

Ashton Urban Renewal Agency

Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2011
Ashton, Idaho

Chairman Jeff Hamilton called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. Those attending were Jeff Hamilton, Stacy Winn, Mayor Teddy Stronks, Terry Butikofer, Judy Coy and Harlan Mann and Ryan Armbruster by telephone.

Chairman Hamilton asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the March 30, 2010 meeting. No changes were noted and a motion was made by Stacy Wynn to accept the minutes as presented. Mayor Stronks seconded the motion. Motion carried.

At this point in the meeting Ryan Armbruster and Harlan Mann were patched in via telephone to the meeting. Introductions were made and Mr. Armbruster started his explanation of House Bill 95 which is legislation recently adopted at the last session of the Idaho Legislature. He explained that any city that has an existing urban renewal agency and has already previously approved an urban renewal Plan can continue on through the term of the Plan as was originally approved. This means that the Ashton Urban Renewal can continue on until 2026 which is when the urban renewal Plan will expire. One change that is significant is that the Legislature, after many years of being concerned about numerous Plan amendments by various communities and the way in which those amendments were processed by way of geography, has clamped down hard on future amendments. House Bill 95 does not allow for amendment to a Plan except for one Plan amendment during the life of the Plan, which, if adding a geographic addition cannot exceed ten percent of the overall geographic area of the original Plan parcels. The other provision in House Bill 95 that would cause some concern for Ashton is that it states that the area added must be contiguous to the existing revenue allocation area. But such contiguity cannot be established by a shoestring or strip of land which comprises a railroad or public right of way. Ryan stated that perhaps he and Harlan should contact the Tax Commission and discuss with them the possibility of adding on property adjacent to the highway right-of-way within the ten percent limit. Harlan Mann stated that the current urban renewal area is 26.1 acres. This includes the two highway right-of-ways. Ashton Main Street has 100 foot right-of-ways and State Highway 20 has 150 foot right-of-ways. With the right-of-ways added it makes the project area 51.5 acres. He further stated that geographically they could add a block on each side.

Ryan stated that the question will be how the Tax Commission interprets the new legislation regarding the addition of those blocks onto the shoe string that already exists. Chairman Hamilton noted that by adding the blocks it would move the area from a shoestring effect to a normal shaped area. Ryan stated this could be a way to get a decent interpretation from the Tax Commission. Chairman Hamilton stated that geographically there is room to expand by picking up the core avenue of Main Street. The real question is whether the Tax Commission will see the wisdom in adding that area on, and also to move away from a barbell situation and try to have the focus moved back towards Main Street and picking up the tax increment. Ryan agreed that this would be the argument to place before the Tax Commission. He advised the Board to be somewhat judicious in which blocks would be added. Chairman Hamilton asked about adding the area with the tennis courts and the park property that has the City swimming pool on it. He asked if there are any restrictions to adding properties that generate revenue such as the swimming pool. Mr. Armbruster stated that from a statutory view point there would be no restrictions on bringing in tax exempt properties, from a justification stand point the Agency would be able to make a stronger case by trying to bring in something that would generate development even if it meant for

example providing public parking in the downtown area that could generate some interest in surrounding parcels. In terms of adding parcels the Agency will want them to be adjacent or contiguous to either Highway 20 or Main Street. The Agency should not add parcels that are on side streets off of Main Street or Highway 20.

The question was asked how pocket parks would be viewed in the downtown area. Mr. Armbruster stated that creating a more esthetic and pleasing atmosphere or environment should help in creating economic development. If a pocket park were created adjacent to Main Street with the hopes that it would generate some economic activity it would be allowed by Idaho Statute. The question was asked how broad the new Plan could be in terms of the new legislation. Ryan commented that the new legislation really tries to make things more specific and to get away from broad statements. Essentially what it boils down to is that there should be a statement listing the kind, number and location of all proposed public works or improvements within the revenue allocation area. There is a little bit of flexibility but the restriction in the current Plan is that it didn't list many optional activities that could be done. Chairman Hamilton stated that the geographical limitation where there is just the 100 foot right of way that is not much that can be done within that space. In theory if the Agency could expand that space then that would expand the possibilities. Ryan stated that there is supposed to be a detailed list of estimated project costs and then a fiscal impact statement showing how the revenue allocation will actually work. It doesn't do much good to create a list of projects but only show increment that will cover part of the items on the list. With the current Plan the tax increment generated by the north parcel could only be used on the right of way and not on new parcels that would be added. There was mention of Ashton Memorial being made tax exempt and the possibility of how that facility could be taken out of the current urban renewal area.

Chairman Hamilton stated that the Agency could pick up three to four city blocks. If Ashton Memorial were taken out of the district another space equivalent to that could be added. A very specific wish list needs to be created with a projection of the tax revenue drawn up to make sure the projects in mind could be completed. Ryan stated that if a Plan amendment were going to be done the Agency would need to update the projected increment coming in off of the northern parcels as well as the increment that could be generated from the new blocks added. Then the wish list of projects that the Agency would complete in the new area would be drawn up. Chairman Hamilton stated that parking is not really an issue in the downtown the majority of the time. There has been a parcel discussed for creating a pocket park on the lots downtown that had been originally looked at for a parking area.

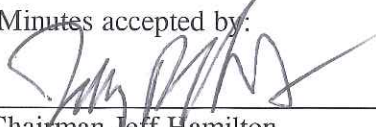
Harlan Mann stated that he has completed the tax revenue figuring and after he gets the total footage on the right of way on Highway 20 he can complete the revenue figures. Ryan stated that the next step would be to meet with the State Tax Commission and discuss with them the proposed additions and see if they think this project is something that could be done. If they do not concur at the Tax Commission then another plan of action would have to be worked on. It was noted that there is about \$193,000 in the agency checking account and about \$20,000 is needed to complete the lighting project that is in the works which would leave about \$173,000.

The conference call was terminated at this point in the meeting.

Chairman Hamilton presented bills for payment from Elam & Burke for legal expense, Targhee Publishing for publication of the public notice for the Annual Report and a bill from Jensen Poulsen for preparation of the FY 2010 Audit. A motion was made by Mayor Stronks to pay the bills as presented. Stacy Wynn seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Hamilton suggested that a meeting date be set after a response is received from Ryan Armbruster on the decision of the Tax Commission. A motion was made by Mayor Stronks to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 PM. The motion was seconded by Stacy Wynn. Motion carried.

Minutes accepted by:



Chairman Jeff Hamilton

Minutes prepared by:



Judy C. Coy, Administrative Assistant