



MINUTES
KEIZER URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
Monday, August 24, 2011
Keizer Civic Center
Keizer, Oregon

CALL TO ORDER

Agent Christopher called the session to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken as follows:

Present:

Lore Christopher, Chair
Brandon Smith
David McKane
Cathy Clark
Jim Taylor
Mark Caillier

Absent:

Joe Egli

Staff:

Chris Eppley, City Manager
Shannon Johnson, City Attorney
Susan Gahlsdorf, Finance Director
Debbie Lockhart, Deputy City Recorder

**PUBLIC
TESTIMONY**

Christine Dieker, Keizer, Executive Director of the Keizer Chamber of Commerce, expressed appreciation that the City is looking to aggressive movement towards visitor services as shown in past support for events such as the Iris Festival and Good Vibrations and the upcoming K-Fest Committee. She added that citizens of Keizer benefit from dollars spent by visitors and the Chamber appreciates City collaboration efforts. Ms. Dieker explained that the facility at Keizer Station will offer information through a gallery of monitors that would give information about the community and River Road businesses. She explained that locating in Keizer Station at one of the busiest interchanges on I-5 allows the Chamber to be a storefront for River Road with the potential to promote local products in a highly visible environment. Ms. Dieker then fielded questions regarding the roll of the Chamber in promoting commerce, providing a place to network, staffing, training and customer service.

Richard Walsh, Keizer, explained that he served on the Keizer Visioning Committee, and part of the 20-year plan for Keizer was to encourage tourism. He explained that Keizer is located in the middle of the state and near a freeway so it is a central location for a meeting place; the Civic Center was constructed with this in mind and was one of the steps towards promoting tourism. He admitted that there are financial problems

but the City had financial problems when Keizer Station was created and now it has a business district that generates approximately \$4,000,000 per year that is pumped back into the community. This happened because the City took a risk and now the opportunity is available to take another risk and follow the vision for the city. Mr. Walsh pointed out that someday there would be a train station at Keizer Station and the transit center will have people coming from all over the state; a visitor information center would be a natural fit for that environment.

Sherrie Gottfried, Keizer Renaissance Inn, distributed a handout which included the definitions of a tourist and a visitor and three pages showing people who visited the community for various reasons and returned. She noted that visitors come back because Keizer is a small town and the Renaissance Inn offers personal services. She concluded her testimony stating that Keizer needs a visitor services center because otherwise visitors will go to Salem; with a visitor center at Keizer Station, visitors can be directed into Keizer.

Carol Doerfler, Keizer, agreed with the previous testimony but objected to the cost of the facility. She voiced opposition to spending \$500,000 on a visitor information facility when the children in Keizer have one bowling alley and a failing skate park. She suggested that Keizer should have a community pool instead; Carlton has a community pool, Dallas and Forest Grove have aquatic centers. She recommended that instead of spending \$500,000 to build a visitor center in Keizer Station the funds be used for sidewalks so children could safely walk to school. Agent Christopher responded that the pool at the Kroc Center is for Keizer and Salem children and explained that the cost of the visitor center would be under \$500,000; most likely approximately \$369,000.

Rick Hammerquist, Keizer, voiced agreement with Mr. Walsh regarding looking into the future towards the development of Keizer as a tournament town but expressed doubt that a visitor center would be able to administer a tournament. He noted that the city is getting tournaments and parades without a visitor center and in this electronic age, information is readily available without a physical facility. He added that Keizer citizens like Keizer the way it is and want it to stay the same. He then fielded questions regarding where tournament participants stay and coaches sharing information and coupons from area businesses with participants.

Garry Whalen, Keizer, voiced support for the decision made by KURB against funding the visitor center either at Keizer Station or at the Transit District building and urged the Agency to uphold that recommendation.

Allan Pollock, Salem, General Manager of the Transit District, explained that when the transit center was being developed and it looked like it was going to be in Keizer, the District wanted to partner; they didn't want the

center to be a "stand alone" facility but rather a dual purpose. He noted that it was still the desire of the District to do that if they could partner with the City and have a co-located dual-purpose building. The District has recently taken possession of the land and is now ready to have further discussions. He explained that funds for this building are from the federal government and "Connect Oregon" and the District does not have the necessary funds to build a facility to lease out to a tenant but was hopeful that if visitor services went into a portion of the building, it could be co-staffed with Transit District personnel. He expressed the hope that the Visitor Services staff would share Transit information in return for the co-staffing. He explained that there might be a possibility of building the facility in phases so that additional square footage could be added at a later date, but the District portion of the facility would consist of private restrooms and break rooms for the drivers only; a partner would make it possible to build additional public facilities. Mr. Pollock then fielded questions and provided information regarding partnering with other entities, bus routes, and designing a building that could be added onto at a later date.

Ken LeDuc, Keizer, urged the Agency to support the KURB recommendation noting that electronic information is readily available so a visitor center might not be necessary and encouraged the Transit District to look into a partnership with a private company. He then requested clarification regarding the Something Special Fund and asked if a sports complex was going to be put in the newly annexed area of Keizer Rapids Park. Mayor Christopher explained that nothing would be done with the newly annexed property at Keizer Rapids Park until a Master Plan for that area is developed and that process will involve multiple opportunities for public input as did the original master planning of Keizer Rapids Park. Mr. Eppley explained that in the past there was an amendment to the Urban Renewal District that added a series of projects to the Urban Renewal Plan and one of them was, for lack of a better word "something special". He explained that typically through the life of a District the position of various projects changes; how the allocation of funding ultimately plays out can look different from the beginning. Regarding the "Something Special Fund", there is none; there was a concept worked into the Urban Renewal Plan and the purchase of the Buchholz property was the fulfillment of the Something Special idea but whatever happens at Keizer Rapids Park will not happen prior to a full planning process.

Allan Prell, Keizer, voiced support for funding the visitors facility noting that everyone does not have Smart Phones and that having an information place that could be an area where people can ask locations of attractions would be extremely valuable to the community.

Dennis Koho, Keizer, spoke in opposition of funding a visitor facility noting that Keizer is a residential community and that the only businesses that would benefit from tourism are motels and restaurants. He voiced the opinion that this would not be a wise investment, expressed support for the City and Transit but urged that the City support the position of the Urban Renewal Board.

Matt Chapell, Keizer, indicated that he thought the location of the transit center was good and adding the visitor center to the transit center at a later date was a good idea. He noted that he did not see an immediate need but would like to focus on tourism and building up the sports theme for Keizer in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING

None

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

a. Urban Renewal Funding for Visitor Information Services Facilities in Keizer Station Area B

Sam Litke explained that the Keizer Urban Renewal Board had unanimously recommended that the Agency not fund any portion of the Transit District building or design but ask the Transit District to design a building that could potentially be added onto if, in the future, the City can fund building an addition. He added that the Board had also recommended that the Agency not fund the Chamber's request for \$30,000 for a temporary office in Area A with 6 in favor, 2 abstentions and 1 member absent. He noted that several letters in opposition had been submitted for the record as well.

Mayor Christopher indicated that she felt the Board was at a disadvantage because they thought the money for this project was money designed to go into River Road projects, but it was not; it is program income. She provided information regarding the real estate transactions that provided these funds and noted that the question is: Do you want to reinvest one-time profits in the community for something that can benefit the community? She explained that she wants to make smart decisions to sustain business in Keizer and bring business and jobs to Keizer. A visitor center, coupling with Transit and another statewide agency would mean jobs and sustaining local businesses. She noted that right now, in the bad economy, the only industry that is thriving is tourism; partnering with Transit for a visitor facility at the Transit Center would be significant and an opportunity she did not want to lose.

Discussion then followed regarding concern about the Keizer Station LID and how it would affect urban renewal program funds and other funds, the location of the transit center, the lack of planned public restrooms at the Transit Center, alternate parcels of property, co-locating and partnering with another agency, expanded access, City review and approval of the facility as it relates to the Building Code and Keizer Station Master Plan requirements.

Agent Clark moved that the Urban Renewal Agency not fund the Chamber's request for \$30,000 for temporary office space in Area A. Agent Taylor seconded. Motion passed as follows:

AYES: Christopher, Smith, McKane, Caillier, Taylor and Clark (6)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSTENTIONS: None (0)

ABSENT: Egli (1)

Agent Clark moved that the Urban Renewal Agency fully fund the design only of the visitor center in Area B (estimated to be between \$25,000 and \$65,000) and postpone funding the actual building until adequate funding can be assured. Agent Christopher seconded.

City Manager Chris Eppley interjected that this is supposing that participation with Transit is an appropriate expenditure. The recommendation is: If the Agency determines that they want to participate, then only fund the design work. The recent amendment makes it a legal expenditure in the District but it does not make it a good decision. He clarified that staff recommendation is only to fund the design should they choose to move forward.

Agent Clark withdrew her motion.

Agent Clark moved that the Urban Renewal Agency determine that participation with the Transit District is an appropriate expenditure. Agent Smith seconded. Motion passed as follows:

AYES: Christopher, Smith, Caillier, and Clark (4)

NAYS: McKane and Taylor (2)

ABSTENTIONS: None (0)

ABSENT: Egli (1)

Agent Clark moved that the Urban Renewal Agency participate in design of the site on a limited basis up to \$65,000 but withhold funding of construction until such time when funding is made available. Agent Smith seconded.

Agent Smith indicated that he supported this project but also supports the Keizer Urban Renewal Board and out of respect for the decision of the Board would oppose this motion. He added that he feared that the City is missing an opportunity and that he hoped the Transit District would be able to design the facility for expansion later even though it would probably cost more.

Agent Taylor noted that he would not support this because he felt it had been rushed through and the City might need the money for other things.

Agent Clark questioned if the City is making visitors feel welcome. She noted that kiosks still work; they provide a personal touch; River Road Renaissance is working but there are no definite projects planned and the

partnership with Transit would not hurt River Road Renaissance.

Motion failed as follows:

AYES: Christopher and Clark (2)

NAYS: Smith, McKane, Caillier and Taylor (4)

ABSTENTIONS: None (0)

ABSENT: Egli (1)

CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of August 1, 2011 Urban Renewal Agency Minutes

Agent Christopher moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Agent Clark
seconded. Motion passed as follows:

AYES: Christopher, Smith, McKane, Caillier, Taylor and Clark (6)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSTENTIONS: None (0)

ABSENT: Egli (1)

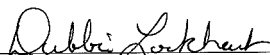
OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

APPROVED:

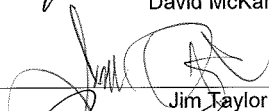

Debbie Lockhart, Deputy City Recorder

Lore Christopher, Chair

AGENCY MEMBERS


David McKane

Mark Caillier


Jim Taylor


Cathy Clark


Brandon Smith

~ Absent ~
Joe Egli

Minutes approved: October 17, 2011