

Administrative Committee



Regular Meeting ~Minutes~

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**Monday
November 8, 2021**

4:00 PM

**Council Chambers
206 E. Third St.**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Brandy Sullivan, Sandra Kelly, Gina Taruscio

OTHERS: Mayor Bill Lambert, Council Member Art Bettge, Council Member Maureen Laflin, Council Member Elect Julia Parker, Council Member Elect Hailey Lewis

STAFF: Gary Riedner, Tyler Palmer, Bill Belknap, David Schott, Alisa Anderson, Taylor Riedner

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Approval of Administrative Committee October 25, 2021 Minutes (ACTION ITEM) - Taylor Riedner

The Committee recommended approval and that it be placed on the Council consent agenda.

2. Consideration of the Moscow Heritage Tree Program (ACTION ITEM) - David Schott

Moscow is justly proud of its beautiful tree-lined streets, particularly in older historic neighborhoods, and works to create the same quality of urban forest in new areas of the City as they develop. To highlight our City's investment in trees, the Moscow Tree Commission has proposed creating a Moscow Heritage Tree Program to inspire and educate our community about our urban forest. A Heritage Tree is one that is notable for its large size, age, health or form, or is uncommon in Moscow. It may also be a tree with an interesting story or connection to Moscow's history. Once designated as a Moscow Heritage Tree, the tree will be featured in the Moscow Heritage Tree Program Guide, which includes a map of the tree's location, a photograph of the tree, and a description describing why it is a Moscow Heritage Tree.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Recommend approval of the Moscow Heritage Tree Program and authorize the proposed Resolution, or provide staff further direction.

Schott introduced the item as written above and provided background to the program. The Moscow Tree Commission formed an Ad Hoc Committee to help start the heritage tree program and reviewed similar programs used by Spokane and Coeur d' Alene. The Ad Hoc Committee presented a draft to the Tree Commission on October 5th and the Commission recommended approval. The goal of the program is to inspire and educate the community about forestry, celebrate the benefits of mature trees, connect people to the natural beauty of trees, showcase examples of varieties of trees, and celebrate the roll that trees play in our environment. The program process includes a nomination form accompanied by a property owner agreement, and eligible trees must be visible from the public right of way. Trees on public and private properties may be considered and the submit the application to the Tree Commission for consideration. The Legal Department has assisted with developing the property owner agreement form. Trees that are selected to be a part of the program will be featured in the physical and online program guide and the property owner will also receive a certificate of recognition. Promotions beginning in the Spring of 2022 include an information flyer, press release, utility bill newsletter, social media press release, farmers market presence, and temporary yard signs for new heritage trees. Staff feels property owners should not be restricted and therefore are not being required to have specific maintenance and may remove the tree if they wish. Staff is asking that any heritage tree that is being removed to notify the City before doing so. Any tree located on public property would have to be approved and permitted by the City prior to removal. Currently there are no requirements for utility companies to handle heritage trees any differently than others but staff will

consider recommendations going forward. The Committee recommended approval and that it be placed on the Council consent agenda.

3. Affordable Housing Grant Program Resolution (ACTION ITEM) - Bill Belknap

During the development of the FY2022 Budget, the City Council appropriated \$30,000 in funding to be utilized to promote the development of affordable housing within the community. City Staff have met with affordable housing developers within the city including the Moscow Affordable Housing Trust and the local Habitat for Humanity Chapter to discuss how the funds could be utilized to leverage grants and donations to support the construction of affordable housing. Staff prepared an outline for a potential affordable housing grant program for nonprofit organizations focused upon the development of affordable housing and included eligible organizations, allowed use of the grant funds, homebuyer qualifications, and ongoing housing affordability requirements that was reviewed by the Administrative Committee on September 13, 2021. The Committee recommended approval of the outline with minor modifications and provided Staff with direction to prepare a Resolution to adopt and implement the program. Staff has prepared the Resolution for the Council's review and consideration for adoption.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Recommend approval of the Affordable Housing Grant Program and the proposed Resolution, or provide staff further direction.

Belknap introduced the item as written above and shared changes made since the original presentation to the Committee. The intended goal of the City would be to allocate \$50,000 annually to the program. Eligible organizations would be non-profits whose primary mission is to develop affordable housing; however, the requirement that the entity be an IRS 501(c)(3) has been removed. Another change from the previous presentation is allowing grant awards to be effective for 24 months rather than 12 to allow the grantee more time for project completion. There are currently no programs offered by the City which allow for-profit builders to apply for grants since they would likely not meet the affordability goal of the City. Acquisition and rehabilitation or renovation of existing homes may now be eligible to apply for the grant opportunity. Homes located on leased lands also qualify for funding opportunities. Grants would be limited to \$10,000 each, however because of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated by City Council of \$50,000 per year for three years, staff may recommend that these grants be increased to \$20,000 until those funds are exhausted. The Committee recommended approval and that it be placed on the Council consent agenda.

4. ARPA Small Business and Nonprofit COVID-19 Assistance Grant Program Proposal (ACTION ITEM) - Bill Belknap / Alisa Anderson

Under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), state and local governments were allocated funding to respond to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City of Moscow was allocated \$5,528,399 with a wide range of eligible uses including direct response to the pandemic, small business and nonprofit assistance and water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. The City Council conducted a workshop on October 25, 2021 and provided guidance to allocate \$750,000 for a small business and non-profit assistance program, \$150,000 for affordable housing, \$1,000,000 for stormwater infrastructure and \$3,628,399 for water system infrastructure. Staff has prepared an outline for the small business and nonprofit assistance program for the Committee's review and direction.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Receive report and provide Staff with direction.

Belknap introduced the item by reviewing the purpose of ARPA funds and their objectives. ARPA allocations will be funded in two payments; the first occurred in June of 2021, and the second payment must be distributed within 12 months of the 1st. Funding must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and fully expended by December 31, 2026. The proposed program defines eligible entities for the small business and non-profit assistance program are those which employ under 200 employees and non-profit organizations. Qualified expenses include direct costs responding to COVID such as PPE, computers, software, and operational costs such as payroll, rent, supplies, and utilities that have been affected by COVID. Revenue reduction or increased operating expenses due to COVID must be more than 20% over the last two years. Belknap noted that the City is not able to compensate for the current shortage of labor. Supporting

documents required to demonstrate revenue reduction include financial statements, tax returns, personal financial statements, and 990 forms for non-profits. Grant awards will be limited to \$15,000 unless otherwise approved by Council. The proposed Review Committee includes the Grants Manager, Finance Director, and Deputy City Supervisor, which will make recommendations to City Council for award. City Council will review and approve the awards, and funds will be distributed within 30 days of the approval.

Sullivan would like to revisit the requirements and eligibility for ARPA funds and the restrictions on businesses to apply. 2019 should be used as a benchmark to compare revenue and expenditures. Belknap commented that 2019 would be included for that comparison.

Anderson stated that the program will be open in 2022, and assistance will be available for businesses that are still struggling. There are currently more funds available for daycare businesses through the Idaho Department Health and Welfare than any other businesses.

Taruscio suggested adding an additional representative to the Review Committee to voice for business owners and non-profits. Anderson mentioned certain financial documents from businesses must remain confidential, so staff will review the ability to do this.

Discussion ensued regarding the fund eligibility and usage. Committee asked staff to gather additional information and decided to table further discussion until the next committee meeting.

REPORTS

Staff Report (if needed)

No report needed.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

