles Smith asked staff if there was a capacity issue and if that is why we have asked to keep Leland Consulting on for the remainder of time. She also asked Commissioner Smith what he thought the next steps would be.

Commissioner Smith thought listing out options or projects and ask for survey or voter feedback would be a good next step. Mr. Konkol said it was both an expertise and capacity issue that the City sought assistance from Leland Consulting.

Commissioner Marl mentioned that he understands both sides of the issues and is still unsure if he is ready to support the budget for Urban Renewal at this time. The Commission discussed the potential options for updating the Urban Renewal Plan. Commissioner Marl asked if updating the Urban Renewal Plan would require a public vote to remove the charter restrictions. Mr. Konkol said that there is already a court order that says the Charter language/restriction is not legal and there is a decision that should be coming from the Court of Appeals.

Commissioner O'Donnell would like to know if the Commission would like to levy the full tax increment, a percentage of the levy, or forego collecting tax for one year.

Commissioner Lyles Smith asked Commissioner O'Donnell why he thought there would be an additional lawsuit if the Commission continued to collect tax increment. She also thought there should not be a delay in the Leland contract.

Mr. Konkol clarified that all Urban Renewal Districts at some point collect money that is not being paid on debt.

Commissioner O'Donnell said he would like to make a motion to suspend collection of TIF for one year to see what the temperature of the Commission is.

The Commission discussed what, if any, questions could be put to a public vote. The Commission discussed holding a work session with public forum to gather public input.

Motion made by Commissioner O'Donnell, seconded by Commissioner Smith, Jr., to suspend the collection of TIF (tax increment financing) for one fiscal year. The motion failed by the following vote:

Yea: 2 - Commissioner O'Donnell and Commissioner Smith, Jr.

Nay: 4 - Commissioner Marl, Commissioner McGriff, Commissioner Neeley, and Commissioner Lyles Smith

Matt Zook, Finance Director, explained what contingency operating funds means and how those can be accessed or moved. The Commission discussed the next steps and process moving ahead.

Motion made by Commissioner Lyles Smith, seconded by Commissioner Neeley, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with the following vote:

Yea: 6 - Commissioner Marl, Commissioner McGriff, Commissioner Neeley, Commissioner O'Donnell, Commissioner Lyles Smith, and Commissioner Smith, Jr.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair McGriff adjourned the meeting at 7:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kattie Riggs
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Kattie Riggs, City Recorder