

Livingston Urban Renewal Agency Agenda



The regular meeting of the Livingston Urban Renewal Agency Committee has been scheduled for July 22, 2025 at 4:30 PM in Community Room, City/County Complex. This meeting will be facilitated by Allison Vicenzi.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82526372452?pwd=bvX0k5TY1kOLSgbm25Xyxj4XOIHr2M.1>

Meeting ID: 825 2637 2452
Passcode: 966119

1. Roll Call

Allison Vicenzi, Melissa Nootz, Chris Raley, Julie Evans, Lisa Garcia

2. Approval of Minutes

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 27, 2025, REGULAR MEETING

Allison and Julie gave corrections to minutes.

Julie motioned to approve minutes with corrections, seconded by Chris. Unanimously approved.

3. New Business

A. FACADE GRANT APPLICATION FOR 101 N. MAIN STREET

The City Manager introduced the item and stated the request is \$73,979 for the façade at 101 N. Main Street, and the project is expected to take 3 years to complete.

Chris asked for clarification on working on this project in thirds.

The applicant stated yes, it will be worked on in thirds.

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Lisa Garcia came to the meeting at 4:42 PM.

The applicant said they might be able to get it done in 2 years.

Allison stated the applicant was wanting to be paid in sections and wondered if that was possible.

The City Manager stated for a multi-phase project like this, they could pay out sectionally. Invoices and proof of payment would be required for each section, but they can do the payments.

The applicant stated the first payment would be larger and the other two as they plan to purchase materials.

Chris asked about labor costs and if they increase over time the URA would still only be paying for what was applied and granted today.

The City Manager stated yes, they could make a motion to approve up to a certain dollar amount.

Melissa stated that City Commissioners get a lot of questions when big projects like this are happening downtown. She wondered what the management of public space will look like in a project like this in relation to parking.

The City Manager stated projects do have the ability to pay for a parking space for construction projects.

Melissa asked if there will be a public communication going out because she feels after 4 summers of this the Commission is going to hear about this project.

The City Manager stated they will work with the applicant to help spread the word and publicize it.

The applicant clarified that other business owners downtown have let them use their parking for the lifts for this project, which has been great.

Chris wondered how the thirds are split.

The applicant stated it's just literally in thirds.

Lisa asked where this project fell in line with the Historic Preservation Commission being involved.

The City Manager stated they are comfortable to moving forward with the project as is and this application came through in June after the legislative session.

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Julie asked about painting quotes.

The applicant stated they supplied 2 quotes because it was required and clarified which one they would be using.

Chris asked if they need 2nd quotes for certain things.

The City Manager stated that the guidelines request multiple quotes, but within the City procurement guidelines we do have allowances for quotes and they understand you can't force folks to submit a quote. This has been reviewed at a staff level and they are comfortable with what has been chosen in the application.

Melissa motioned to approve this item, seconded by Chris. Unanimously approved.

B. PRESENTATION OF BY-LAWS AND HANDBOOK

The City Manager stated that the City Commission adopted new bylaws for the URA in an effort to standardize the bylaws across all advisory boards. He stated they don't materially change anything in the function of the URA.

Melissa asked about quorum.

The City Manager stated to start a meeting 4 members must be present. He stated if the full board is at a meeting they require 4 out of 6 votes to move an item forward.

The City Manager stated that the board and commission handbook provides clarity to advisory boards about how they fit in with the City and their role. He stated the City Commission adopted a conflict-of-interest policy earlier this year, and it does apply to all boards and commissions, and he encouraged all of them to review that document. He clarified that if a member has a financial interest in an item before the board the member is required to declare that, recuse themselves and that includes stepping down from the table. He added that there is also a disclosure form that will need to be filled out and sent back to the City Clerk.

Melissa added some topics to be discussed about the conflict-of-interest policy and they include the appearance of impropriety, and the use of the word shall when it comes to filling out the disclosure form. She stated that the Commission wanted to make it a requirement for boards to fill this out.

The City Manager reviewed page 38 that references LMC 2-24. He stated the purpose of this policy is to ensure the actions of elected and appointed boards are not called into question, and there is no appearance of impropriety.

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Melissa stated that is why they included the word shall for the disclosure forms as a requirement to sit on the board.

Julie asked for clarification on recusing yourself and wondered if it was just from voting or the whole conversation as well.

The City Manager acknowledged they would recuse themselves from the conversation and voting.

Allison asked for clarification on some wording that says the board member may come back to the table for a vote.

The City Manager referenced page 39 and explained that happens only if the vote is needed to meet quorum requirements.

Allison asked for an example of ex parte.

The City Manager stated ex parte communication would be where a board member has a conversation with the applicant about the project outside of a public meeting. He stated it would be appropriate for that board member to let the board know in the public meeting that they did have that conversation.

Melissa brought up order of operations on page 35 of the packet where it lays out the steps to disclose things like ex parte.

Lisa asked what happens if the board votes 3- 3 on an item.

The City Manager stated the item would fail since it didn't pass. He stated the Chair could call for additional motions.

4. Old Business

A. DISCUSSION REGARDING ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

The City Manager stated this item is revisiting a conversation initiated by several board members in the spring. He stated that any board has the ability to create subcommittees, and referenced in MCA that subcommittees are subject to open meeting laws.

Lisa asked when it would be appropriate for board members to meet outside of a public meeting.

The City Manager stated that Montana's constitution and MCA are very supportive of public participation and public meetings, so at no time should a quorum of the URA board meet outside of a public meeting. He clarified that 2 members could have a

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conversation about board business, but if one of those members started talking to other members of the board about the same business, they would be in violation of open meetings law by having a walking quorum. He stated that best practice is not to talk about board business outside of a board meeting.

Chris asked about noticing for a meeting.

The City Manager stated the requirement is 48 hours before a meeting.

Allison asked about the part that states members shall not perform work tasks to support the function of their board or commission.

The City Manager gave an example of a board member on a different board going to an approved project posing as someone from the City there for compliance, and he stated that is not allowed.

Melissa gave an example of an applicant is having their application considered by the URA, but they wanted to know if the project guidelines met the requirements of the City or HPC guidelines, and they asked a URA member and the URA member was giving feedback on that. She reminded everyone that it would not be appropriate to do that as City requirements would go through the City Manager and HPC topics would go through the appropriate City staff.

The City Manager stated that much of the work for an application and for the board should be in a public meeting setting. He stated that after a public meeting the board next expected work task is read a packet when it comes to them.

Lisa asked if a community member asks about the grant guidelines if they can answer or send the person to the City Manager.

Melissa stated that you do have to send the community member with those questions to City staff.

The City Manager clarified that the board can let folks know the program exists, but just cannot advise them on the process, at that point they would direct applicants to City staff.

Julie asked about work tasks and specifically when a board member went and put out flyers.

The City Manager stated that is an example of something that should have been done by City staff.

The board made comments about how this is all new information for them.

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Melissa clarified that it is not necessarily new because it hasn't been new for the City Commission, and she stated that the City Commission has done a lot of work to clarify all of these guidelines and information more clearly for the advisory boards.

Allison acknowledged that creating more subcommittees might not be possible as it would impact City staff.

Melissa reminded everyone that the City Manager is the only one who directs City staff, and the City Commission is the body that directs the City Manager.

The City Manager stated that looking at URA meetings and noticing they have only around 1 application to work through per meeting, he does feel there is time in the meetings themselves to deal with some of the boards items they would like to move forward.

Lisa asked how to get the information to the City Manager for items they would like on the agenda.

The City Manager stated that he is the designated City staff on this specific board, so it is appropriate for them to ask him to add items to the agenda.

Chris asked about updating the URA portion of the website, and if that would go to City staff.

The City Manager stated yes, and he explained how the City website functions and does allow creation of microsities.

Melissa asked if it would be additional cost, or not because it would be through the website that the City already pays for.

The City Manager stated the City does currently pay for the website and a URA microsite would be included.

5. Public Comments

6. Board Comments

Julie asked about the sewer project and when she attended a meeting it was brought up that URA funds would be used for the project.

The City Manager stated the program was created a few years ago, and does still exist. He stated that it should have been mentioned in those presentations who affect property owners are and who can use the funds.

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Julie asked how people would apply or get funding.

The City Manager stated he will make sure Public Works gets the information out, or folks can contact him at CityManager@LivingstonMontana.org or 406-223-4475.

Chris motioned to add a topic of a URA website to the next agenda, seconded by Lisa.

Melissa asked about what was decided to be included in the 122 N. Main project from last meeting.

The City Manager stated that the northern and western facing sides of the building meet the criteria for reimbursement. He stated the south does not because there is not a pedestrian walkway, and the east because the pedestrian walkway does not front the building.

Lisa asked about their consultant Brienne Downy and if they are still able to reach out to her and how that works. She asked if they could also get an update on the new FY year budget.

The City Manager stated that Brienne's contract is very useful as she could be assigned items such as making flyers or scoping out the website.

Lisa motioned to add to the next agenda an item to give tasks to Brienne, seconded by Allison.

Allison expressed with new clarity she hopes it empowers the board to work together and better as a team.

7. Adjournment

5:59pm Allison motioned to adjourn, seconded by Lisa. Unanimously approved.