

LA JUNTA URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY

CALL TO ORDER: The La Junta Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners held a Special Meeting on Thursday, August 22, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Bennett.

Board Members Present

Joe Ayala
Nancy Bennett
Toni Madrid
Erin Monroy
Lily Sweikert

Absent

Christine Coffield
Trevor Herasingh
Daniel Horton
Randall Roberson

**Subject to approval at the
September 26, 2024
Urban Renewal Meeting**

Also present: Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
Cristian Estrada, Deputy City Clerk
Aimee Hill, Building Code Official
Erika Lively, La Junta
Bette McFarren, RF Gazette

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

There was no citizen participation.

MINUTES: July 25, 2024 and August 1, 2024

Chairperson Bennett asked if there were any corrections or additions to be made to the July 25, 2024 or the August 1, 2024 minutes. Hearing none, a motion was made by Joe Ayala, seconded by Erin Monroy, that the minutes for July 25, 2024 and August 1, 2024 be approved as published. The motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: July 2024

MOTION TO TABLE THE JULY 2024 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS UNTIL NEXT MONTHS MEETING: Sweikert

SECOND: Madrid

DISCUSSION: There was no discussion

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously

REPORTS:

A. Plaza Building

Chairperson Bennett: Received a letter from the lawyer which allows SECCP to get the bank loan at the tax-free rate which is going to drop the interest rate to around 3%. The money is not going to be borrowed until it is needed but it has been guaranteed. Another tour will be scheduled.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Governing Body Comments:

1. Nancy Bennett: Since the work session about the application and rubric, two people have asked for applications. They have not been turned in yet.

Group Discussion: It would be a good idea for board members to look at the application and rubric again to see if there's any changes that need to be made. It was noted that the rubric that Cynthia had sent out was a draft version. The final version included the items that was discussed during the work session. One being instructions on how to complete it.

2. Lily Sweikert: The website needs updated. It should include the Strategic Plan, the funding application along with the rubric. People are only finding out about the funding by word of mouth.
3. Toni Madrid: Got in touch with Sheryl Trent with questions regarding an Urban Renewal Director. Following are the questions and responses:

a) Do other Urban Renewals function without a director?

No, almost always, a city employee has a job description that would include the executive director position and almost always get someone with planning, development, and economic development experience. In small cities, it is often the city manager.

b) If so, how does it work?

To function without a director would mean the board would need to take on organizational and administrative duties which puts the board at a higher degree of legal risk in regards to reviewing and recommending applications, etc.

c) Are there Urban Renewals with administrative support vs a director?

None that she's aware of because the administrative support person would not be able to complete the level of work that would be required of an executive director.

d) If so, what is the pay?

Probably a minimum of \$20/hour, that's just a guess. She suggests to start thinking about the job duties, description that you would like to have done and how much time those duties might take. For each of those areas, determine if there is a legal, ethical, or is it realistic for a board member to complete. If a board member could do the work, is the board member willing to take on the additional accountability, commitment and time to do that work. At the end of the process, you will have a list of duties you can then review and see what level of employee/contractor you need to perform the work.

Group Discussion: There wasn't an application for an Urban Renewal Director. Cynthia's job description was of an Economic Development Director and the Urban Renewal Director position was added afterwards. It would be a good idea for the board to come up with their own job description for the director. It was mentioned that Rebecca Goodwin would be a good choice. She used to be on the board and has worked closely with the State Historic Fund and the Colorado Preservation Inc. Perhaps it could be as a part-time position. There could also be the chance the new city manager would have the experience needed. It was decided that the board needs a director now. Nancy will reach out to Rebecca to see if she is interested.

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4. Joe Ayala: Nancy mentioned that she talked to Daniel Horton about his position on the board. How did that conversation go?

Group Discussion: Nancy said that he is still interested in staying on the board and will attend by zoom. Daniel was a great asset in the beginning when he was living here. If he is asked to give up his seat, the board will be losing access to legal advice which he currently provides. It was discussed if Daniel could remain on the board and possibly open it up to additional applicants.

MOTION TO ADD AN ADDITIONAL TWO BOARD MEMBERS AND OPEN UP THE VACANCIES TO THE APPLICATION PROCESS: Madrid

SECOND: Sweikert

DISCUSSION: Need to make sure that there is not an even number of board members. Melanie will handle the advertising, posting and receiving of board member applications.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously

5. Joe Ayala: Regarding the Urban Renewal website, Melanie will get Erin and Jessie together to see what can be done when the city's website goes live.
6. Lily Sweikert: It's about time for another round of funding applications. The word needs to get out better, possibly posting on Facebook and putting up flyers around the TIF district, especially in places where we know there are dilapidated buildings.
7. Lily Sweikert: It was never decided what direction the board is going on the Urban Renewal Director job description.

Group Discussion: A good start would be with the draft that Erin has already done. Further suggestions can be submitted to Melanie. As far as the pay, it should be scaled to the experience of the individual and can range from \$40-\$60/hour or higher.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Nancy Bennett, Chairperson