



**MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
LAUREL URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2020
11:00 AM
LAUREL CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Public Input: *Citizens may address the committee regarding any item of business that is not on the agenda. The duration for an individual speaking under Public Input is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the committee will not take action on any item not on the agenda.*

General Items

1. Roll Call

Daniel Klein
Janice Lehman
Don Smarsh
Judy Goldsby
Dean Rankin (arrived at 11:15AM)
Nick Altonaga (City of Laurel)
Steve Simonson (Beartooth RC&D)

The chair called the meeting to order at 11:04AM

2. Approve Meeting Minutes: May 11, 2020

Members reviewed the meeting minutes from May 11, 2020.

Daniel motioned to approve the meeting minutes from May 11, 2020.

Don Seconded.

Motion Carried.

3. Big Sky EDA Update

Dianne Lehm from Big Sky EDA emailed the Board that she would be out of town. She provided some details available

The Chair read off details from Dianne's email.

Economic Recovery Task Force is ongoing, and includes subcommittees on:

- Response, coordination, and communication
- Economic impact assessment
- Strategic restart partnership
- Recovery planning

Economic recovery plan will be released in draft form this week. The website yceanomicrecovery.org has details available on the plan, resources, and funding from state and federal sources. Big Sky EDA is always available for technical support and any questions from businesses and stakeholders.

4. Beartooth RC&D Update

Steve Simonson from Beartooth RC&D was present from the meeting. He remarked that the public meeting phase has begun for the draft Recovery Plan.

Beartooth RC&D has submitted \$400,000 grant request for economic recovery planning including \$200,000 for technical support for recovery plan preparation, \$100,000 for regional economic development, and \$20,000 for operations support for Beartooth RC&D. Grant and loan funds are available through Beartooth RLF. Currently doing gap financing for organizations.

Bridger Wind Project- Concrete has been poured and bases are going up.
Hoping to do a tour this fall depending on COVID19 situation.
Pictures of the project are up on the Beartooth website.

Daniel had a question for Beartooth – Where does the RLF gap financing come from?

- CDBG- Allows us to relend those sources
- EDA
- USDA Rural Development

Nick added that the Public comment period will include Laurel City Council, Laurel Chamber of Commerce, and LURA. He wants to ensure Laurel has a say in the Recovery Plan.

Steve hopes that we can keep the number of business closures down through proper reopening and safety precautions.

New Business

5. Small Grant Application: Dragon Palace

Members discussed the general small grant for the Dragon Palace.

Daniel Motioned to approve \$3,575 for the General Small Grant application for the Dragon Palace
Don Seconded.
Motion Carried.

6. Small Grant Application: Ron Seder - 119 W. Main St

Discussion of Ron Seder multiple grant request. Technical Assistance and Facade Grant.

Don Motioned to approve technical assistance grant at \$1,914 for the project at 119 W. Main St.
Dean Seconded.
Motion Carried.

Daniel motioned to approve \$9,000 for the facade grant for the project at 119 W. Main St.
Don Seconded.
Motion Carried.

7. Small Grant Application: Nancy Rutt - 511 W Main St Sign

Don motioned to approve \$3,000 to Nancy and John Rutt for the Kwiki Car Wash sign.
Daniel Seconded.

Motion Carried.

Old Business

8. Small Grant Application: Mountain Land Rehab

Review of Mtn Land rehabilitation grant requests (technical assistance, façade, signage, general small grant). Members discussed the splitting of costs and categorizing the different invoices that were provided with the application.

Daniel Moved to approve \$2,400 for the Technical assistance grant request

Don seconded.

Motion carried.

Don motioned to approve \$3,345 for the Façade grant request.

Dean Seconded.

Motion Carried.

Daniel Motioned to approve \$2,540 for the Signage grant request.

Don Seconded.

Motion Carried.

Don motioned to approve \$985.00 for the General Small Grant request.

Daniel Seconded.

Motion Carried.

Other Items

9. Small Grant Application – Shaun Jones – 101 W. Main St.

Members discussed the façade grant application for 101 W Main Street. Members discussed how the costs were split between

Dean motioned to approve \$6,000 for the Façade grant request for the Project at 101 W. Main St.

Don Seconded.

Motion carried.

10. FOE Grant Extension Request

Nick presented the letter provided by Marvin Carter of the Eagles to extend their grant request. Had not been able to line up an artist for their proposed mural on their building due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Don motioned to extend the FOE Eagles grant request for an additional year (June 2021).

Daniel Seconded.

Motion Carried.

11. Large Grant Meeting Scheduling

Nick presented the current 2020 Large Grant Application Spreadsheet. Members had a general discussion of the grants and scheduling a meeting. It would be best to have a separate meeting as Nick did not include copies of the large grants with the agenda packet due to meeting constraints.

Members discussed whether residential buildings/uses should be allowed to apply for funding for the TIF District grant programs. Are there options for them to apply for HUD funding? Judy mentioned that HUD has funding available for residential revitalization.

Nick remarked that if a property is within the TIF District and their project is focused on improving the property, then it is eligible for funding. Nick remarked that the TIF District funding exists to make improvements to properties, structures, and services within the district to increase district property values. There is no mechanism to block residential properties from these funds. TIF District funds are not solely for commercial properties.

12. LURA Big Projects Discussion

Nick presented the fact that LURA should think about funding a few other big projects in order to use some of the funding that has been saved up over time. Cities and towns anticipate the state legislature will target TIF Districts to regain those funds.

The Lighting District would be a great project to finalize.

Dean discussed the need to address downtown Laurel and boost its visibility. Could utilize the previously established landscape and downtown master plans for ideas and a way forward.

- Lighting District
- Streetscape plan implementation
- Signage/marketing

Members discussed how to possibly enliven downtown Laurel. They presented the previous plans such as a water fill station on the south side of Main Street and other unfinished projects.

Dean discussed the case of Phillipsburg, MT which has made improvements to their downtown that have revitalized it and is now thriving. Phillipsburg reused their vacant structures and other assets downtown.

Major comments and questions for us going forward:

- We need to give people a reason to come to downtown Laurel.
- What will attract people to the downtown area from Laurel and Billings?
- We need local owned businesses
- How do we create an atmosphere that people will want to be in and that their business can survive in?

How do we build critical mass?

Dean discussed the proposed LARC facility and how it could benefit from being located within a neighborhood. Proposed that they should investigate a reuse for the old Middle School Gym.

13. Budget Review

Announcements

12. Next Meeting: July 6, 2020 – Large Grant Committee, 10:00AM

Meeting Adjourned at 12:32PM

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DATES TO REMEMBER