



Novato Citizens Finance Advisory/Oversight Committee
Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 20, 2021 – 7:30 AM

Teleconference Only

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chair Maglio at 7:35 A.M.

Committee Members Present: Regina Bianucci Rus, Caitrin Devine, Cris MacKenzie, Tim O'Connor, Andrew Zmyslowski, Vice Chair Mark Milberg, Chair Rafelina Maglio

Staff Present: Public Works Director – City Engineer Chris Blunk, Finance Director Amy Cunningham, Office Assistant Jean Holzgang de Buren

B. APPROVAL OF FINAL AGENDA

Commission Action: Upon motion by Chair Maglio, the Committee voted 7-0-0-0 to approve the final agenda.

Ayes: Bianucci Rus, Devine, MacKenzie, O'Connor, Zmyslowski, Milberg, Maglio

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

D. CONSENT ITEMS

D.1. Approve the Meeting minutes from March 18, 2021

Upon motion by Committee Member O'Connor and seconded by Vice Chair Milberg, the Committee voted 4-0-3-0 to approve the Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2021.

Ayes: Devine, MacKenzie, O'Connor, Milberg

Noes: None

Abstain: Bianucci Rus, Zmyslowski, Maglio

Absent: None

Motion Carried

D2. Approve the Meeting minutes from April 15, 2021

Upon motion by Vice Chair Milberg and seconded by Chair Maglio, the Committee voted 5-0-2-0 to approve the Meeting Minutes from April 15, 2021

Ayes: Bianucci Rus, Devine, MacKenzie, Milberg, Maglio

Noes: None

Abstain: O'Connor, Zmyslowski

Absent: None

Motion Carried

E. UNFINISHED AND OTHER BUSINESS

None

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

F.1. Presentation of Capital Budget by Director of Public Works, Chris Blunk

Director of Public Works, Chris Blunk presented information on the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), described the annual CIP Budget Update Process, provided a CIP Executive Summary for 2022-2026, detailed the proposed new and carryover funding, and provided an update on the City's ongoing Capital projects.

Public Works Director Blunk updated the Committee on the 2021/22 proposed new projects and fund sources which included the annual pavement rehabilitation, underground fuel tank replacements, the Delong-Diablo corridor enhancements, Pioneer Park play area upgrades, crosswalk enhancements, citywide play

structure upgrades, and CDD permitting and CPRA Software Procurement. Total proposed new funding is estimated to be \$3,510, 000. He shared highlights from the proposed new projects including:

- Pioneer Park play area upgrades, which include replacing the small play area equipment with a more inclusive play structure, adding a rubberized surface, and perimeter fencing (anticipated to be completed in early 2022).
- Crosswalk enhancements including in 35 locations citywide in response to resident requests.
- CDD Permitting and CPRA Software procurement to improve staff processing efficiency.

He emphasized that despite the challenges that arose during the pandemic, the public works staff worked hard to continue to deliver projects. Work continued with the preparation of the Storm Drain Master Plan, Hill Recreation Area Central Hub Project, Lamont Avenue Bicycle Lanes, Annual Paving Project, Hamilton Pump Station Cathodic Protection Project, and the Hamilton Swimming Pool Resurfacing Project.

A Committee Member wanted to know what the long-term plans are for the police building; are the plans to stay in the current building, or are different sites being considered? Public Works Director Blunk explained that the City is considering looking at different sites as the current building requires a lot of investment to bring the building into a condition where it matches modern policing needs and to make the building accessible to all.

A Committee Member wanted to know if Public Works is caught up on the backlog of deferred maintenance or if there are still items needing to be addressed. Public Works Director Blunk explained that Novato has done a good job investing in infrastructure and that we try to continue that investment; there is a lot to take care of and the City is in pretty good shape.

A Committee Member noticed that the funds in the slides presented are projected to be diminishing. He asked what kinds of conversations are happening in terms of backfilling the gaps due to increasing construction costs. Public Works Director Blunk shared that there are conversations about backfilling the gap as it relates to the general fund and how the general fund supplements the CIP.

A Committee Member asked for a status update on the train depot. Public Works Director Blunk shared that development of the depot site got bumped back behind all the other work that needed to get done in the City during the pandemic. The project is on hold while we wait for the industry to recover before there is any legitimate interest in that site.

A Committee Member asked for status of the City's retaining walls; have the ones that were in jeopardy of collapsing been replaced? Public Works Director Blunk

explained that they have the assessment report of the City's retaining walls and are working through the priorities that were identified for replacement.

A Committee Member wanted to know how the City assesses the safety of the play structures in terms of risk liability for potential injury. Public Works Director Blunk stated that there is a playground assessment report which looked at the current play structure standards and identified non-standard components; the report ranked each play structure as risk levels 1 (the highest risk of potential injury), 2, and 3 (lowest risk of potential injury); the goal is to take care of all risks in level 1, then level 2, then level 3 in all 16 of the City's play structures.

A Committee Member asked if the City has looked into constructing roundabouts. Public Works Director Blunk explained that the City is always looking for the best ways to invest in infrastructure and believes that roundabouts, when built properly, are a great alternative to four-way stops. With current funding, the City needs to do these types of projects when there is a need due to safety or when a level of service does not meet our general plan.

A Committee Member asked if, in terms of improvement planning, does the tool determine your planning horizon, or are you looking out beyond the five years reflected in the tool. Public Works Director Blunk explained that the tool captures five years of planning and that the City looks out further on a few big picture items.

A Committee Member inquired if disposition of City owned property is under Public Works; if so, does Public Works solicit community input? He specifically inquired about the buildings sitting across from the police station and if these buildings could be a potential revenue source for the City. Public Works Director Blunk stated that he oversees the acquisition and disposition of City owned properties and is currently working on three city owned properties that the Council has directed us to work through the disposition process. If someone in the community wants to provide input, the best way to reach staff is by sending an email to pw@novato.org.

A Committee Member inquired about the research on user fees of the sanitary district's help with the City repaving project. Public Works Director Blunk shared that a feasibility study for taking over the franchise agreement for waste collection from Novato Sanitary District and bringing that into the City is ongoing and results will potentially be available by summer of 2021.

Update on Finance Department Activities by Staff Liaison, Amy Cunningham

F.2.

Staff Liaison Cunningham provided an update on the FY19/20 year-end close status. The primary bank operating account has been reconciled through September; the disbursements account through December; accounts payable and payroll accounts are reconciled through June of 2020, so the prior fiscal year for those last two accounts is done. The IT department continues to work with

BlueRec (for Parks and Recreation), TrakIt (CDD permit system), and with New World to create some new scripts so that the financial information is formatted in a way that New World can use it. Moving forward, this will make the bank reconciliations easier; this will not help with the backlog of reconciliations but will be helpful moving forward.

Overall, we are continuing to make progress and to get staff trained.

Based on the auditors' suggestion, credit card users have been reduced by 40%; many have been transitioned to using house charge accounts instead of credit cards.

Staff Liaison Cunningham reported that the department is up to date with operating budget journal postings and are continuing to work on the backlog of reviewing the Marin Valley Mobile Country Club (MVMCC) financial statements to make sure that everything reconciles. The current year is up to date. Additionally, the cost recovery invoices are current through March 2021. The next step is to tackle some of the auditor findings about the historic accounts and getting those cleaned up.

Staff received a revised estimate for the federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars, the City's allocation has dropped by \$1.3M, from \$10.4M to \$9.1M. The City Council tentatively earmarked the funds at the April 13, 2021 meeting, and confirmed funding and projects to include in the FY2021/22 budget at the May 18th Budget Workshop.

G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

G.1. Staff Updates

Agendize the introduction of new Committee Member Andrew Zmyslowski to the June 17, 2021 Committee Meeting.

G.2. Committee Member Reports

The next meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2021 at 7:30 AM.

H. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 AM.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were duly adopted at the Novato Citizens Finance Advisory/Oversight Committee Meeting of July 15, 2021.

/ Jean Holzgang de Buren /
Jean Holzgang de Buren, Office Assistant