

Missoula City Council Housing, Redevelopment, and Community Programs Committee Minutes

DRAFT

February 14, 2024

1:10 PM

Council Chambers (in person) or TEAMS (virtually)

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

Members present: Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Bob Campbell, Eric Melson

Members absent: Kristen Jordan, Sandra Vasecka

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Committee Chair, Gwen Jones, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call

The Committee Chair verbally confirmed the committee members who were absent.

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

1.2.1 Approval of the Minutes from 7 February 2024

The minutes were approved as submitted.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Democratizing the MRA Expenditures

Councilman Daniel Carlino introduced the item regarding democratizing MRA (Missoula Redevelopment Agency) expenditures. He explained his reasoning behind the resolution including the concern over increased taxes, to ensure there are checks and balances between City Council, voters and the MRA regarding how money is allocated as well as voting on the individuals who utilize the tax revenues. For more information on this item, please watch the video.

Ellen Buchanan, the Director of the MRA gave a brief background on the purpose of the MRA, the successes realized from the utilization of TIF (Tax Increment Financing) funds and the various projects both past and present. She explained the MRA board appointment process as well as overall operating procedures and approaches in accordance with state law and local governance to promote investment and economic development in Missoula's Urban Renewal Districts (URD). Ms. Buchanan described the intricate, collaborative relationship between the MRA and the City Council. She highlighted the various ways the two entities work together regarding expenditures, property purchases, projects and so forth. She concluded by mentioning openness of the

MRA process, that informational items are brought in front of council on a regular basis, that the council sees all documents pertaining to the various projects and that all MRA meetings are open to the public, all are encouraged to attend.

- The committee questioned the following:
 - The MRA Board composition
 - The touch points between MRA and the City Council
 - The estimated timeframe to see economic outcomes from projects in various urban renewal districts.
 - How the utilization of TIF funds for projects correlates to the funding of neighborhood improvements and affordable housing.
 - The timeframe/process if the resolution was approved and the council's current ability to intervene in MRA decisions if they determined it necessary.
 - Reiterating the MRA process regarding funding of projects and the long-term benefits financial benefits of those investments.

Committee member Daniel Carlino made the recommended motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Moore commented that the money came from taxpayers. He commented regarding the regulations, and bylaws of the MRA.

Matz Larson spoke in favor of the motion and commented on sunseting URDs. He called for a vote on the item.

Brandi Atanasoff spoke in favor of the motion and thanked councilman Carlino for bringing the item forward.

Councilman Campbell made the motion to keep the item 3.1 Democratizing the MRA Expenditures in committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Moore commented against keeping the item in committee. He called for the termination of the MRA.

Matz Larson commented against the motion. He called for more regulation and correlated TIF funding to other issues that have occurred in the County.

A roll call vote was taken. The motion to keep the item in committee failed.

The Committee discussed the MRA's current projects and the MRA's historic involvement in a variety of projects throughout the community. A committee member spoke against the motion and provided their reasoning including the need for predictable policy in long-term community development. They also touched upon the discussions of the URD's exit plans. They conferred on the framework of state law regarding the MRA as well as the lack of correlation between public schools and the MRA/TIF funding.

Councilman Nugent made the motion to table item 3.1 Democratizing the MRA Expenditures

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Moore- reiterated the taxpayers are paying these funds.

Matz Larson commented on TIF funds, called for more transparency on the topic and was not in favor of tabling the item.

A roll call vote was taken, the motion passed. The item was tabled.

Moved by: Bob Campbell

Motion to keep item 3.1 Democratizing the MRA Expenditures in committee.

AYES: (2): Daniel Carlino, and Bob Campbell

NAYS: (7): Mirtha Becerra, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, and Eric Melson

ABSENT: (3): Stacie Anderson, Kristen Jordan, and Sandra Vasecka

Vote results: Failed (2 to 7)

Moved by: Mike Nugent

Motion to table item 3.1 Democratizing the MRA Expenditures.

AYES: (7): Mirtha Becerra, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, and Eric Melson

NAYS: (2): Daniel Carlino, and Bob Campbell

ABSENT: (3): Stacie Anderson, Kristen Jordan, and Sandra Vasecka

Vote results: Approved (7 to 2)

3.2 Built for Zero Capacity Building Grant Agreement

Emily Armstrong, the Houseless Programs Manager in the Department of Community Planning, Development and Innovation introduced the item. She provided information on the grant award including amount and conveyed the funds would support an additional built for zero staff specialist position. She explained the grant requirements, community aims and the work plan. Ms. Armstrong concluded by reiterating the recommended motion.

Councilwoman Sherril made the recommended motion.

The committee spoke in favor of the motion. They discussed the long-term sustainability of the position and the plan regarding this. They also discussed various community aims including the goal of achieving functional zero houselessness for veterans and that a community working toward a common goal can produce great outcomes.

There was no public comment.

Ratify the agreement with Community Solutions executed by the Mayor accepting \$190,075 in grant funds over two years to fully fund a new Built for Zero Specialist position in Houseless Programs.

AYES: (9): Mirtha Becerra, Daniel Carlino, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Bob Campbell, and Eric Melson

ABSENT: (3): Stacie Anderson, Kristen Jordan, and Sandra Vasecka

Vote results: Approved (9 to 0)

3.3 Mid-Fiscal Year 2024 Houseless Programs Update

Emily Armstrong, the Houseless Programs Manager in the Department of Community Planning, Development and Innovation provided an update on the Houseless Programs. She discussed how the various Houseless Programs align with the 24-26 Strategic Plan and goals. Ms. Armstrong provided information, context, details, data and outcomes regarding the contracts and projects related to the Houseless Programs including the following:

- Contracts and funding that were administered by the Houseless programs including the Poverello Center operations and outreach and the Johnson Street temporary emergency shelter.
- Contracts and funding granted to the Houseless Programs including Build for Zero, the Montana Healthcare Foundation and Big Sky Public Relations as well as the Missoula County Financial Assistance Fund.
- Other key projects including the Community Strategy to address homelessness, the Missoula Coordinated Entry System, and the Trinity Navigation Center.

Chief of Police, Michael Colyer provided context and statistics regarding the calls for service in the radius of the Johnson Street shelter. He defined terminology and discussed comparative data regarding frequency and type of calls for service before the shelter opened and after opening. The committee discussed and questioned various aspects of the data and statistics Chief Colyer presented.

Ms. Armstrong concluded by highlighting additional strategy, steering, and funding which the Houseless Programs provides oversight. She also provided guidance on where to find Houselessness data.

The committee questioned and discussed various aspects of the presentation including:

- Access to services or care providers for individuals unhoused and camping compared to individuals utilizing the shelter space.
- The real time data accessibility provided by the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Connecting and collaborating with other communities regarding various topics relating to homelessness.
- The impact the Villagio apartments opening had on the houseless numbers.
- The current data on those experiencing homelessness.

The committee concluded by discussing sustainable funding with Eric Levold, the Director of Impact for the United Way of Missoula.

There was no public comment.

No motion – this is an informational update.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.