

**City of Madras
Madras Redevelopment Commission
Official Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2011**

I. Call to Order

The Madras Redevelopment Commission's (MRC) regular meeting was called to order by Chair, Councilor Tom Brown at 5:33 p.m. on Tuesday, September 20, 2011 in the Madras City Council Chambers.

Members in Attendance:

Chair City Councilor, Tom Brown; Commissioners: Doeshia Jacobs, Doug Lofting, Blanca Reynoso, Helmer Wallan and Patty Woll.

Members Absent:

Vice Chair Mayor, Melanie Widmer; City Councilor Kevin O'Meara

There was one vacancy

Staff Members in Attendance were:

Community Development Department: Director Nick Snead and Specialist Tammy McHaney;
City Administrator Mike Morgan.

Guest:

Rob Berg

II. Consent Agenda

- a. Adoption of Agenda
- b. Approval of Vouchers
- c. Approval of Minutes from July 19, 2011

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER DOUG LOFTING AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PATTY WOLL. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. Visitor Comments

There were no visitor comments.

IV. Possible Candidates for MRC Membership

Director Snead informed the Commission that there had been a vacancy on the Commission since January. He said he had invited Mr. Rob Berg to the meeting regarding his interest in membership.

He reminded the Commissioners that normally the policy was to present at least two candidates for their consideration; however one candidates that had been interested, did not submit the

requested second letter of interest. Mr. Berg did submit a letter of interest and therefore Director Snead asked if they wanted to consider Mr. Berg at this time or wait for a second candidate.

He explained the process regarding appointments and noted that the Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council and City Council then appoints the member.

Mr. Rob Berg introduced himself and noted that he owned Berg Aircraft which had been in business for the past 19 years and for the past five years he had managed the City of Madras' Airport. He also noted that previously from 1977 through 1984, his Father had managed the Madras Airport.

He said his interest in the MRC was based on his desire to assist the City to be successful, because what happened in the City affected not only his business, but the airport as well. He said the MRC had accomplished some great things and he wanted to be a part of that.

COMMISSIONER HELMER WALLAN MOTIONED TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL THE APPOINTMENT OF ROB BERG TO THE MADRAS REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER DOUG LOFTING SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Berg noted he was a member of the Redmond Airport Commission as well.

Chair Brown thought he would be a great addition.

The Commission thanked Mr. Berg.

V. Additional Discussion

a. Oregon Main Street Annual Conference

Director Snead presented a conference announcement and suggested they attend if possible. He noted the MRC would pay for travel expenses and accommodations. He requested they let him know as soon as possible.

b. Future Plans

A discussion took place on future MRC projects.

Commissioner Wallan thought the Commission should have allotted less individual funding for the façade projects so they could have financed more projects. He said he wasn't finding fault with any of the projects that had been completed; he just would have liked to see more businesses helped. He mentioned his stance on the street trees and said he had hoped someone would have suggested the Commission set aside money to maintain the trees as well as other things such as weeds.

He told the Commission it was time for an operation change to the MRC and submitted his resignation. He said this would be his last meeting. He was glad he had been a part of this Commission.

The Commission said he would be greatly missed and thanked him for all he had done.

Chair Brown agreed with some of his comments regarding the façade projects and asked the Commission to start thinking about who this Commission would become.

Director Snead agreed.

Commissioner Lofting asked if staff had received any recent request for funding.

Director Snead replied, not to his knowledge.

Specialist McHaney reminded the Commission that they still had requests for a “Phase III” of the façade projects fund.

Commissioner Lofting read that Jon Burchell had recently received his “arborist” certificate and questioned if any consideration had been taken by the public works department to trim the downtown trees.

Director Snead noted he had a personal conversation with Jon Burchell and suggested to him a survey of the downtown trees to identify which ones needed trimmed, replanted or whatever action Jon thought necessary. Jon Burchell responded and explained that trees can only be maintained at certain times of the year.

Director Snead asked if the MRC would like Jon to complete this survey and provide a report to them. He noted there probably was funding available if needed for special equipment if needed.

He recommended they recognize the expertise and passion of the Urban Forestry Commission and suggested that collectively the Urban Forestry Commission and Jon Burchell complete this survey.

Commissioner Lofting suggested that the MRC, the Forestry Commission and Jon get together and work on a solution. He said there were a lot of good things going on downtown, but there were some areas that looked unkempt and we should take advantage of what we have.

He continued and asked if there had been any other consideration given to blight removal or blight purchases on 4th or 5th Streets.

Director Snead noted he had some thoughts but had not presented them formally.

Administrator Morgan reminded the Commission that the \$2,500,000 line of credit was what had allowed the original blight removal/purchases which needed to be “rolled over” to permanent financing. He said in terms of the original plan, they were ahead of the schedule; however the revenue was only at 50% according to the plan, so large projects may be delayed. He suggested a planning mode for the next year or two but pointed out that if they really saved here and there, maybe they could accomplish a smaller project.

He reminded them that during their blight purchases, the MRC had never used “eminent domain” or force. The Commission had paid what the seller had asked.

Commissioner Wallan noted he had on several occasions he had been told by the hospital district that they planned to improve their downtown building; however they had yet to make any improvements.

Administrator Morgan encouraged the Members to attend this annual conference in Baker City.

Commissioner Jacobs noted change was good, but she suggested they review their plan because she did not want to change their original intent.

Commissioner Lofting requested staff provide them with financial information as to what the Commission was currently obligated to, the outlook for future income and, to help them set a direction.

Administrator Morgan suggested staff bring to the next meeting a conceptual, viable, work plan.

Commissioner Wallan thought this was a good idea.

Administrator Morgan suggested they review all their plans and refresh their memory of why the MRC existed.

Commissioner Jacobs stated for the record, she was not in favor of the MRC spending money every year to maintain the downtown trees because it was the City of Madras' job and Director Burrell should be informed.

Commissioner Reynoso noted that on 5th Street someone was stripping the lower branches.

Director Snead said he would speak with Director Burrell or Jon Burchell and see what they thought was the appropriate action to take and whether to have representation at the next Urban Forestry Commission meeting, or just send a request.

Commissioner Jacobs asked if it was the adjacent property owner's responsibility to maintain the street trees.

Administrator Morgan replied no, the trees belong to the City.

Commissioner Jacobs asked if maintenance had been considered when those trees were originally planted.

Administrator Morgan explained that the trees do get trimmed, but staff would look into this.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Tom Brown, Chair

Tammy McHaney, Specialist