

# **Council Meeting Action Summary**

## **Missoula City Council**

**May 23, 2022, 6:00 pm**

**Council Chambers (in person) or ZOOM Webinar (virtually)**

**Attend in person: City Council Chambers, 140 W. Pine, Missoula, MT**

Members Present: Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, John P. Contos, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Heidi West

Administration Present: Marty Rehbein, Jim Nugent, City Attorney

Administration Absent: Mayor John Engen

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The virtual meeting of the Missoula City Council was called to order by Acting Mayor Gwen Jones at 6:00 PM.

### **2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

#### **2.1 Minutes from the May 9, 2022 Meeting**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

#### **2.2 Minutes from the May 16, 2022 Meeting**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT - NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

President Jones Next we have public comment on items that are not on the agenda. If anyone wants to give public comment on items not on the agenda just come up to the microphone, state your full name, first and last name, and we allow about 3 minutes per public comment. Come on up

Joe I wasn't here last week, kind of had a screwed up weekend so I don't have something written pre, ahead of time. So, I'm just gonna tell you about one of the last times I was down at the ACS and stuff that I saw and how I think it kind of demonstrates some of the problems that I have with how this city is approaching our homeless neighbors. So, I was down there with one of the groups that I work with distributing food. It's one of the, the basic dignity programs that we have down there, just a hot decent meal for people. We see two MPD rigs pull up, guys get out and strut into the camp. Okay, we start talking to a couple of the folks and they're kicking out one of the residents that I've known for years. She's a little old lady, white-haired, has lots of cats and she loves to collect stuff, always likes to take more silverware and stuff always likes to have plenty of water bottles and that kind of stuff. They're kicking her out because her campsite's too messy and to do that they had to call the police department. Again, I couldn't help but think while we were doing this that my federal tax dollars are being wasted by these guys and we still have to call the cops to harass a little old woman who's sick. She's a recovering addict. She's ill. She's ill and she can't moderate all of her collections. I don't know if any of you have had the misfortune of holding a little old woman's hand in the middle of the street while she cries because she is worried that what little she owns on this earth could be stripped away from her without her being there, worried about one of her cats that she wasn't able to get on a leash in the 20 minutes they gave her before they kicked her out. How this city is deciding to handle human beings who

are poor, who are sick, who are desperate is unbelievable. It's inhumane and the fact and the fact that really makes me resent it so much is that I'm paying for it out of a fund that was supposed to be for pandemic relief. These people are especially susceptible to pandemic relief they don't get to just go to the hospital whenever they want. They don't have health insurance in a lot of cases. They have pre-existing conditions, compounding factors that make them especially susceptible. This was an opportunity where the federal government finally gave us some of our money back that we could have used to actually make improvements to our community and what did we do instead, we leaned into this perverse idea that the only way that we can be safe is if we put untrained dudes with guns on every street corner. hope you never have to go through that. It was hard to sit through and it's been cooking with me for a couple weeks. Again, I understand that we can't void the contract but that's not something that I can hold on to until August. You need to understand that every week that goes by that those people are there that they're going to be abused by these people who don't know what they're doing and are making those people's lives harder unnecessarily.

President Jones Thank you. Any other public comment on items not on the agenda? Okay seeing none, next we have committee meetings committee membership appointments and changes to committee agendas.

**4. ANNOUNCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS, COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES TO COMMITTEE AGENDAS**

Committee of the Whole, May 25, 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Public Works and Mobility Committee, May 25, 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Climate, Conservation, and Parks Committee, June 1, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Land Use and Planning Committee, June 1, 12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

President Jones Thank you. Next is our consent agenda.

**5. CONSENT AGENDA**

President Jones Items on the consent agenda were approved in City Council committees to be placed on the consent agenda to save time at Council meetings by voting on them as a package. The City Clerk will read the list aloud so citizens watching on MCAT will know what is on the consent agenda. We'll invite community comment on these items before we vote. Ms. Rehbein if you would please read the consent agenda.

AYES: (12): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Contos, Alderperson Hess, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, Alderperson Vasecka, and Alderperson West

**Vote result: Approved (12 to 0)**

**5.1 Accounts Payable (claims) for checks dated May 24th, 2022**

Approve accounts payable in the amount of \$908,358.06 for checks dated May 24 2022.

**Vote result: Approved**

**5.2 Amendment No. 2 Lincoln Hills Upper and Lower Water Tank Replacement Project**

Approve and Authorize the Mayor to sign a Professional Services Amendment No. 2 with Morrison-Maierle for the Lincoln Hills Upper and Lower Tank Replacement Project at a cost not to exceed \$11,699.00.

**Vote result: Approved**

**5.3 Referral - Resolution for 3rd Quarter FY 2022 Budget Amendments. This resolution amends the fiscal year 2022 budget to recognize revenues, and appropriate expenditures and budget transfers not identified in the original budget.**

Set a public hearing for June 6 with final consideration on June 13, 2022 for a resolution amending the annual appropriations for the City of Missoula, Montana as set forth in the fiscal year 2022 budget and capital improvement program.

**Vote result: Approved**

**5.4 Contract – Reaching Home 10-Year Plan Evaluation**

Authorize the Mayor to sign and execute an agreement with JG Research and Evaluation for \$42,000 from City funds for the provision of evaluation services to evaluation Reaching Home: Missoula's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness funded by the City of Missoula.

**Vote result: Approved**

**5.5 Appointments to the Affordable Housing Resident Oversight Committee**

Re-appoint Will Sebern as a regular member and Emily Shankle as an alternate member of the Affordable Housing Resident Oversight Committee with terms beginning June 1, 2022 and ending May 31, 2025.

**Vote result: Approved**

**5.6 FY22 Neighborhood Improvement Grant Fund Awards**

Adopt a resolution of the City Council awarding \$21,000 in Neighborhood Improvement Grant Funds for fiscal year 2022 to certain individuals and directing staff to negotiate contracts with said individuals for the Mayor's signature.

**Vote result: Approved**

**6. COMMENTS FROM CITY STAFF, CITY AGENCIES, COMMUNITY FORUM, NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, OR AUTHORITIES**

None

**7. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS**

**7.1 Proclamation - Angel from 96.3 The Blaze Day**

President Jones We do have one special presentation today or I'm sorry proclamation and I will read that. This is regarding Angel from 96.3 The Blaze.

WHEREAS, Angel from 96.3 The Blaze is leaving her Missoula broadcast career in radio after over 20 years on the air; and WHEREAS, Angel has provided western Montana entertainment, community service, and respect and WHEREAS, Angel has given a voice to women in radio, local musicians, bands and rad characters in Missoula; and WHEREAS, Angel is going to continue to serve the Missoula community by going into the medical field to help children; and WHEREAS, Angel's last day on the air is Tuesday, May 31, 2022 and she will be greatly missed. Now, therefore, I, John Engen, Mayor of

the City of Missoula in the State of Montana hereby recognize the 31st day of May, 2022 as Angel Day.

President Jones Is there anyone in the audience that wanted to speak to this? All right, I'm not seeing anyone but that's one of the best proclamations I've ever seen. So, excellent.

## **8. FINAL CONSIDERATION**

None

## **9. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **9.1 Funding Recommendations for 2022 Unified Application- AHTF, CDBG, HOME**

President Jones We do have four public hearings, two of which we are opening and will keep open until June 6th and two of which we are actually, the last two we are voting on them tonight. So, we'll start with the first one 9.1 Funding Recommendations for 2022 Unified Application for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, CDBG, and HOME funds. And we have staff here to present on that, I assume. Let me see about, okay we have Aubrey Godbey here to present, I believe. If you unmute yourself Aubrey; there you go.

Aubrey Godbey Hi can you hear me?

President Jones Yes, we can.

Aubrey Godbey Can I be promoted to a panelist? I was not a panelist, but I do know that Karen and Kendra are also on as panelists.

President Jones Marty are you able to promote her to a panelist?

Marty Rehbein Yes I am and yes I did.

President Jones All right.

Aubrey Godbey Okay, thank you.

President Jones Go ahead with whatever presentation you have tonight. And if you can make it bigger so we just see the slide?

Aubrey Godbey Yes.

President Jones Yes, lovely. Wonderful....

Kendra Lisum All right, so I'm Kendra. I'm joined by Karen and Aubrey. Emily is out today and we're going to present on the unified application. So, the Community Development Block Grant, CDBG, and HOME Investment Partnerships Program or HOME. Funds are made available to the City of Missoula on an annual basis from the federal government through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or HUD. HOME and CDBG allocations differ from year to year but on average we get it about, we get about \$800,000.00 between the two and then the Affordable Housing Trust Fund is, as you well know, the city has allocated approximately 1 million in funding for this program cycle and collectively we're calling these the Community Development Funds. This just shows a timeline of our application period and then our funds must benefit households of certain incomes. Income limits are often referred to in terms of area of median income and we just wanted to provide a quick breakdown. If you line up every household in a region, from the one making the least to the one making the most, the household in the middle would be the median household. Therefore, the area median income is the household income for the middle household in a region. Community Development Funds use area median income to determine eligible eligibility for assistance and HUD requires that our CDBG and HOME dollars be spent on those

making 80% AMI or less where our trust fund dollars for some projects can go as high as 120% AMI. In 2022, Missoula's AMI for a family of 4 is approximately \$80,000.00, which means our HUD funds can help families making less than \$65,000.00, while our trust fund dollars can help families making less than \$97,000.00. When we compare that to the affordability threshold from the Missoula Organization of Realtors, which is basically what a median earner can afford to pay for a house with 5% down, we see that the most a family could pay is approximately \$340,000.00 and there were only 279 houses sold in that price range in 2021.

Aubrey Godbey Thanks Kendra. So, here's a brief overview of all of our funds. The trust fund's purpose is to better provide housing at a wide range of entry points and to ensure that all Missoulians can obtain safe and decent homes and then our funds can be used for a variety of housing related activities including new construction, preservation, and consumer housing services. HOME can be used for a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or for home ownership or providing direct rental assistance to people with low incomes. And then CDBG is a more flexible program than HOME and supports community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities. Activities may address needs such as housing rehabilitation, acquisition of real property, homeowner assistance, demolition, infrastructure and public facility improvements, economic development and social services. So, this year, we had 11 applications for funding, which worked out to approximate these funding requests here. Throughout the process, we evaluated each project to determine which funding sources they would best be fit for on the project details and the applicant's preference. Due to a delay in the congressional budget, HUD has not released the 2022 CDBG and HOME allocations this year. However, Community Development used last year's allocations as a starting point and took into account leftover funds. Once the program income does come up, in what we see, we will just change the numbers here and adjust the words as necessary. So, with applications in hand, we went off to the scoring committee. First staff scored based on these blue bullets we had the committed match fund, complete list of application, preventing displacement, innovation and then funding request type was based off of grant or loan and that was just for the trust fund. And then next, we took it to the entire scoring committee which included Council member Mirtha Becerra, Council member Kristen Jordan, and then six CPDI staff, and then we reviewed these applications and used standardized scoring to evaluate them, and then the scores were averaged and then the highest scoring projects were selected for funding. And then, as we mentioned, throughout the process, the team at CPDI continually assess the projects for their appropriate funding source based on constraints and applicability to the spirit of the trust fund. In the end, the scoring committee is recommending eight projects for funding overall this year. So, for the trust fund, we are recommending NMCD - the Wolf Street project to give \$340,000.00 to purchase land under two apartment buildings and adjacent house for conversion to a community land trust or a housing co-op. And then the Habitat for Humanity Acquisition and Placement of modular homes has already been funded previously. And then we're also asking to fund Homewood for \$15,000.00 for a home ownership center program, for financial and housing education and counseling programs. And then we will be taking the Ravara Development - Scott Street project for \$500,950.00 later at a separate date.

Karen Gasvoda Thanks Aubrey. As Aubrey mentioned, HUD has yet to release the allocations for federal CDBG and HOME dollars for our program year 2022, but as you can see here the annual allocations haven't changed that much in the 11 years, in the past. This allows us to more readily estimate our annual allocations, but on the flip side, the amounts we receive aren't adjusted for inflation, so we have to do more with less. If our allocations come in more or less than what we anticipate, the, the project funding amounts will be increased or decreased according to the scores received in the scoring committee and more details can be found in the memo attached to this item. You'll

probably recognize these projects; they have been recommended for this year's HOME funds. The Trinity and Villagio projects have been funded with HOME dollars in the past and they have returned this year to ask for additional funding. The HOME program also allows for the designation of what is called a community housing development organization, CHDO, is a non-profit organization whose main purpose is to help build capacity to develop affordable housing for the community it serves. CHDO can ask for and receive up to 5% of our HOME funds to cover operating expenses. This year Homewood and Missoula CHDO since 2003 was asked for \$19,000.00. The North Missoula Community Development Corporation's Burlington project has been recommended to receive CDBG funds. The project will help the cost of a purchase of a single-family residence and two adjacent lots. The properties will be converted to a community land trust ensuring permanent affordability. In addition to these projects, HOME and CDBG allows for a small percentage of the award to be spent on administration and planning. These amounts will be increased or decreased within the regulations once HUD awards us our allocation. These projects will have lasting positive outcomes for our community with support for more than 400 permanently affordable units and well over 2,000 individuals. If you estimate those who will move into those units that's including those who will be helped immediately through the financial and homeownership education program, and the immediate assistance available to the 11 individuals benefiting from a housing programs. And we would like to encourage everyone to reach out with comments on the annual auction plan or any of these projects. You can do so on [engagemissoula.com](http://engagemissoula.com) or by calling or emailing any one of us. The annual action plan goes into more details on our CDBG and HOME projects and will be submitted to HUD prior to the start of our program year, and those comments will be accepted through June 6th. Now we're open for any questions that you have.

President Jones Great, thank you, appreciate the staff presentation. We'll take public comment first and then see if there's any questions from Council. Does anyone here have public comment on this item? I'll check in our attendees. We do, I see Bob Oaks. You need to unmute yourself and you can provide public comment. There you go.

Bob Oaks Hi. I'm, I'm just here to answer any questions also for the projects involving the NMCDC.

President Jones Thank you, appreciate you coming to the meeting. Okay, seeing no public comment, are there any questions from Council? This is, we're just opening the public hearing tonight, so it's not comments but we'll take questions from Council and leave the public hearing open until June 9, 2022. Ms. Vasecka.

Alderperson Vasecka Thanks. I had 2 questions. I was curious on the, the scoring slide. I was wondering what the staff scored bonus meant and then I also noticed that for a lot of the estimates, it was using estimates from 2021. Are you, are we expecting the cost to be a little bit higher this year because of increasing in construction costs?

President Jones I'm sure who from staff can answer?

Karen Gasvoda As far as the allocations that we receive, it's, it is generally, generally within that same amount that we are expecting as far as funds received from the HUD. And then the, do you have the bonus questions Kendra or Aubrey pulled up?

Aubrey Godbey Yeah, I can answer on that.

Karen Gasvoda Thanks Aubrey.

Aubrey Godbey Thanks Kendra. So, the staff scored bonuses were based off of preventing displacement, innovation and then the funding request type. So, the funding request type was only for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and these ones were only for staff and we scored these all before taking them to the scoring committee.

Alderson Vasecka Okay, thank you.

President Jones Great thanks. Any other questions from Council? Let me check virtually. Okay, I'm seeing no other raised hands. So, this public hearing will stay open until June 6, 2022 and then we will take a final vote on it. Thank you Kendra, Aubrey, and Karen.

## **9.2 Substantial Amendment to the CDBG and HOME Program Year 2021 Action Plan**

President Jones The next item is item 9.2, which the heading is a Substantial Amendment to the CDBG and HOME Program Year 2021 Action Plan. I believe we've got the same staff presenting on this.

Karen Gasvoda Yes, we are here. Will you start with slide 3? Thanks Kendra. So, Kendra and I would like to present to you a substantial amendment to last year's annual action plan and also present on the HOME-ARP allocation plan and we'll start with a substantial amendment. We, we were presented to you last year six projects for a community development block grant and home investment partnerships program funds, but we need to amend that action plan. So, in program year 2021, Homewood applied for a \$500,000.00 CDBG grant to help support the Navigation Center which is part of the larger Trinity apartment project. The Navigation Center will be located at the Mullan site, to provide access to supportive services. And before any contract was signed, Homewood notified us that they were able to secure additional funding from the state and therefore no longer needed the city's CDBG funds for the Navigation Center. The state has recognized that housing projects throughout the state have been greatly impacted over the last two years and carved out a chunk of ARPA Funds for housing projects that have seen significant cost increases. That influx of federal dollars into our community through funding such as the American Rescue Plan has created a unique situation but it's unlikely that that situation will happen again. So, just to reiterate, no contract was signed with Homewood, and no funds were given. Our policy, however, requires that we bring before you and open a public hearing whenever there is a significant change in funding or projects. So, so for the substantial amendment the Navigation Center project will be moved from the 2021 action plan and all funds will be reallocated to future projects. And do you have any questions before we move on to the Homewood?

President Jones We do have some questions. So, let's go with Ms. Sherrill.

Alderson Sherrill Yeah thanks and I'm happy to have that funded another way. I'm just curious will there be any reduction in any of the services or the services planning on staying exactly the same? We're just getting the funding from another source.

Karen Gasvoda I don't know if anyone from Homewood is on this call. My understanding is those, that, the, the funds that they were needing were found in other avenues and so that Navigation Center has found additional funding elsewhere.

Alderson Sherrill Great, thank you.

President Jones We had a second question? I thought I saw two hands raised. Okay, Ms. Anderson.

Alderson Anderson Sorry, I didn't know if you were asking Ms. Sherrill if she has a second question. Thank you. I guess my question, this great news that this funding has been allocated elsewhere. So, the funding that you showed us for in 9.1, does that reflect the additional dollars now available because the funding for this allocated project was not needed or will we be seeing a future proposal of how to reallocate those dollars?

Karen Gasvoda We have another project that is being considered. They are still getting us more information before we can determine that, but those funds may be used in that, for that project.

Alderson Anderson So to follow-up, to simplify those funds, the \$500,000.00 is still available to be allocated, yet to future projects?

Karen Gasvoda Yeah, well those funds have been contingent upon, for another project until they are able to get us required further information. So, we're still waiting to hear more on that to see if those funds will go towards that project.

Alderson Anderson Great okay. So, just to clarify it, you know we're one 9.1 and 9.2 are not interconnected? Thank you so much.

President Jones Ms. West.

Alderson West I think I had the same question as Ms. Anderson, but to be clear....I don't think I understand yet. So, the, the unified application round that is completely separate from this, so there's half a million dollars now that are in limbo, we'll say, and there's not going to be another application period.... there's yes.... that's my question. Is there going to be another application period or is there, is this remaining funds going to be handled just administratively?

Karen Gasvoda If the additional project is able to get what the information that we need, that is needed, they will be funded. If not, it will be available for our next round of funding, for the next project year, that, that's the plan for now.

President Jones Okay, I think we, it was clarified. Any other questions from Council regarding this matter? And not seeing anyone from our virtual participants who want to ask questions. This matter will remain open as a public hearing and close on June 6, 2022 for a final vote and we are taking public comment in the meantime up until June 6th on this item.

President Jones Okay, we have two more public hearings tonight and both of these will be voted on tonight for final consideration. The first one is 9.3, North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal District Boundary Amendment and I believe Annie Gorski is here to present on this.

Karen Gasvoda Gwen...

President Jones One moment, Karen did you have something else?

Karen Gasvoda I'm so sorry there was a second part to our presentation, on the ARPA.

President Jones Go ahead Karen, we got away from ourselves. I wasn't reading your signals there. Okay, we're going to continue on with the presentation with 9.2.

Karen Gasvoda Thank you, appreciate it. So, the City of Missoula received 1.3 million dollars in HOME, American Rescue Plan funds to primarily address homelessness and supportive services and this is a separate allocation from the ARP funds that will be administered through the city. Homeward is subject to the same regulations as the HOME program with a few exceptions and in addition to the HOME funds that we receive each year as a participating jurisdiction, the allocation plan is currently in draft form, and we want to stress that at this time we do not have a specific project associated with the plan. This is merely the first step in determining specific needs for our community through presenting the plan for public. As we move through the process, we will return to Council for an amendment that will include a specific project or projects. One of the main stipulations of the HOME-ARP funds is that they must primarily be used to help certain qualifying populations. This includes those in situations related to homelessness, fleeing from violence and veterans and their families. With HOME-ARP, we can fund rental



housing, supportive services, non-congregate shelter and rental assistance and the last two types of projects listed here come with the stipulation that operating support and capacity building must be in conjunction with a HOME-ARP activity. Since these are new funds, our timeline is a bit of a work in progress and will depend part on how much collaboration is needed to find projects. As of today, we've consulted with our local continuum of care. We've asked them to participate in a survey and to help us collect data to demonstrate need gaps and needs in our community. We've also engaged the public through a survey. The public hearing is an additional step to solicit public input. Our plan right now is to submit the allocation plan to HUD without a specific project in mind and then include HOME-ARP funding as part of the program year 2023 competitive application process. In the meantime, if the eligible project does come forward that we can fund with HOME-ARP, we can forego that competitive application process.

Kendra Lisum Okay. So, we're going to jump into a brief overview of the gaps and needs analysis. More detail of these of this stuff that I talk about can be found in our allocation plan.

Marty Rehbein Excuse me. For the record, this is Kendra Lisum.

Kendra Lisum Thank you. Most of this data was pulled from existing reports and conversations with our community partners. So, we all know the story there's been 109% increase in home prices in 11 years. Missoula is short 2,400 units and we have an incredibly low rental vacancy rate. Missoula's housing market is out of reach for many of us. So, we're going to review some of the statistics we found, relating it to those who we can help with our HOME-ARP dollars. In other words, our QP's. So, the first QP we will visit, are homeless individuals and one way to survey homeless individuals is through the HMIS system or Missoula's comprehensive record of unhoused individuals receiving service from city agencies and local nonprofits. In January 2020, there were 510 individuals seeking services and a year later in 2021 there were 666, and some reports suggest that homelessness could increase by 40% in the coming years. Next we'll turn to students experiencing homelessness. Data from the Missoula County Public Schools shows that the total number of students experiencing homelessness or housing instability has more than doubled since the 2017-2018 school year. The pandemic was cited as the biggest driver of this increase. The University of Montana 2020 real college survey reports that 50% of students at UM experience housing insecurity in 2020 and 23 experienced homelessness and this is 7% and 9% higher respectively than other 4 year institutions. So, now we're going to move on to our QP's, fleeing domestic violence. Missoula's YWCA Pathways, a program that includes shelter and support for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse served a total of about 1,600 unduplicated individuals and their crisis line helped an additional 1,400. The YWCA reports that the link between domestic violence and family homelessness is vivid; 70% of homeless families we see are headed by women and domestic violence is a significant cause of their homelessness. Since opening its doors in spring of 2021, the YWCA Meadowlark has helped families faced with homelessness through their family housing center and providing emergency housing to those who need it. YWCA Missoula anticipated serving more than double the number of families and children annually in their new facility; however, with the ongoing effects of the pandemic, disproportionately affecting low-income homeless families, those numbers have been higher than anticipated. HOME-ARP defines at-risk households, in part, as individuals or families who have incomes below 30% of area median income. For Missoula, this would be those without a household income of approximately \$22,000.00 or less for a family of four. Additional risk factors for homelessness include paying more than 30% of your income on housing and this is what you'd call cost burden. This chart shows that nearly 8,000 households earning less than \$50,000.00 a year are cost burdened. Missoula County, for those earning less than \$35,000.00 a year, 82% of households are cost burdened. Severely cost burden, low-income households are more likely than other renters to sacrifice necessities like healthy food and healthcare to pay the rent and to experience unstable

housing situations. While we have a robust set of tools to help those at risk or unsheltered, in particular, our QP's, we're consistently seeing a gap as well. While it's hard to quantify precise gaps, we did our best by looking at the number of emergency beds Missoula has versus the numbers of homeless we're seeing. We have approximately 569 emergency beds, but 606 homeless individuals. We can also look at the housing choice voucher waitlist as another indication of gaps. HCV or housing choice vouchers provide rental subsidies for families earning very low income. The number of households on the HCV waiting list is another indicator of overall demand for affordable rental housing. Since 2015, the wait list number has remained consistently in the 1,700 range with the dip in 2021 indicative of households being unable to utilize the vouchers due to the low supply of units. Another looming gap that isn't often talked about has to do with housing units that have been subsidized by federal dollars. The University of Montana's Affordable Housing in Montana, December 2022 report, says that there are about 2,100 units receiving some form of federal subsidy to keep them affordable. When federal dollars are given to help build affordable housing, the units have to remain affordable for a set number of years. Once those years are up, the building can, the building or units can be sold at market rate and of Missoula's housing units receiving subsidies for affordability 473 or 23% are set to have their subsidies expire in the next 10 years. So, we'd like to encourage everyone to reach out with comments on our substantial amendment and our HOME-ARP allocation plan and you can do so by emailing Karen or I or on Engage Missoula, and we'll accept comments through June 6, 2022. Thank you.

President Jones Thank you. So sorry to have cut you off earlier. I missed a beat there. Glad you could finish it. Okay is there any public comment on this item? And if you're in the attendee....oh we do have someone....Great come on up and just state your full name and 3 minutes.

Liam Seymour It'll be real quick. Liam Seymour, Ward 4. I would just say that in the slide on gaps in housing, it does take into account the emergency winter shelter program for 150 beds; that program is only in operation half of the year. So, in terms of our gap for six months of the year, it is closer to 250.

President Jones Appreciate that. Any other public comment on this item? Any questions from Council? No further questions from Council? Okay, this item will stay open until June 6, 2022, when we will hear it for final consideration. Thanks Karen, Kendra, and Aubrey, appreciate your work tonight.

### **9.3 North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal District Boundary Amendment**

President Jones Okay, moving on now...sorry to item 9.3. The North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal District Boundary Amendment and we have Annie Gorski from the Missoula Redevelopment Agency here to present on that. Good evening Annie.

Annie Gorski Good evening. Okay, can you see my full screen?

President Jones Yes.

Annie Gorski Great. Good evening. My name is Annie Gorski and I'm the Deputy Director of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency. The agenda before you this evening is a proposed amendment to the North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal Plan. If approved, the plan amendment will modify the boundary of the Urban Renewal District by adding three parcels on Grant Creek Road. This is a map showing the boundary in green of the North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal Plan District. The area in pink here, these three parcels on Grant Creek Road located at 3721 are the parcels that we are proposing to add to the Urban Renewal District. On the west side of the district is North Reserve Street, to the north I-90, to the south the railroad tracks, and here to the east is

Scott Street. Continued investment on the west side of the district, here where we're talking tonight, is needed to generate the property tax needed to support activity on the east side. The east side is where significant urban renewal investments are contributing to nearly 500 new housing units that are planned. Specific parcels that we're recommending, again are 3721 Grant Creek Road. This is the location of Diversified Plastics. This property, these three parcels were annexed into the city in December of 2021. The Urban Renewal Plan gives the City Council authority to amend the Urban Renewal Plan from time to time. The Missoula Redevelopment Agency Board recommended this amendment at their meeting last month and on May 9, 2022, Council adopted a resolution of intent to modify the boundary. The Urban Renewal Plan amendment is consistent with several goals in the city's strategic plan, as well as the Urban Renewal Plan. Over time, the City Council has approved several boundary amendments in this and other Urban Renewal Districts. The most recent boundary amendment was approved for the North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal District in 2015 to add the consumer direct property. By adding curb, gutter, boulevard and sidewalks to Grant Creek Road and by helping a community business expand, this amendment aligns with community, design, and livability goals, safety and wellness goals, as well as additional goals in the Urban Renewal Plan, which are shown here. Supporting the inclusion of annex property into the Urban Renewal District, which we are doing here developing infrastructure needed for current and future growth, improving a key transportation corridor, which we anticipate because Public Works will likely require improvements on Grant Creek Road as part of the development. And then lastly, supporting rehabilitation of commercial and industrial properties in the district. This is a schedule including the public notice that was given related to the public hearing tonight from May 9 to May 22, 2022, we noticed the public and taxing jurisdictions of this hearing that included a mailing to all property owners in the district, mailing to the taxing jurisdictions, as well as two advertisements in the newspaper on May 15 and May 22, 2022. I received two phone calls from individuals asking about the action tonight, but there was no formal public comment received. And then if Council approves of this amendment and the ordinance tonight, the ordinance could be effective June 22, 2022 and then following that, we would submit a package to Montana Department of Revenue. The Urban Renewal District would likely receive its portion of the property taxes from the new, from this new property in 2024. And I'll end with a recommended motion tonight and stop sharing my screen. Thank you.

President Jones Thank you. Okay, so again, this item will be voted on tonight following our, our order of sequencing of items. Is there any public comment first of all on this item? Seeing no public comment, any questions from Council? Mr. Carlino.

Alderperson Carlino Yeah, I just saw that there was sidewalks there and I saw that we're intending to support future business expansion and then related public infrastructure improvements and I was wondering if we had any other ideas on what the public infrastructure improvements might be?

Annie Gorski So, I'm happy to answer what I know. We sat in with a meeting with Diversified Plastics and Public Works. I don't know if there's anyone in the meeting tonight from Public Works, you can share more detail, but my understanding is so what consumer direct is proposing is expansion to their existing building off of Grant Creek and then in the future likely a new building to support their operations. Public Works indicated that frontage improvements on Grant Creek Road would likely be required as part of that, whether tied to a building permit or other approval. There may also be some utility connections that are needed as part of that development. Did I say, I'm sorry....I meant to say Diversified Plastics, I'm sorry if that was not clear and I said a different business name. That's the business we're talking about tonight at 3721 Grant Creek Road, Diversified Plastics.

President Jones Great, thank you. Ms. Vasecka.

Alderson Vasecka Thank you. I was, even though they weren't formal protests or formal public comment, I was wondering what those two phone calls did entail in that conversation.

Annie Gorski Yes, so both calls were, one gentleman called because he thought we were proposing a zone change at this location. So, I clarified for him what the process was; he owned a business in the area and when I told him what it was, he didn't have any concerns. The second gentleman again was asking to clarify what the action was tonight and when I explained it to him, he did not have any concerns. So, they both received the public notice that we mailed to property owners in the district and were simply asking for clarification on the action tonight, what we were doing.

Alderson Vasecka May I have a follow-up?

President Jones Go ahead.

Alderson Vasecka And to my understanding, from my questions, was it last week when I talked about this or the week before? The, all the property that is being included in this this not really annexation, but kind of annexation into this on district they're all in support and they, they want to be in this URD, is that correct?

Annie Gorski Yes, Diversified Plastics asked to be annexed into the city. So, they are now in the city and that occurred in December and then they also asked, as is the policy in the Urban Renewal Plan to be added to the district, yes.

Alderson Vasecka Okay, thank you.

President Jones Was there another hand up? Any other questions from Council? No. All right then, for a motion, since this is in Committee of the Whole and yet I'm presiding over this meeting, I'll go to Vice President Hess for a motion please.

Vice President Hess Thank you. I move on the second and final reading, we adopt an ordinance amending the North Reserve - Scott Street Urban Renewal Plan to include additional property in the district. I would like to speak to the motion.

President Jones I'm going to follow our sequencing and we're going to go for public comment first and then I'll come back to you. It's going to take a while to change old habits here. Any public comment on this item? Seeing no raised hands, back to you Mr. Hess for a comment.

Vice President Hess Thanks. I'm in support of the motion and I, I just wanted to highlight that when this district was created, I was on Council at the time. It was, the Urban Renewal Study was bounded by I-90 to the north and the railroad tracks to the south, and a lot of this area was not in, was not in the city and it's still not in the city but it was definitely intended that properties when they were annexed would be added to the district. So, this is consistent with that plan and I'm in support of it.

President Jones Thank you. Any other comments from Council? Ms. Vasecka.

Alderson Vasecka Thanks. I know many of you know I'm not the biggest fan of Urban Renewal Districts but if they want to be in it then all right I'll be in support of it tonight.

President Jones Thank you. Any other comments from Council? Mr. Carlino.

Alderson Carlino Yeah, just...it seems to make sense with how this got annexed into the City, but I'm also just concerned that this will mean that some tax increment financing money will just go towards helping a plastic company get bigger and plastic companies are really harmful to the environment. And I would really, I'm definitely open to see what the public benefits are here, but just very concerned about the business side of things, but I guess that's up to the MRA to decide for the meantime, but I hope one day the

Council will have to approve where MRA puts money, but for now I guess I'll support the redrawing.

President Jones Any other comments from Council? All right, seeing none, we will have a roll call vote.

President Jones Thank you and item 9.3 passes. Thank you Ms. Gorski.

**Moved by:** Alderperson Hess

[Second and final reading] Adopt an ordinance amending the North Reserve-Scott Street Urban Renewal Plan to include additional property in the District.

AYES: (12): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Contos, Alderperson Hess, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, Alderperson Vasecka, and Alderperson West

**Vote result: Approved (12 to 0)**

#### **9.4 Conceptual Master Plan for Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity**

President Jones And our final item tonight under public hearings is 9.4, Conceptual Master Plan for Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity, and I believe we have Donna Gaukler, Department Head of Parks and Recreation, here to present on this. And Donna are there other people to present also?

Donna Gaukler Yes, I have Mike Sweet with me, he's with Friends.

President Jones Great.

Donna Gaukler We'll get this set up.

President Jones Alrighty, go ahead.

Donna Gaukler This my first hybrid meeting, in person.

President Jones It's been a few years, hasn't it?

Donna Gaukler It has. All right. Well let's see. All right, Donna Gaukler, Director of Parks of Recreation and this is a project that we've been working on for over 22 years. It's fondly known today as the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity. Some of you don't know but I came from North Dakota where community centers were pretty common and became the focal points of communities of all sizes, where we'd gather for special events, evening sports and wellness programs, dance, fitness, children's programs, swimming and one of the greatest curiosities I had when I moved to Missoula is why there wasn't a community center, a true public community center. We have a lot of fitness centers, and we have a wonderful YMCA Zootown, arts and community center, fantastic intellectual community center called the new public library, but we don't have a public community center dedicated to year-round, seven day a week recreation for all individuals in our community. So, I want to tell you a little bit about it and the partnerships and then I'll ask Mike Sweet to come up here. And I did share a longer version of this, so I'm going to try and go through it quickly, recognizing time is somewhat limited, but a little bit of a history. It was, this project was, identified as one of three major projects with the 2000 millennium of ways we could improve our community over the next 100 years. It was also adopted in the 2003 McCormick Park Master Site Plan, there's a drawing on the screen and then it was noted in our Growth Policy. Additionally, and more recently, it is noted in the 2020 Climate Ready Missoula Plan, City of Missoula Strategic Priorities, and

we talk frequently about the need to gather under justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and especially to get to resources in a public venue. So how do I find out about aging? How do I find out about childcare and all those kinds of things? In 2021, we received approval from City Council to take a deeper dive and so over the 22 years, we've been looking at partnerships with Missoula International School, Missoula County Public Schools, different private schools, the fairgrounds and on and on and on just about every imaginable way of partnering and every time we go through a public process or we hire a consultant to look at market feasibility, about five times over, we've come right back to McCormick Park as the preferred location, especially for Missoula's first community center, for a whole bunch of reasons. So, some of the benefits, it really is about health, wellness, improving health equity, making sure you know people have access. There's a lot, there's ample opportunities to do prevention work in our community and we do that through recreation and engaging the public, building sustained physical and mental health. You know, we all recognized during the pandemic how important that access to the outdoors was with friends and family. Well, for a lot of people, the safety of an indoor space, that's lit and that has good air quality during long smoky seasons, that I can see during long icy dark season is super important to that wellness and keep in mind people aging well in their homes or people feeling like they belong to Missoula, which is so important to all of us has to do with meeting other people that you can identify with. It's when we meet each other that we create safer communities. So, connecting folks of backgrounds, of all types, regardless of demographics, politics, religion or anything else and expand upon and complement other facilities. Sustainability and climate resiliency, this has been super, super important. I already mentioned smoky seasons; they keep getting longer. Air quality is a challenge. We have very few public facilities in Missoula that meet air quality standards during a fire season, very few. One of the floors in the public library is probably our best example. Accessibility for all, regardless of disability, age, or anything else and then of course being a model facility for, for the way the facility is built, maintained, designed, and maintained, and we've tried to do that as, as time progresses, and technology changes and we have a better understanding of what is a true sustainable environment. We can build community, again welcoming and accessible multi-generational has been a high priority for the community and regardless of which of the 22 years we've asked that question. I want a place to gather with people of all ages. Synergy of different spaces, coming together. So, if you think about the energy of our downtown environment, something that makes that work great is there's lots of different opportunities so the whole family can engage. So, when I talk to people about well imagine you know a member of the families in the pool and other members in dance, another member is taking a, a class and you brought the grandparents along and they're engaged in a dance or whatever it might be, there's a place for folks to come together. So, a wide variety of activities and again helping folks meet each other. Complimenting existing services, you know questions been asked well what about you know the YMCA. The YMCA is superstars in providing quasi-public health and fitness facilities for their members. They're also superstars at licensed daycare and they are in the southern portion of town, so they do provide a community center component for our residents. This community center is very, very different. It's about dance and movement and we have nowhere near the gymnasium space and for those of you who don't know, we also lost City Life Jump. So, we are literally turning away people from gym use and that is more than just sports and it is multi-generational. It also would help us increase our capacity for youth program services. Just to give you an idea, we had 3,600 registrants for summer camp programs; we have more than 2,400 on the waiting list to get in. Part of that is staffing, part of it is transportation, but a lot of that is capacity. Where do you go? What do we do in a storm? What do we do during if we're smoky for more than a month? It's hard enough already when we lose August to keep the kids entertained. And then we do increase capacity and best you know, a real easy example I can share with you is when we built pickleball courts, there were facilities all over this town that were then putting pickleball lines down on whatever gym floors they had and the peak athletic center literally building pickleball courts because it creates a market and that happens a

lot in Parks and Recreation programs and then programs become self-sustaining or they grow other businesses. And it is, it's happening in multiple different sports and activities over the years. We had a very robust public process. I'm going to touch on some of it here, but we did have steering committees, consultants and professionals. We had technical working group that includes all of our different permitting agencies, people around climate expertise around providing resources for families who are seeking out whatever resources our community as a whole. We have a ton of nonprofits in this community and one of the things that nonprofits were most excited about was having an actual resource center where they could meet clients and customers in a community setting while the rest of the family was engaged in recreation. And they could have actual meetings there and distribute their information. We had a number of community open houses. We used Engage Missoula and then we did some specific and targeted outreach. We would meet with folks from you know Missoula Aging Services. We would go to the food bank. We would go to the markets, some of the youth programs like Fall Family Fest were, we're reaching families that um they're coming for programs that are relatively you know no cost or like a dollar to get in and so we're reaching different families without all of the resources, and so by, we went to the Western Montana LGBTQ Center and then we went to all of our traditional places where we always receive public comment and super helpful. And then how do we hear from the people who don't have time to show up or didn't come that day or that week and that we hosted different activities? We also had a week-long, 10-day long open house inside the Currents lobby where you could drop in and just ask to visit with an employee, to tell you more about it. Well, we rely on the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails statistical valid survey. It does go all the way back to 2018, so it's a little bit limited but certainly support for a community center at that time as well. We went back out to the public with a conceptual design, 84% of the respondents who viewed that plan believed that the project honors the vision and 79% said the project also honors the guiding principles, which I'll touch on here in a moment. And questions that came up is can we make sure we ensure access for all people, especially individuals with disabilities? And that is an area I think as Parks with each new facility, we've tried to exceed, go well beyond the ADA requirements because anything that feels safe, welcome, inviting and is easy to access is better for everybody. And then just general concerns about overall access, CPTED is important to everybody, crime prevention through environmental design. They want to know that when they're in a facility they're going to feel safe in that facility and so we put a lot of effort into that, both indoor facilities and in our park facilities, especially as we get to build them or renovate them. And then of course, cost to construct, construct and to operate is always part of the question but it is not a question we're asking you tonight. We, I'll talk a little bit more about costs in a little bit here but what is a conceptual design? Well, it's a graphic representation, so what we're trying to get to, is a shared vision for the community, a shared picture because if we can look at the painting on the wall we have a pretty good idea what that is. So, if I showed you a picture of a pizza and it was pepperoni with cheese and a certain crust, we would all know that it looked the same. If I just said it's going to look like pizza, we would all have you know 20 different ideas what pizza looks like and so trying to have a shared and common vision. It also cites the building, gives us some preliminary floor plans and has some three dimensional representation. So, the facility would be next to the, the existing aquatic facility in McCormick Park immediately adjacent to the Montana Rail Link, Bitterroot Trail Corridor and, and near the river. It would share the use already of the lobby and locker spaces. We would increase the lobby side. It would have multi-purpose gymnasium facilities. It would have a community ballroom and social space, as well as a multi-forum theater and all the support facilities and classrooms. So, you could have a, a senior event, you could have a teen focused activities, you could have you know parent kinds of things. We talked about ted talks, some molly classes and all, all kinds of opportunities. There'd also be an upper floor. One of the things that's most important to our aging community is an indoor track, a place to walk where they feel safe and quite frankly that would also work for our striders on bad weather days. So, the amazing things about a thing about

recreation facilities and programming is different times a day, we meet different demands and so that's why we can do things like actually have a basketball court and a tennis court on the same facilities. For some reason, people tend to play those sports at different times of the day, so it works. And so, everything we can, we do to make things multi-use, adaptable, multi-purpose. This would be more of a three-dimensional with the mountains in the background looking mostly north, slightly northwest, sort of flying above McCormick softball diamonds and looking at the facility. This would be the entrance, so very close to the current entrance just kind of where you would enter the, the basketball court that's behind the facility right now. more in that area. So, this might be what it looks like when you enter the facility. We didn't go into a lot of detail like art, and you know different languages for welcome and all those things, but it gives you an idea of an open air, welcoming feel. The lobby and resource spaces and some of the teen and senior or aging adult facilities would be open all of the time for use and then this would be an example of a dance activity in that ballroom space that could be taking place and you can see out across McCormick Park. So great connection with the indoors and the outdoors when we design Currents. I, you know most cities, when they design a Currents kind of aquatics facility, or a splash people say oh we want it to look like the tropics or you know some place like that but not in Missoula everybody wanted to look like Missoula. So, they wanted a timber, and you know argillite stone and lots of open windows and, and almost this immediate indoor-outdoor, I can be on either side of the wall and feel equally welcome, so that was pretty cool. Theater space this is neat, could you imagine there could be a performance outside looking in? There could be guests outdoors and looking back at the performance. This would be about for 200 folks, and it does not at all, not at all like the MCT or UM. So, we did a lot of work with all of the different similar type facilities to make sure that it fits a niche that is not being met in the community. Again, the gym space multi-use volleyball, pickleball, tennis, futsal or soccer. You name the sport; we could probably play it in there. This would be looking from the river trail and so the river is on your right if you will and the access from that side of the building. One of the great things about McCormick Park is we run a lot of the children's camps out of there. It's where we deploy from and so having indoor facilities where kids can go on a storm or where we can provide more services, especially some kids can't be out all day they might have sensitivity, skin sensitivity and all that and so we try and create a warm welcoming place for everybody. Additional information, yes we did look at a pro forma or business plan, it's something that parks, and recreation regularly does when we're looking at community recreation facilities that would come with fee charges. We also looked at cost of construction and we did escalate them 30% just for the change in cost over the last couple of years. Those are big numbers; we do not think that this is the right time to build a facility like this. We do think it's the right time to adopt a schematic conceptual master plan, so we can continue work. The, the way we did cost recovery was based largely on public input. So, if we would go to a cost recovery of you know 80%, if you think about government services that's a pretty good cost recovery you know for every dollar in tax you pay get 80 cents back. We looked at that and we looked at 50% or less and we landed in a range that's kind of halfway between Ft. Missoula Regional Park recovery and halfway between existing aquatics facilities. And again, this is a snapshot in time. At this time, I would not feel at all prepared to tell you what the fee should be or what the exact cost recovery, but we felt it was important to take a look at that. There are comparable community centers across Montana, and more and more being built, again same reasons we are. We have a growing population; we have a growing aging population, and we have climate challenges that we're trying to address. So, the working group that worked with us throughout the process, there were about 20 members and they worked really hard for about eight months helping with public process, listening, working with consultants, made up of citizens. I feel that the design does meet the guiding principles, which reflect the needs and values of Missoula residents. So, this is for and about residents; it's not about you know drawing tourism or shows, that's not the point. It's for the people who live here, that it works well with the natural built environment, clean air is an absolute must, sustainable practices are another absolute



and building a resilient inclusive Missoula. It should host a wide variety of programs and services, transform how the needs of Missoula residents are met including all populations and especially those who are sometimes experiencing income challenges. We want to make sure it's a place to celebrate, that we can facilitate recreation, creativity, renewal, and respite. Respite has come up a lot for families during the last three years, just having time to relax, to talk to adults, but have my kids nearby. Childcare has become a real issue for many, many in our community and then the working group advanced the goals on to Park Board in February. The Missoula Parks and Recreation did adopt the working group's recommendations and directed staff to bring this forward to City Council. So, tonight what we're asking you is to consider please a motion to adopt the conceptual plan for the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity. I want to be really clear about what we're asking, adopting the plan allows our friends, groups and foundation to continue to do their work. In working, this is actually a time to work with philanthropy. It is a time to build coalitions. It also provides us what, what we call in the industry shovel ready projects should there be funding available and it, for me, this is very similar to Fort Missoula Regional Park. There comes a time when the economy is right, and people are ready, and you will know as Council members. So, we're not asking you tonight to put any funds into it, just give our community permission to continue working on this conceptual plan with a shared vision. And so, I just wanted to be really clear, we're not ignoring those things, we're acknowledging them. We're not asking you for any funds and with that I would like to invite Mike Sweet up and then I'm going to guess there's a few other folks that are pretty excited to talk to you about the 22 years they've spent working on this project and I'll be here to answer questions and bring up any of the slides.

President Jones Great thanks. Come on up Mike and thank you Donna, and it's lovely to see you in person.

Mike Sweet So, I won't be as polished as Donna is in public presentation. She's much more practiced than I so thank you Council and thank you Donna.

President Jones And if you, if you just state your name for the record....

Mike Sweet Oh yeah, I will get there yeah, yeah. It's so strange to see you up there and see you here. My name is Mike Sweet. I'm here tonight to represent a citizens group called Friends of the CCRC. While the name may not reflect this, participants of the group have been leaders in facilitating the community conversation around the concept of a gathering space; some of us have been doing this for decades. And my role here tonight is to represent that legacy and humbly speak on their behalf and on behalf of the hundreds of conversations we've had within the community of Missoula even prior to the Celebrate 2000 effort. I would be remiss if I didn't also recognize the contribution you all make on behalf of the community, as well. While we've had prior concept plans, as Donna alluded to, this plan I feel is unique in two ways. One, first the amount of community outreach well exceeds that which has occurred in the past. That outreach not only shaped the design; it shaped or framed the guiding principles. Secondly, while this design captures all the components of the previous efforts, it more completely represents the diversity of interest in the community, reflects how our community has grown and changed. While I know we're here tonight to consider the, the adoption of a plan for a building; it's important to be reminded of what that facility provides for Missoula. In the 2003 Master Plan for a community center in McCormick Park, there's a quote from former Mayor, Mike Kadas. Mayor Kadas states that and I'll quote, one of the reasons we have things like Missoula's Children's Theater and the Carousel are because we know each other pretty well. We've got places like those where we can get to know each other across all ages and across all income groups. As we become a bigger and bigger community, that becomes harder to do. So, this conversation has gone on for a while, the need has not changed. The CCRC is Missoula's door into the community; that's how I view. It soundly welcomes those who call Missoula home and welcomes those who are new to Missoula, it invites them to get to know their neighbors. I've been thinking in fact

the past week that I might like to rename the facility to be called the center for neighbors without borders. Consider that this box filled with rooms is not the end of a conversation but the beginning. It is the footprint for the future of Missoula. It, excuse me, it lays a foundation for us to discover or rediscover who we are as Missoulians. It is a foundation for equity. It is a foundation for empathy. It provides us the opportunity to create a socially, mentally, physically healthier Missoula that is hopeful for the future and ready to take on its challenges. Thank you for your time and consideration.

President Jones Thank you so much, both to Mike and Donna. I believe we've got people in the audience who wanted to comment on this. So, we're going to put that under the category of public comment, and I've got Amy Ragsdale, your hand is raised. So, if you want to state your name for the record and typically do about 3 minutes. Go ahead Ms. Ragsdale.

Amy Ragsdale Hi, can you hear me?

President Jones Yes.

Amy Ragsdale Okay great, thank you. I'm traveling, it's about one in the morning my time and I, I'm, I'm in a strange public space. So, let me know if you're having trouble. Yeah, so my name is name is Amy Ragsdale and I'm here tonight because I too like Mike have been one of the Friends of the CCRS or CIRC, as I like to call it, working alongside Donna and her great crew now for almost 10 years in my case. And I came into this because I'm a dancer and a dance professor. I taught in the dance program and ran that program for 20 years at the University and I also started a couple of dance companies. The first one under the auspices of the University and then the second one as an independent company and so just speaking to Donna's mention in her presentation about our efforts to make sure that we're fulfilling a niche, let me tell you what we are because I am very familiar with how painfully challenging it was as a local dance professional with a company looking for a well-equipped space to perform and present our work in, how difficult it was to find that in Missoula a space that was available in terms of dates, that was affordable, so that I could actually rent it for more than one weekend a year, which would allow me then to you know build audience and you know Missoula is a word of mouth kind of a place. Those things were not available, that's that trio well-equipped available and affordable and I think that I have now watched for the 40 years that I've lived in Missoula a steady talent drain from this town of performing artists and I think one piece of the puzzle of how we keep artists here with us who want to stay is to be able to provide them a well-equipped affordable space. So, this is really about a space for local artists and performers, theater, dance, music, storytelling, filmmaking, all of those people. So, that's the niche and so we are super excited about the prospect of a place like this and that it would be city run and that that would give it a kind of longevity over generations that we haven't been able to see in the past. The other thing that I've come to fall in love with this project in so many other ways even though that's how I got into it. And one has come to feel really urgent to me and I know I've met with some of you, and we've talked about this but for the record my, my feeling is that, as we're all very aware, we have a lot of divisiveness in our country now and we're seeing that same kind of thing in our own community. And well certainly, there can be ideological divisiveness as our community grows as fast as, as it is, there's also a lot of increasing economic divisiveness and I think it's you know, I find that I hang out with people who are like me, who have my education my interests, maybe my politic, my politics. I think that's pretty normal. We call it pods these days; we hang with our pods but I think that we need to be really proactive now about figuring out how we can provide opportunities for people to come together and not jump to the kinds of labels that I think at least I find myself jumping to and I think we need to provide those spaces where people can be engaged together and stimulating, you know activities, and as a dancer, I think there's no better way to do this than the monthly contra dance or that beginning pickleball workshop or that you know being together in a parent taught stretch class or even just swimming side

by side in the pool or attending a music jam side by side. And these are the ways, I think, that we could genuinely be bringing all members of our community together and that's, that's the key phrase, is how do we make it possible that all feel welcome, all can afford it, and we have a chance to meet our neighbors as, as Mike was saying. Often, we don't even meet our neighbors. So, for me this has come to feel quite urgent as a proactive thing that this community can do to keep us all healthy and together. Thank you for your time.

President Jones Great, thank you so much. Okay, next for public comment, I have Amy Cilimburg. Amy, you can unmute yourself. There you go.

Amy Cilimburg Great, hi. Can you hear me?

President Jones Yes we can.

Amy Cilimburg Okay. Thank you Council members and thank you Donna and Mike, and Amy Ragsdale. I yeah, I just want to speak really quickly here. I know most of you folks. As you guys probably know, I'm the Executive Director at Climate Smart Missoula. I have not been working on this for 10 years, just to be clear. I'm really impressed at the fortitude of Donna, Mike and company but I have long been involved in climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, working closely with the city and I think you all know at Climate Smart Missoula and I worked with the city in the county to develop and pass climate ready Missoula which Donna referenced and it passed by Council as an amendment to the Growth Policy; we've been busy implementing it the last two years. So, I, of course want to speak about our experiences these last very many years and many to come about our hotter and smokier summers. The more we learn about the health dangers of breathing wildfire smoke, the more we understand we really need to clean indoor air and clean indoor air for all, and extreme heat can and will be a really significant health issue. So, a center like this is really a foundation for equity, as Mike just said and to keep us healthy. I'm excited to support this. And just to elaborate on what Donna mentioned, it was in the climate ready plan and it's so specific. One of the strategies is to find, develop and promote indoor recreation, exercising, creative activity spaces that are available to individuals and recreational programs that are accessible to all income levels. So, it's just, it's great that this particular proposal and this center really speaks so clearly to one of the strategies in our collaborative Climate Ready Missoula plan. So, I did participate in the sustainability technical group, and I think there's some really great suggestions to the conceptual design. I look forward to seeing where this can do and go in you know as we further have further conversations but I really support moving this forward and I know Climate Smart Missoula and others in the comic community look forward to you know working in further engagement on the design should funding for this facility be available in the future and, and I really do you know agree with the things that were offered by both Donna and, and Mike and especially Amy there about bringing people together. It's just super important. So, thank you, those are my comments.

President Jones Thank you Amy. Okay next, we have Travis Hoffman. You can unmute yourself. There you go, oh you're muted again Travis. There you go.

Travis Hoffman Thank you Council members. Travis Hoffman: I live in Ward 6, I'm also the advocacy coordinator at a local non-profit here called Summit Independent Living. At Summit, for those of you who don't know who we are, we provide services for people with all types of disabilities and, and those services range from individual services, benefits assistance, accessing resources, individual advocacy, all the way up to providing or helping people with recreational opportunities or access recreational opportunities and systems advocacy. We have also been involved for several years in the development of this concept, as we have with so many of other Missoula's long-term kind of conceptual plans with transportation, parks, etc., and I think this community center concept can be a model not only for Missoula but for Montana and really the nation in how to go about from the start, designing an inclusiveness and accessibility for, for people of all abilities. It's

already been mentioned a couple of times but recreational opportunities for people with disabilities are kind of few and far between. You know, we can go outside in the summer months but that kind of gets shut down when the snow flies and we can't get around in a wheelchair or walker or cane, what, what have you. So, and that's not to mention what others have brought up with people who have respiratory sensitivities when it comes to fire season and, and some of the bad fire seasons we've had over the past 20 years makes it virtually impossible for people to get out and exercise, let alone socialize. So, we are in full support, and we hope you are in full support of this conceptual design, and we look forward to continue working with you all, as well as Donna and Parks to evolve this even further and make it something that all Missoulians can be proud of.

President Jones Thank you for your comments. Last, we have Lisa Sheppard. Lisa, if you can unmute yourself. There you go.

Lisa Sheppard Hi, I'm Lisa Sheppard, CEO of Missoula Aging Services and I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of the CCRC.

President Jones Lisa, you're a little bit muted, maybe you could speak a little bit louder....

Lisa Sheppard Let me see if I get closer. Can you hear me now?

President Jones It's a little bit better.

Lisa Sheppard A little bit? I'm not sure what else to do. So, I'm gonna, I'm gonna try...

President Jones That's good. That's good, just speak loud.

Lisa Sheppard Okay. So, I haven't been involved in this planning process because I'm new, but I understand that my predecessor Susan Kohler was very involved. So, I'm happy to, to speak in support. I appreciate Donna highlighting all of the ways the conceptual design is going to benefit older adults, so I'm going to try to be brief. She did a great job. I'd like to point out, as others did, how important it is to have that safe, accessible, indoor space for older adults. You know particularly in the winter slips, trips, falls people have mobility issues very difficult for them to get out and get about and also as others have said during the summer months when it's fire season having that place to go inside since so many older adults have respiratory conditions that make it really hard for them to be outside. The other thing that I wanted to point out is having the ability to access all of the wide range of tools and resources that can help older adults increase their independence, and their self-confidence, and their knowledge and their skills, that's a critical feature as well. And finally, I wanted to talk about that multi-generational piece. So, we know, this is really the main point I want to make is that when we have multi-generational, intergenerational opportunities, it really helps to dispel stereotypes and reduce ageism and that's all across the age spectrum. It also improves physical and mental health for everyone involved for older adults, it decreases their social isolation, but for younger people when they can develop a positive view of aging by interacting with older adults. That is a very powerful predictor for their own lifelong health and well-being as they age and that's all I have. Thanks again for letting me provide comment. I hope you could hear it.

President Jones Yeah we were able to hear you. Thank you Lisa. Okay, any other public comment on this item? Why don't you come on up? Thank you and just state your name and about 3 minutes.

Janet Sims Good evening. My name is Janet Sims and my, my address is 910 Ronald Avenue in Ward 3. I moved to Missoula in 2010 so that I could be an active grandparent to my two granddaughters, now aged 11 and 13. Just for the record, I'll be 80 this year and hope to be able to live here for the rest of my life. I was born in the UK and have lived in southern Africa and different parts of the U.S., but somehow Missoula feels more like home to me than anywhere else. I'm speaking tonight to ask that you adopt the

conceptual master plan for the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity. I love that this city and its surrounding area makes it possible for aging adults like myself to remain so active. I've been able to do many hours of yoga, African dancing, attend adult education classes, volunteer at the Montana Native Plant Society Botanic Garden at the UM and various other things, all within a short bike ride or walk from my house. In my spare time, I walk my dogs and hike on the trails close to the city. I'm pretty hardy and love experiencing the weather year round but it's less easy to stay as active in the winter months and in many years, the smoke-filled air makes it difficult to stay active in outdoors in the summer months also. I look forward to being able to stay active in the clean air and climate-controlled spaces planned for the new center. The design of the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity will provide space for many of the activities my whole family enjoy on a year-round basis. I can imagine days when all three generations of my family will be able to attend the community center together as we engage in separate activities under the same roof, whether it be playing basketball, taking a dance or yoga class, using the walking track or attending a community meeting. My granddaughters are very familiar with the existing Currents Center having used the pool and the outdoor spaces there since they were wee ones. The expanded spaces in the new center for performances and community celebrations means that there will be many occasions when we can all attend together. I've been very fortunate since moving to Missoula to find a nurturing and friendly community, partly by pursuing the interests that I arrived here with, but I've known a few aging adults like myself who've struggled to find connections and I believe that having this new community center will allow people from a diversity of backgrounds to make connections and find their place in Missoula. There are gyms and other facilities spread around the city that require membership, but these may not be affordable for everyone, nor easily accessible and this new facility will provide amenities that are either free of charge or very affordable for our diverse population. The center's location close to the bus line and walking-biking trails is yet another benefit, as we strive to reduce our carbon footprint. In conclusion, I feel a strong responsibility to leave this world as healthy as possible an environment for all of our grandchildren and their children. It makes me proud to think that the city that I've grown to love so much is planning to build a new community center using sustainable design in the heart of Missoula so that it can be accessible to people from all parts of our community. Please adopt the conceptual design for the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity. Thank you for your attention.

President Jones Thank you Ms. Sims. Okay, any other public comment on this item? Come on up.

Maggie Bornstein My name is Maggie Bornstein for the record, and I have to leave to pick up euros because I've had a long night after this, but I just wanted to say.....

President Jones Can you just speak up a little bit?

Maggie Bornstein Yeah, definitely. I, I didn't plan to comment on this but have been very inspired by other commenters. I'm a person who spends five days a week with senior citizens and I think that while this will be a benefit to so many people. My life personally has just been so enriched by having a wide diversity of folks in my, in my little circle and in my community and so I just see this as such a wonderful project and I hope that you adopt this, this plan.

President Jones Great thank you. Okay, any other public comment on this item? Seeing none, are there questions from Council for Donna or Mike? Ms. Anderson.

Alderperson Anderson Thanks. My question is for Donna. Thanks for taking the time to walk us through all of this and I, I, I and you spoke about this in your presentation but I want to give you an opportunity to be very clear because I can see the headline now from those who didn't take, are not paying attention, the Missoula City Council is adopting a plan to build a 44 million dollar you know community center and I realize that that is not

what we're doing but I really want you to kind of very crystal clear lay layout what exactly it is that you're asking for us to do tonight. Why you're bringing it to us and then what are the next steps?

Donna Gaukler Sure, thank you. So, when we ask you to adopt a conceptual master plan, it gives us as a department and our, the friends and community members a vision of what could be, what will it look like. I liken it to anything else, a business plan to advance a business, designing a, a trail system or a road system or a utility system so it connects, and it functions, and it works after it's been constructed. So, we're asking you to adopt the conceptual master plan to create a vision. It's site-based; it's not unlike adopting the Downtown Master Plan or the Downtown North Riverside Parks and Trails Plan. It's a vision. We recognize that today's economy is not the time to ask for funds, but please keep in mind while we are not asking for funds, we are not asking for construction or operational funds, that there is value to having a vision and there is there is opportunity for philanthropy. I think a lot of us were probably surprised over the last few years at some of the gifts our community has received over, over time. You know like the old library block for example or one of the trusts dedicated to open space and some of the facilities on campus, so it goes on and on. There is value to having a shared vision. We are not asking you for funding and I don't have a timeline on which we would come and ask you for funding.

President Jones Is that satisfactory?

Alderson Anderson Yes, I just, I wanted to kind of clearly lay it out.

President Jones All right.

Alderson Anderson So thank you for doing that.

President Jones I don't think Donna could say it more. Ms. Vasecka.

Alderson Vasecka Thanks. So, I see that there are some architectural firms that are doing the design process and I'm assuming that they're not doing that for free. So, although we're not voting for any costs right now, I'm assuming that there are costs associated with adopting this conceptual design. Is that correct or incorrect?

Donna Gaukler So, those costs.... So, there was a contract for professional services with MMW. Those are all paid. They were paid through use of impact fees based on population growth of the community, over the, since the inception of the impact phase. All paid, all done, prior budget.

Alderson Vasecka Okay, thank you.

President Jones Okay. Any other questions from Council? All right then I would need a motion from our Climate Conservation and Parks chair.

Alderson Sherrill Thanks. I move that we adopt the conceptual master plan for the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity, and I would like to speak to it when you've taken public comments, I guess. May I speak to it?

President Jones Let me, let me see if there's any further comment now that we've got a motion on the floor. I'm not seeing any raised hands, so go ahead Ms. Sherrill.

Alderson Sherrill Great. First I want to thank all the volunteers that have worked on this tirelessly for decades. I, I say this a lot, but I'm continually amazed at the engagement by our citizens and how it starts. I don't know where some these ideas start sometime maybe in someone's garage and they, they come to fruition because of people like you that are willing to put their time and their energy into that. So, I just want to, I want that recognized that we are really lucky to live in a community that has people that are willing to do this. I think it's important that we adopt this plan because you know you

don't go, I've done lots of fundraising in my life. You don't go to get grants, you don't go to big philanthropic organizations, and say I've got this idea you know that I came up with in my garage unless you have a plan to back it. That's how you get funding. So, I think it's important for that. I think it's important for this, just for the vision to move forward after so many years. And I just have some things I want to kind of point out that I really love about it. I think it was pretty well covered and all, all of the presentations and most of us have seen this presentation more than once, still enjoy it but I, I think it was a really thoughtful design for all the different demographics of our community, so I love that. It's a sustainable design which is really important for us and it's funny as I was listening to the presentation tonight, it hit me if I think back to the last week, I've had of meetings that it crosses over with so many of those, whether we were at the you know few of us were at the Missoula Economic Partnership meeting last week. We were talking about how daycare and I know this isn't going to be a daycare, but the bottom line is many, many families use the Parks and Rec programs in the summer as daycare. So, that has been, that is you know a model that needs to change in our state but that's a different, different topic. I was in a meeting this morning with Amy and actually Donna as well talking about an emergency heat plan for the summer, an emergency smoke plan for the summer, and that requires indoor facilities with clean air and with air conditioning. So, I think that's really important. We've seen some major, major heat events around the country and while we while we work on climate change mitigation, we also have to accept that we are at a point in our history a very sad point that we need to be really focused on adaptation as well and I think this is a big part of that. You know the other the other meeting that I reflected on was Missoula Aging Services had come in as well as the Missoula Economic Partnership meeting talking about the aging population of Montana and Missoula, which is higher than the average other states around the country. So, I, I think all those things are really important and I could kind of go on and on, but I think it's I, I think that it is time after two decades, after the work that this organization has done, the need in our community, that we adopt this conceptual plan. I also want to say that I, I appreciate the Friends Group recognizing that right now in a very difficult time, where we have lots of competing priorities, that it's not time that we come for funding yet, but I hope at some point that we are able to do that for our community and I hope for everyone that that's really soon. Thanks.

President Jones Okay thank you. Any other comments from Council? Ms. Vasecka.

Aldersperson Vasecka Thanks and I wanted to thank Donna so much for that wonderful presentation. All of my questions were definitely answered during it. Every time I came up with a new one, you hit on that subject right away, so I really appreciate that. I'm, I'm really torn on this one. I, I don't like the, the competition that the city is going to put in place with the Y and with Marshall Mountain coming up, and we just had that public library, it just everything just is, we're putting so much burden on the property tax, on homeowners for the property tax dollars and I just feel like we're spending too much money and I know that this is not, you're not asking for funds at the moment, but I feel like if me voting yes for this conceptual master plan is me saying that I want to move forward with this plan. And I just I don't think that financially we're ready for this. So, at this time, I am not going to be supporting this but my I used to be super against it, now I'm getting more in the middle. So, I, I just wanted everyone to know my train of thoughts on this but unfortunately I will not be supporting this tonight, but I am willing to hear more about it in the future.

President Jones Thank you. We have Ms. Savage and then Ms. Becerra.

Aldersperson Savage Thank you. I will be supporting this tonight and in particular I, I want to thank the Friends Group for all their dedicated work over the years and also for staff for such a thorough presentation. And particularly, I just wanted to call out the sort of the deep work that I feel like this group and staff did on engaging the community and over many, many years and lots of different folks that you were able to bring to the table.

Some of those people are not traditionally consulted and I really have appreciated knowing that there was a lot of deep engagement in this process. So, I will be voting for it tonight.

President Jones Thank you. Ms. Becerra.

Alderson Becerra Thank you. Like Donna, I too grew up in a community with a community center and I have vivid memories of trying to find my grandma and I knew that if I couldn't find her at home, she would be at the community center with her friends, in a knitting group. It was a place where dads and uncles would go and play chess, us kids could go and hold a, a dance party, at times it was a makeshift church and an impromptu polling place. So, community centers have a really important role in the community, one that I truly support, but for tonight I, I really think it's important for us to support this conceptual master plan because it is so important for the fundraising that needs to happen. No one who, who, who has the means to support a center or an endeavor like this one is going to do it without some sort of master plan. We do this for the city we, do this all the time, it's a, it's a more concrete way for anyone who wants to support it to have an idea what it will do in the community. So, just for that reason I'm fully supportive. I think the benefits as Donna and everyone else has mentioned are many for, for the community and thank you for all your work on this.

President Jones Great, thank you. Ms. Anderson.

Alderson Anderson Thank you so much. I want to echo a lot of what my fellow Council members said. I also spent a lot of time fundraising and know that you need to have something to put forward and I think that what Donna has highlighted, as well as the comments from other folks is that there is an identified need in our community and having this master plan helps them sort of figure out the way to fund it and they're not, they don't know how that's going to end up and you know things have changed and you know there's opportunities that we might be missing and, and that there is a need in our community, not only from the climate aspect but the opportunities to bring people together. I loved the gentleman who said he wants to call it I think it's the community center without or something like it was I you know loved that because I think that we do need to figure out ways to address and give opportunities for people to come together and learn and build relationships and you never know what the next thing that could spark by having that random you know run in with somebody at the community center that could be the next thing that really makes people's lives better here in Missoula and I think that that is what the whole purpose of a community center is to bring opportunities for people to come together and think about their community. And I you know I realize and agree that right now doesn't seem the right time for a, a big bond initiative or something like that but having the ability for the Friends Group, for the Parks Department to go around and see what opportunities are available seems it seems like short-sighted for us not to support that and who knows what opportunities we may be missing and for them to give them a roadmap to go forth and figure out how to fund this seems like a waste not to support it. So, I will be supporting it tonight and look forward to building more and more community excitement around this and opportunities to fund this and hopefully see it into fruition. Thanks.

President Jones Thank you. Ms. West.

Alderson West I am also going to support this. I think that Missoula has limited capacity right now for a lot of the services that this facility could provide. I used to be a member at the YMCA but we only had one car for most of the time that we lived here and I only biked across town a handful of times with two kids in the bike trailer before I decided it was just not the best way to use my time to get there and it wasn't the safest way either because Russell Street is challenging on with a bike trailer and I also think that we need spaces that are unique from what exists today. I have a daughter who performs with the middle school band, she's in jazz band and the regular band and the all city



band, and they don't have a performance base that is really adequate for them that isn't also super expensive. And so, we're regularly seeing kids who have put in years of work playing in the orchestra or the band or the choir perform in gyms and that is not comfortable for people, you know sitting on bleachers or really does their work justice. So, and there's things like community dances, just all sorts of things we could have in this space that bring people together. And because of that, I think it's really important to have a unified vision that you know really we're just validating what the community already said and I think that's the least we can do really and make sure that we have what we need to carry this forward and fundraise. There's going to be a lot of fundraising to make this happen.

President Jones Thank you. And Mr. Nugent.

Alderperson Mike Nugent Thank you madam president and I appreciate all the comments from my, my colleagues. I, I will be voting to support the, the adoption of the master plan. You know, Missoula has a seemingly infinite ability to dream big and often finds ways to make that happen and I think that's an impressive trade for, for our community. I do think and I appreciate Ms. Anderson for asking Ms. Gaukler to clarify what exactly it is we're doing tonight because I think it's important for the community to understand how these processes work. That all being said, I, I tend to agree that if we adopt this master plan that the community is going to find a way to make this happen at some point and if that's the case, I think we do need to acknowledge that we're already pressured on the way we fund parks. You know we had a public hearing a couple months ago that talked about user fees and the, the maybe the gap for in some people's mind on, on what we're already doing in parks already. We're looking at Marshall Mountain and then you know potential gaps in in what this will generate in user fees versus what it will cost annually, and I think that that's part of a growing community. I think those are realities. I'm not saying that's a reason not to do it but I do think that by voting for this tonight we as a Council probably need to acknowledge that we're going to need to evaluate how we fund parks moving forward because these things do cost money and I don't think that there's capacity to go back and raise user fees anymore, nor do I think that that would be the goal of anybody involved in in parks at all. So, I think that that's just something we need to put in the back of our minds because you know Mike, Mike's an old neighbor of mine and I, I enjoyed meeting, meeting with him and others on the Friends Group and I, I believe that Missoula will find a way to make this happen. So, I, I just think that as, as my colleague Ms. Vasecka said, we probably need to acknowledge what it's going to cost.

President Jones Thank you. Mr. Hess.

Alderperson Hess Thanks. A lot of great comments so I'll try not to be duplicative. I'm really supportive of this and I want to thank I want to thank Donna and Mike and the Friends Group and all of the staff for their really hard work on this. And this I guess is like so many other things in our community that a group of dedicated individuals get together and establish a vision and, and sometime later we have an amazing product in our community, and you can see it all over all over our community and it's why, it's, it's part of why our community is such a vibrant wonderful place to live. So, thank you for all of your work over the years on this. I also like Donna grew up or was born in North Dakota and lived in a community that at that time didn't have a community center. My family among others were involved in an effort to establish one there and some decades later they've, they've built that, and they've opened it and it's largely funded through philanthropy. And the missing link there is a local option sales tax, which is a tool that we don't have here in the State of Montana, and I know we, we bump up against all of these funding constraints on so many of our initiatives and I think we have a real dysfunctional tax system that needs to be reformed in order to really be able to provide for our community needs in a meaningful way. So, I'm, I'm for all the reasons others have, have stated I'm really supportive of this project and happy to vote for it. The, the action tonight, as others have

pointed out, is limited but the action to build this facility when the time comes in in years down the road will be built on a foundation of all the action up until now and as well as the adoption of the plans tonight. So, it's an important action even if it's, even if it's a preliminary one.

President Jones Seeing no other public comment, I'll just add a few short words. I agree with Jordan and other Councilors who referenced this. I think this project begs the question that we need tax reform desperately in Montana. We have a very, very broken taxation system and we need tax reform, and we need to figure out different dollars from which to pull pop, different pockets from which to pull dollars and I would love to be in a situation where we did not have to look to philanthropy for the majority of funding for this item, but that's another conversation for another day. In the meantime, we're looking at a great conceptual plan and I know how hard Donna and Mike Sweet and all of these people have worked on this for years and years and years. And when I just take a look at what's going on in the world today, Missoula is growing rapidly which causes a fair amount of stress and disconnection, our world is changing rapidly, our economy is upside down, our income inequity is increasing, and I think all of that points to the fact that it is all the more important to create something like a community center that pulls people together, that provides the vehicle for them to connect, and that's how we keep our community strong is by connecting with each other. We live in a very fractured time, and I think if Missoula is intentional and can pursue these types of goals that's how we move forward and get to a better place. So, I'm very much in favor of this. Seeing no other comment, we'll have a roll call vote on this item.

President Jones Thank you. That passes. Thank you Donna and Mike for all of your time on this.

**Moved by:** Alderperson Sherrill

Adopt the Conceptual Master Plan for the Currents Center for Recreation and Creativity

AYES: (10): Alderperson Anderson, Alderperson Becerra, Alderperson Carlino, Alderperson Hess, Alderperson Jones, Alderperson Jordan, Alderperson Nugent, Alderperson Savage, Alderperson Sherrill, and Alderperson West

NAYS: (2): Alderperson Contos, and Alderperson Vasecka

**Vote result: Approved (10 to 2)**

## **10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **10.1 Budget and Finance (BF) committee report**

#### **10.1.1 Minutes from the May 18, 2022 Meeting**

### **10.2 Climate, Conservation and Parks (CCP) committee report**

### **10.3 Committee of the Whole (COW) committee report**

#### **10.3.1 Minutes from the May 18, 2022 Meeting**

#### **10.3.2 Minutes from the May 4, 2022 Meeting**

### **10.4 Housing, Redevelopment, and Community Programs (HRCP) committee report**

#### **10.4.1 Minutes from the May 11, 2022 Meeting**

#### **10.4.2 Minutes from the May 18, 2022 Meeting**

### **10.5 Land Use and Planning (LUP) committee report**

**10.6 Public Safety, Health and Operations (PSO) committee report**

**10.7 Public Works and Mobility (PWM) committee report**

**10.7.1 Minutes from the May 18, 2022 Meeting**

**11. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**12. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

President Jones For communications from the Mayor, I will just make a few brief comments. I had the pleasure on Friday and Saturday of going up to the bison range and then to Pablo for the events surrounding the return of the bison range to the tribe, the confederate, confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes and the management of the bison range. It was just a wonderful two days. I learned so much about the bison range, about the great importance of buffalo to the tribes. There was just wonderful speakers, wonderful messages, and really it got across to me how significant the return of the bison range is. So, I just wanted to note that. There were also some really great speakers Chairman McDonald, Senator Shane Morigeau, Elder Johnny Arlee, and then finally Interior Secretary Deb Haaland spoke Saturday at the event. It was just wonderful hearing all of these people, I was incredibly impressed by Deb Haaland, especially. So, I just wanted to note that. I think people haven't been up to the bison range. They really get need a chance to get up there and check it out and it was really heralded by the tribe as a great event moving forward and it was literally a hundred years in the making to get it returned to the tribe. So, it is a significant event.

**13. GENERAL COMMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

President Jones All right, I will go to Ms. West for comments.

Aldersperson West I don't have any.

President Jones Ms. Savage.

Aldersperson Savage Thank you. I just wanted to echo your comments about attending the bison range restoration celebration. On Friday, the invitation of the confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes, I also attended the bison range restoration celebration in Moise. I was humbled to be invited and honored to attend. The celebration marked the return to the tribes of the bison range. It was a monumental day and it was a long time coming and I just wanted to read a quote from Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. This was in the Montana free press, and she said the return of the bison range to these tribes is a triumph and a testament to what can happen when we collaboratively work together to restore balance to ecosystems that were injured by greed and disrespect. Thank you.

President Jones Mr. Hess.

Aldersperson Hess Thanks. I also had the pleasure and the honor of attending the ceremony on Friday at the bison range and found it to be incredibly moving and, and meaningful and I want to congratulate the tribes on their decades-long quest to transition the bison range to tribal management. I wanted and I'll just echo the comments of others so far. I want to specifically make a call out to the new visitor center museum, which is incredible, just a really nice job there and so next time you're in the area definitely check that out. It's, it's worth the stop alone and then of course the, the bison range itself. So, thanks.

President Jones Mr. Carlino.

Aldersperson Carlino I was also going to comment on that. I got to go celebrate with the Salish Kootenai tribe on Saturday and I just think this is a really good example of land back that a lot of activists and indigenous people ask for and are advocating for. You know, just returning it

returning the management of the bison range back to the Salish Kootenai tribe is an example of land back, what people often ask for and we all still get to enjoy the bison range and it'll be under good hands in the future. So, that was exciting to see land back in practice.

President Jones Great. Mr. Nugent.

Alderson Mike Nugent Thank you. Thursday and Friday last week I was able to attend with several of you the Missoula Economic Partnerships Big Sky Business Insight Summit. I know my colleague Ms. Sherrill is on the board so I hope I'm not stealing your thunder here. And I just want to point out that they had two days full of conversations around two major issues impacting our community, housing and childcare, and how those are so intricately tied to you know the economic health of any community including ours. And the presentations, I believe, are going to be available on the MEP website by the end of the week I believe is what they said but I don't know that for certain. So, maybe if you're interested, I would check it out and it, it, it's the first time they did it in person, but I would encourage anybody who did attend to consider attending that and putting on their calendar next year because it was a tremendous community conversation.

President Jones Ms. Sherrill.

Alderson Sherrill You did kind of steal my thunder and I have no idea when they're putting it on the website. I'm not privy to that kind of information but if they do, I'm glad to hear that they will be though because one of the presentations it was the one Thursday morning was Bryce Ward who is an economist, and he was talking all about housing. It was fascinating he speaks faster than my 16 year old, but I was hanging on every single word because it was just so full of information. Anyone that is interested and worried about housing in this state should go and watch that; it was absolutely just fascinating. You know, I said this last time too that Friday was all about childcare and along with our tax system, our system for childcare is, is absolutely broken and I really hope that the legislature takes this up next session because it, it is, it is exacerbating all the other problems around, around housing and affordability as well. So, oh, I was just going to say again that I think it is really a sign of the times that an economic development organization has two full days that is dedicated to housing and childcare and I, I, I'm actually really happy it's going to be on their website because I didn't realize that. So, go watch it.

President Jones Ms. Anderson.

Alderson Anderson I'll pass.

President Jones Mr. Contos.

Alderson Contos Yes, I've been out of town for a while, so I missed the bison celebration up there. I'm sure that was a good one. I've actually been up there and it's very impressive. I did want to mention something about the cleanup under the North Reserve bridge; that's impressive. I've been out of town for a while, I went up there Sunday, and it just looked great. And so, I just want to, really want to thank everybody that had anything to do with that. What an amazing effort. Thank you very much.

President Jones Thanks. Ms. Vasecka.

Alderson Vasecka Thank you. I wanted to thank everybody in the public that came tonight to offer their points of view on everything. I love it when public participates, so thank you for coming. I also wanted to wish everybody a safe Memorial Day weekend and I just ask that you spend a couple of moments and remember why you have a three-day weekend. It's to honor all of those who have lost their lives and to protect, to protect our country. So, just take a couple of moments and think about that while, while you're having, having a good time. Hopefully it'll be sunny; I didn't look at the weather but be safe and have a good weekend.

President Jones Thank you. Ms. Jordan.

Alderperson Jordan Thank you. I just wanted to say two quick things. One is, is I wanted to thank the county for all, John you reminded me, for all the resources that they threw into getting the, the land under the Reserve Street bridge fixed up. They, all our county commissioners were out there picking up trash. They offered their Public Works equipment, and a lot of county folk were out there picking it up, and it was a really great effort that was really nice to see. The other thing I wanted to talk about is that there is a Bear Smart fundraiser at Imagination this Wednesday from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and proceeds from certain beverages will go to benefit the Bear Smart action fund, which was established by local residents in partnership with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks. The fund creates a source of revenue for projects that need immediate attention in order to keep bears and people safe in Missoula. So, the idea of creating the fund emerged in the wake of a report of a female grizzly with her three cubs moving into the north hills. This bear has already had some bad interaction with, with humans because humans have left stuff out for it to eat and the funds from, from the Bear Smart action fund will go to help educate and hopefully eventually we can find enough money for bins, so that people could have bear safe bins. Anyway, this Wednesday 5:30 p.m. to 8 o'clock for the bears at Imagination. Thank you.

President Jones Thank you. And Ms. Becerra.

Alderperson Becerra I will pass, thank you.

**14. MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS, REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**14.1 Administratively approved agreement report**

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

President Jones We will stand adjourned. Thank you everyone for your service.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

---

Martha L. Rehbein, CMC, Legislative  
Service Director/City Clerk

---

John Engen, Mayor