Minutes of the Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District Board

September 17, 2003 at the Sam Lena Library, 1607 South Sixth Avenue, South Tucson, Arizona.

1. **Roll Call**

   Chair Suarez called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Alice Eckstrom, Olivia Hernandez, Corky Poster and Ruben Suarez present.

   Staff present: Karen Thoreson, Project Director, John Updike, Project Manager, Tim Pickrell, Counsel to the District Board, Fernando Castro, City Manager of South Tucson, Lucy Amparano and Karen Leone, Project Managers, Virginia Monyak, Staff Assistant.

2. **Approval of Minutes of June 11, 2003**

   Ms. Eckstrom moved to approve the minutes, Corky Poster seconded. Motion approved unanimously, 12-0.

3. **Update on Tucson Origins Project**

   This item was held until later in the meeting. Ms. Thoreson and staff provided a brief update. The next public meeting is set for October 22nd. Mr. Poster indicated disappointment in the level of engagement of WLB Group, and some concerns in particular regarding the Presidio Wall location and reconstruction plans. Mr. Poster indicated the plan for the project needs to be overlaid on the future downtown patterns, not the existing land use and transportation patterns.

   Ms. Thoreson asked that we place this item on the next agenda with a more complete review of the status of the project.

4. **Update on the Rio Nuevo Director Recruitment**

   Ms. Thoreson distributed a memorandum from the City Manager regarding the cancellation of the recruitment process, and the process will be re-engaged in the very near future.

   Mr. Poster asked how the new process would differ from the prior process to recruit a different field of candidates. Ms. Thoreson indicated that a wide net was cast previously to recruit those interested, and that this recruitment might be more targeted, with specific outreach, as an example. Mr. Poster asked whether a headhunter firm would be appropriate for this next effort. Ms. Thoreson indicated that all approaches would be considered.

5. Depot Plaza – Request for Funds

Mr. Poster noted that his firm was involved in creating some of the visions for the project, and may be involved in future elements of the project, so is recusing himself from this discussion. Ms. Nottingham and Mr. Siry of the City's Community Services Department made a brief presentation.

Chair Suarez asked if the Ronstadt Transit Center (RTC) was impacted by the project. The project adjoins the Center, and Ms. Nottingham indicated that the Depot Plaza project team is coordinating closely with the team analyzing re-use options for the RTC. Chair Suarez also asked about the fate of the existing tenants in the MLK building. Ms. Nottingham indicated that many alternative housing choices will be available for existing residents, on site and off-site.

Ms. Eckstrom asked about the size of the new units – they will be primarily 1 bedroom for the seniors. Market rate units will be 1 and 2 bedroom units. Ms. Eckstrom also asked about the fate of the existing MLK building. The building will either be renovated substantially, or demolished and replaced, subject to further investigation and funding issues. Chair Suarez asked if this request would be the total likely funding from Rio Nuevo. Ms. Nottingham indicated that the amount requested today is likely the total sum to be requested of Rio Nuevo.

Ms. Eckstrom asked about the timeline for the project. Ms. Nottingham indicated the project is likely a four year process from start to occupancy. Ms. Eckstrom moved approval of funding for the plaza as presented in the amount of $950,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hernandez. Motion approved 7-0.

Update on the University of Arizona Science Center Feasibility Study

Ms. Thoreson provided a brief update. It is expected that in November a full summary of community comments can be provided to the Board. Mr. Poster noted that the project is very impressive, a cornerstone project for the area. Mr. Poster noted three concerns. One is that the west side of the plan shows the State Museum & Historical Society elements adjacent, but not necessarily planned as functional elements of the larger project. Secondly, there may be too much functional program in the central section of the bridge of venues, should the unispherium and resource center be relocated to the east near the civic plaza? Finally, the success of the civic plaza will be dependent upon the design, and the plaza should be considered as a part of the overall program proposed by the University.

Chair Suarez noted that the project's initial concept architecture doesn't have a southwestern flavor and is perhaps too modern. Ms. Thoreson concurred that much additional work remains ahead to address architectural issues.

6. Agreement between the Rio Nuevo MFD & U of A School of Architecture

Mr. Poster noted that as Acting Dean of the School, he is recusing himself from this discussion. Ms. Thoreson provided background on the master lease, and the overall agreement between the City, District and University. This item addresses the coming semester's activities and costs.

Ms. Eckstrom moved to approve the agreement as presented, Ms. Hernandez seconded. Motion approved 7-0.

7. Acceptance of Sub-Lease Agreement with TDA at 52 West Congress

Mr. Updike provided a brief review of the sub-lease. Mr. Poster asked about the size of the space and if the rate was market – based, and it effectively was not too far from a market rate, given the circumstances and comparable rentals in the area. Mr. Poster moved acceptance of the sublease agreement, and Ms. Eckstrom seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously, 12-0.

8. Next Meeting – October 8, 2003

Ms. Thoreson noted that the RNCAC has it's next meeting currently set for October 1, but it might be better to move that meeting one week to the 8th, and thus move the Board meeting to October 15th.

9. Future Agenda Items

None.

10. Call to the Audience

None.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Eckstrom moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm, seconded by Ms. Hernandez. Unanimously approved, 12-0.

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