

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTIES OF POTTER §
AND RANDALL §
CITY OF AMARILLO §

On the 10th day of February 2022, the Center City Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 1 Board met in a regularly scheduled meeting at 12:00PM, in Room 306 of City Hall, at 601 South Buchanan Street, Amarillo, Texas with the following members present:

Voting Members	Present	Meetings Held	Meetings Attended
Dean Frigo, Chairman, Amarillo Hospital District	Yes	27	23
Austin Sharp, City of Amarillo	No	23	13
Dr. David Woodburn, Amarillo College	Yes	7	5
Gary Jennings	Yes	1	1
Dick Ford, Amarillo Independent School District	Yes	4	4
Kimberly Warminski, Panhandle Groundwater Conservation Dist	No	31	27
Jackson Latimer, Potter County	Yes	3	3
John Coffee, Potter County	Yes	3	3
H.R. Kelly, Potter County	No	12	10
Joseph Peterson, Jr., City of Amarillo	Yes	32	30

Staff Present:

Jared Miller, City Manager
Emily Koller, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services
Cody Balzen, Economic Development Specialist
Andrew Freeman, Assistant City Manager
Bryan McWilliam, City Attorney
Laura Storrs, Assistant City Manager,
Kyle Schniederjan, Director of Capital Projects and Development Engineering
Andreanna Jarrett, Recording Secretary

ITEM 1. Call to Order.

Chairman Frigo opened the meeting at 12:03 PM, established a quorum and conducted the consideration of the following items listed below.

ITEM 2. Public Address

Chairman Frigo inquired if anyone in the audience wished to speak for Public Address.

No comments were made.

ITEM 3. Minutes.

Chairman Frigo asked for corrections, deletions, or changes to the minutes of December 13, 2021.

A motion was made by John Coffee, seconded by Jackson Latimer, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4. Presentation of Quarterly Financials.

Laura Storrs, Assistant City Manager, presented the above item. Ms. Storrs stated the report is for the first quarter of the new fiscal year, through December 31st of 2021. The assets held by the TIRZ was \$1,970,705, and the Loan Receivable was \$1,963,552. This brings the total assets to \$3,934,257. The Current Liabilities include "accrued interest payable" of \$11,413 and the current portion of the loan from the city of \$65,259. Noncurrent Liabilities of the loan from the city was \$1,182,245. This brings the total liabilities to \$1,258,917. Net position was \$2,675,340 bringing the Total Liabilities and Net Position to \$3,934,257.

Ms. Storrs asked if there were any questions.

Dick Ford asked if the loan to the LGC was a liability.

Ms. Storrs explained that this is an outstanding loan that is accruing interest; however, there is not a plan for LGC to pay that money back in the near future making this money listed as a long-term receivable.

Ms. Storrs continued to present the Statement of Activities. The total revenue for the first quarter is \$794.44. There has been no activity in expenditures for the first quarter, but there was a payout of \$150,000 for a previous project, First Bank Southwest Tower. The total Net of Expenditures was \$149,206, the Net Position for the year is \$2,824,546, and the total Net Position at the end of the quarter is \$2,675,340.

Ms. Storrs presented the commitments to the board; current year commitments are \$210,000 and the only thing has been paid out is the \$150,000 from the previous year.

Ms. Storrs asked about the payout for the additional \$10,000

Mr. Freeman stated yes for the next 5 years.

Chairman Frigo asked if there was a net number available for uncommitted.

Ms. Storrs stated yes, an estimated number would be about \$650,000

Mr. Frigo asked if this was available to spend.

Ms. Storrs explained it hasn't been approved but it is available if approved.

Mr. Frigo asked if there were any other questions.

No other questions or comments were made.

ITEM 5. Presentation and Discussion on Polk Street Streetscape Project.

Kyle Schniederjan presented the above item. Mr. Schniederjan explained that this is project is for public improvements for Polk St from 2nd Ave down to 10th Ave. This was previously a part of a grant application for a larger project that would have included part of 6th Avenue as well. Since the grant was unsuccessful, this will be the use of the approximate \$5.5M 30% matching funds from the City to focus on the typical Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards (DAUDS) public improvements within the pedestrian and furnishing zone.

Mr. Schniederjan further explained that this project does not address transportation items but is focused on streetscape. We are currently in the preliminary engineering stage with Parkhill

Engineering as the consultant on the project. They have also been working on public engagement in addition to the engineering aspects of the project. Anticipated start of construction in spring of 2023 with estimated completion by the end of 2023. The project will go through a DAUDS review.

Mr. Schniederjan asked if there were any questions.

Gary Jennings asked about what happens if they ran into hesitant property owners.

Mr. Schniederjan said they are trying to coordinate with all property owners. However, they are working in the right-of-way, and there is a deadline for the project. The city will also consider public private partnerships with property owners if they would like to hire their own contractor or expand the work further off the main Polk Street scope.

Joseph Peterson asked if the allocation deadline was the end of 2022.

Mr. Schniederjan stated that the allocation deadline is 2023.

Chairman Frigo asked if the scope included lighting, benches, and bulb-outs.

Mr. Schniederjan stated that they are evaluating all of that; however, the bulb-outs are not required by the DAUDS.

Dick Ford asked how long construction would take.

Mr. Schniederjan stated that they are anticipating 140 to 180 day working contract but are considering the phasing of the project to help mitigate some issues of the construction.

John Coffee asked if the \$5.5M would be enough to complete the project.

Mr. Schniederjan stated that this amount would cover the scope they have established. If public private partnerships do happen as a result of this, it could expand the footprint of the project.

Chairman Frigo asked if they had any expectations of the TIRZ for participation in the project.

Mr. Schniederjan stated that they did not have any expectation of participation from the board.

Dick Ford asked how TIRZ fits into this type of project since it is a right of way project and not directly associated with a project subject to property tax.

Mr. Schniederjan stated that the project is not directly associated with a TIRZ project, but this presentation is for informative purposes since the board interacts with property owners and people around the project location.

Jared Miller, City Manager, stated that the TIRZ has the opportunity to participate in projects that are adjacent to this location, and that this presentation gives the board some situational awareness of improvements occurring around potential projects they may have come in for TIRZ participation.

Andrew Freeman, Assistant City Manager, stated that the TIRZ could participate in public infrastructure projects as well, but it just has not focused on this in the past.

Chairman Frigo asked if anyone had any more questions or comments.

No other questions asked.

ITEM 6. Presentation and Discussion on Neighborhood Empowerment Zones.

Cody Balzen presented the above item. Mr. Balzen explained that this an incentive program that helps promote private sector investment in areas that are in need for revitalization. Within these zones, the program allows the city to enter into agreements for property tax abatements, sales tax refunds, development fee waivers, and release of city liens for rehabilitation or new construction projects. Since the TIRZ has the ability to do property tax and sales tax rebates, the neighborhood empowerment zone (NEZ) proposed for the downtown area would focus on residential rehab and new construction and would be limited to the development fee waivers and release of city liens. There are four other areas the city is looking at establishing NEZs, more particularly areas with small scale planning efforts such as the neighborhood plan areas.

Emily Koller, Assistant Director of Planning, introduced the Urban Neighborhood Overlay that is anticipated to be established with the city's zoning code revision. This overlay would surround the Central Business District zoning and allow by right different types of residential uses that would not currently be allowed in some of the non-residential zoning districts that surround the downtown area. This would also change some of the development standards as well, such as allowing max lot coverages of 100% and some parking reductions. This layered with other programs could offer a nice package to encourage residential in and near downtown. This is anticipated for consideration later this spring.

Cody Balzen then went over the next steps of the NEZ program and anticipates City Council consideration later this spring as well. Once adopted, work with the neighborhood plan areas will start as they establish an application for designation and design standards and limitations that would be associated with each zone. It is anticipated that there will be an evaluation of the program after five years.

Chairman Dean Frigo asked how this will encourage residential development.

Mr. Balzen stated that a simple but high impact tool of the program is the development fee waivers which would include building inspection fees and construction permit fees. This will also help make sure the work that is being done in the zone is up to code.

Chairman Frigo asked what type of fee waivers this would include.

Mr. Balzen stated that this would include platting, zoning, demolition, building permit fees, inspection fees, and water/sewer tap fees. A new construction project utilizing this could potentially see a savings of close to \$3000.

Chairman Frigo asked about the release of liens part of the program.

Mr. Balzen stated that the release of liens would be a separate application process and would have different standards that would apply to it.

Andrew Freeman, stated that this would more likely be utilized in the neighborhood plan areas where there are a higher number of mowing liens and demolition liens.

Chairman Frigo asked if sales tax refunds would be a part of the package.

Mr. Balzen stated that for the downtown neighborhood empowerment zone program this would not apply.

Jared Miller, City Manager, stated that the existing economic development policy would still apply for sales tax refunds but not for residential development. This NEZ program focusing on residential development the sales tax refunds wouldn't really be relevant.

John Coffee asked how the word was going to get out about this program and what it offers.

Mr. Balzen stated that we are working with the neighborhood plan areas and their neighborhood associations, and we will have notices posted when the program is to be considered by City Council.

Emily Koller stated that we are also reaching out to different associations to provide them with informational presentations or documents on the program.

John Coffee asked if the downtown area has a neighborhood association or other organized group as well.

Ms. Koller stated that there is a Plemons Eakle neighborhood association as well as Center City. That is also the reason behind the presentation to the TIRZ to help spread the outreach as well.

Andrew Freeman stated that there is also a Downtown Amarillo Inc group.

John Coffee asked if the neighborhood association were similar to ones that require home owners association dues.

Mr. Freeman stated that the neighborhood plan areas do not have those types of associations but there are some private HOA's in areas such as the Greenways.

Mr. Coffee asked if these standards associated with the program were going to apply to everyone.

Mr. Freeman stated that the standards in the program can only apply to the people that apply for the program and are limited on what they can require.

Dick Ford asked if it had to be the property owner who would apply for these fee waivers or if potential buyer could apply.

Jared Miller stated that we would need the consent of the owner.

Bryan McWilliams, City Attorney, stated that there would standing ownership or right in the property so it would need to be some type of partnership with signatory or some way the owner is part of it.

Mr. Ford asked if a person under contract for purchase of a property would have standing to apply.

Mr. McWilliams stated that it probably would not because some one could back out of a contract for purchase. The owner is the only person with the standing for the property. If there were still moving parts, then the board would basically be approving contingencies which is never a good thing.

Gary Jennings asked if the city has a monetary or percentage definition for "affordable housing".

Mr. Freeman stated that this program is not set up under programs like CDBG, so it does not have to focus on this but can support both kinds.

Chairman Frigo asked if the design standards of the NEZs could be different than the DAUDS.

Mr. Balzen stated that they could. They can be associated with things such as minimum investment amounts or design standards similar to the DAUDS such as meeting overall design of new houses matching the architectural features of historical houses in the neighborhood. The NEZ being an incentive program allows for the establishment of these standards as the program is voluntary. A developer not wanting to meet these standards do not have to meet them if they do not want to utilize the program.

Mr. Coffee asked if we have seen people interested in the program already.

Mr. Balzen stated that we have been in contact with some people eager to utilize this program.

Emily Koller stated that the city does get calls asking what is offered to a small-scale project, and right now we don't really have anything to offer them. This program can help fill this gap in supporting smaller scale infill and rehabilitation in a lot of the neighborhoods, not just downtown.

Chairman Frigo asked if anyone had any more questions.

No other questions or comments were made.

ITEM 7. Discussion on Ports-to-Plains and TEX-21 Organizations.

Andrew Freeman presented the above item. Mr. Freeman explained this was added to this agenda after Commissioner Coffee asked for a discussion item at last meeting. Port-to-Plains is a group with membership based in West Texas, around the Panhandle and up to Colorado. This group is primarily focused on creating divided highway access from Mexico to Canada to improve the ability to transport and trade goods easily. The biggest portion of this for this area is likely the loop system to go around the west side of Amarillo.

Mr. Freeman further explained that Tex-21 is based in the Dallas area. This group is more focused on areas such as IH 35 and Interstate 30. Highway 287 is the closest focus of the group that might have some impact for Amarillo. This group's membership is primarily located in Houston and DFW. Both organizations are advocacy groups to try to encourage legislative changes and investments in highways. We have focused on Ports-to-Plains here because of the significant impacts this could have for Amarillo more so than that of TEX-21.

John Coffee asked how long the City of Amarillo has been in Ports-to-Plains.

Mr. Freeman stated that he thinks that the membership is paid through AEDC and started probably 20 years ago. The group has been going for a while.

Chairman Dean Frigo asked if a resolution of support from the TIRZ could have an impact.

Mr. Freeman stated that he thinks they may have had a resolution of support come through the TIRZ in the past.

Chairman Frigo asked if anyone had any more questions.

No other questions asked.

ITEM 8. Discuss Items for Future Agendas.

Chairman Dean Frigo asked if anyone had any items for future agendas.

Andrew Freeman stated that we will probably have a Wayfinding Update ready for them at the next meeting.

Joseph Peterson asked for an update on the Housing Study.

Andrew Freeman stated we can have that on a meeting agenda in a couple months.

Chairman Frigo asked if there were any other future agenda items.

No comments were made.

ITEM 9. Adjourn.

There being no further items before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 1:09 PM. All remarks are recorded and are on file in the City Manager's Office.



Cris Valverde
Director of Planning and Development Services