



**CITY OF HELENA**  
**Downtown TIF Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, July 13, 2023, 10:00 AM**  
**Zoom Online Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/91384672412>**

**Members Present:** Brian Obert (Chair), Krys Holmes, Nathan Bilyeu, Lori Ladas, Seth Brandenberger, Brett Charles, Charlie Carson

**Members Absent:** Riley Tubbs, Tatum Curtis, Jennifer Deherrera, Andrew Chanania

**Staff Present:** April Sparks, Kyle Holland

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

**(0:07:50)** Chair Obert called the meeting to order, and roll was called. A quorum of 6 members present was established.

**Minutes**

**A.** January 12, 2023

**(0:09:01)** Minutes from the January 12, 2023 meeting were approved without discussion.

**Regular Items**

**A.** Budget Report

**(0:13:52)** Kyle Holland, Planner II, gave an update on the TIF District's budget noting that there was an available balance of \$147,551. Outstanding projects were briefly discussed, with April Sparks noting that agreements for three projects had been extended because applicants were having difficulties finding contractors.

**B.** Consider the Atlas Rentals, LLC, Sidewalk Improvement Application

**(0:17:45)** Ed Santos presented his application for funding to repair vaulted sidewalks abutting Jackson St along the side of the Atlas Building. Mr. Santos noted that the sidewalk was currently closed with a barrier due to its condition, and that a contract was in place with All Around Construction to complete the repairs. Mr. Santos further explained that the building is a rent-controlled building, and as such the residents of the 24 units are vulnerable to being unhoused, and as such he does not see a large profit from the building but keeps it this way as he sees the need for this type of housing. Mr. Santos noted that as the sidewalks are vaulted the void underneath the sidewalks will need to be filled and brought up to the street level, which makes the project more expensive, with the total cost now coming in at approximately \$98,000.



**(0:20:01)** Ms. Holmes asked Mr. Santos about page 8 of his application and the amount listed as his investment and other funding sources. Mr. Santos stated that he had already paid out \$2800 for engineering costs, and the remaining funding (minus the requested TIF funding) would come from him. Chair Obert asked if the original purpose of the vaults was known. Mr. Santos stated that it appears as though it was storage. There was additional discussion about vaults in other parts of the Downtown area. Board discussion then opened on this application, with Chair Obert noting that the project fits with the intent of the TIF. Mr. Bilyeu stated that he felt this project hit two points: supporting affordable housing and promoting public safety. Ms. Holmes stated her agreement with Mr. Bilyeu.

**(0:25:24)** Mr. Brandenberger moved to recommend funding the application at the full request of \$47,900. Ms. Holmes seconded the motion. A vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (6:0).

**C.** Consider the Lewis and Clark County Myrna Loy Sidewalk Application

**(0:27:38)** Jenny Chambers, Lewis and Clark County Public Works Director, presented the application for the Myrna Loy Sidewalk project. Ms. Chambers gave an overview of the larger project noting it will bring sidewalks in the area up to code, complete upgrades to approaches in line with ADA, and increase the height of the curb to better manage water run off and mitigate significant ice problems in this area. There is already a contract underway with All Around Construction and described photographs in the application materials for the Board and explained how the County had decided to apply for TIF funding to complete a section of the sidewalk that would extend the reach of the improvements from the Myrna to Broadway despite it not being the county's responsibility for the area being proposed and that the county is acting on the behalf of a lower income individual who does not have the financial resources to complete the work themselves. In total the County is asking for \$9,000 to amend the contract to include this stretch of sidewalk.

**(0:31: 36)** Mr. Brandenberger asked if the private property owner were current on their (property) taxes. Ms. Chambers stated that they were and that they also did not anticipate the project would affect the current property value but that the improvements would improve public safety. Ms. Holmes voiced her support for the project, noting that it would not only benefit the disabled elderly property owner, but also public safety in the area. Chair Obert noted that a statement of support from the City of Helena Non-Motorized Travel Advisory Council had been received regarding this application. Ms. Chambers stated that the project had been presented to the Board of County Commissioners and they had extended their unanimous support. A quorum was needed to continue discussion and consider a motion so the next item was considered until a quorum was reestablished.

**(0:44:04)** A quorum was reestablished, and Ms. Ladas made a motion to recommend approval of the \$9000 request for the sidewalks at the Myrna Loy. Mr. Brandenberger seconded the motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously (6:0)

**D.** Election of board officers

**(0:37:22)** Chair Obert opened the discussion on electing a new vice-chair. Ms. Holmes was put forward as a candidate by Mr. Brandenberger. Ms. Holmes accepted the nomination on condition of the Board knowing she was not experienced with



Roberts Rules, etc. A voice vote was called and the motion was passed unanimously (6:0), Ms. Holmes is now Vice-Chair Holmes.

### **Public Comment**

- (0:40:32)** Chair Obert called for public comment. Katie Brandis owner of the Goodkind building stated that she also had a sidewalk project that needed funding and was hoping to get some additional information on submitting an application. Ms. Sparks informed her of the application process and encouraged Ms. Brandis to contact Ellie Ray to further discuss her project and to submit an application as soon as possible.
- (0:45:54)** Chair Obert asked if there were any additional public comments. Mr. Brandenberger suggested that the Board look into raising awareness about the TIF district and the availability of funding for projects within the district. Chair Obert noted that discussions had started with the city's PIO to produce some videos on the TIF district and agreed that there needs to be better outreach for the TIF. Mr. Brandenberger suggested that TIF funded projects be required to display a sign noting the TIF funding. John Dendy suggested his organization could send out information via their email list if someone would put it together. Vice-Chair Holmes suggested that the information include graphics of the various types of projects funded so it does not look like all sidewalk projects.

### **Member Communications / Proposals for next Agenda**

- (0:50:10)** It was noted that the next scheduled meeting is August 10, 2023, however there may not be a meeting held.

### **Meetings of Interest / Announcements**

- (0:50:57)** Vice-Chair Holmes issued an invitation to a puppet performance being held at Anchor Park on August 14<sup>th</sup> jointly hosted by the Myrna Loy and the Library. Chair Obert also announced a grant project which involves a contractor to look at several sites to convert or new-build live-work space for artists in the Helena community.

### **Adjournment**

- (0:55:46)** The meeting was adjourned.