South Billings Urban Renewal Association

Meeting Minutes | November 3, 2026

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the October 6, 2026 meeting minutes. No additions or corrections were offered.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as presented.

Action: Motion carried.

3. Septic/Water-Sewer Connection Program – 449 Orchard Lane

Sara presented an application for assistance of up to $5,000 for 449 Orchard Lane. The applicant owns two properties but is applying for assistance for only one at this time. Required documentation and one contractor bid were received. The contractor, Current Inc, has completed work for a previous applicant. No public comment was received.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to approve the application, subject to the program's $5,000 maximum.

Action: Motion carried.

4. Energy Laboratories TIF Application

Sara presented the revised TIF application for Energy Laboratories' approximately 10,000-square-foot expansion and development of two vacant lots into parking on South 27th Street. The company reported approximately 95 Billings employees, anticipated creation of 8–10 positions, average hourly pay of $28.63, and secured project financing. Its total project cost was reported at approximately $3.7 million.

Eligible expenses included demolition, sidewalks, curb and gutter, hardscaping, water and storm sewer, landscaping and irrigation, lighting and controls, and streetside façade improvements. HVAC was excluded as ineligible. Eligible expenses totaled $328,181. The initial requested TIF amount of approximately $618,803 was associated with an estimated 16-year payback; the Board discussed its historical preference for shorter paybacks.

Company representatives described the project's benefits for employment, reinvestment and corridor appearance, along with construction delays, foundation surprises, and rising steel costs. They stated that TIF-eligible work had not yet been substantially completed.

One public commenter opposed using tax increment funds for an established private business, citing effects on other taxing jurisdictions. Board members expressed support for business retention, new jobs and investment.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to approve $328,181 in TIF-eligible expenses for Energy Laboratories.

Action: Motion carried unanimously. The application remains subject to subsequent Advisory Committee and City Council review.

5. Board Meeting Schedule and Location

Sara discussed returning regular SBURA association meetings to the Billings Hotel & Convention Center on the first Tuesday of each month. The City's TIF Advisory Committee is expected to be reconstituted in January 2027 and will continue meeting at City Hall. SBURA will present applications and recommendations to that committee as needed.

Applications for Advisory Committee appointments were discussed; appointments were expected to be considered December 21, 2026. No formal motion on the meeting schedule was recorded.

6. Amend Park / ARK Recreation Campus Parking

Sara described increasing parking concerns at the ARC and adjacent recreation facilities. A preliminary estimate of approximately $1.8 million was discussed for paving the remaining area. Alternatives included grading and gravel, partial paving, preserving a future building pad, improving drainage ditches and access, and collecting approximately six months of attendance and parking data. A gravel option of approximately $1 million was also discussed.

Participants emphasized that recent major events may not represent typical demand, while acknowledging an ongoing need for parking. The Board discussed the potential indoor tennis facility, the distinction between conceptual support and a funding commitment, possible competitive development processes, and the need to avoid paving areas that may later be redeveloped.

Public comment addressed tennis-site preservation, temporary gravel costs, access and parking behavior. Board members generally favored timely improvements while seeking more information and coordination with City staff.

Motion: A motion was made and seconded to bring campus parking needs and improvement options to the Advisory Committee for further discussion.

Action: Motion carried. No final design or construction expenditure was approved.

7. Street Improvements and Capital Improvement Plan

Sara updated the Board on proposed street improvements remaining in the South Billings master plan. The City's sequencing differed from some SBURA priorities; Morey Street was not anticipated in the first phase. Approximately 12 projects, estimated at roughly $7 million, were discussed as potentially occurring in two phases. Timing and funding remain subject to the City's CIP process.

Members stressed unfinished streets serving development and school routes and noted competing capital priorities, including Fire Station No. 2. Further City Council discussion and potential CIP approval were expected around November 23, 2026.

Action: Information only; no motion recorded.

8. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

No additional public comment was received.

9. Additional Business and Adjournment

No further business was raised. The meeting was adjourned.