Minutes of the November 8, 2000
Rio Nuevo Multipurpose Facilities District Board

Approved on: _________________________

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Ruben Suarez called the Board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 8, 2000 at Community Services, Sentinel Building, Rillito/Sabino Rooms, 310 North Commerce Park Loop, Tucson, Arizona.

Present:
Chair Ruben Suarez                Secretary Corky Poster                Alice Eckstrom
Absent/Excused: Olivia Hernandez

Staff Present:
John S. Jones, Project Director    Bill Hicks, Esq., Snell & Wilmer
Marty McCune, Historic Program Administrator
Emily Nottingham, Assistant Director, Community Services

It was determined that a quorum was present.

2. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Eckstrom moved approval of the October 11, 2000 minutes. Mr. Poster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously (11-0).

3. Rio Nuevo Master Planning

Mr. Jones reviewed the updated information provided in the meeting packets. The first public forum on November 1 was well attended. The Master Plan Design Workshops are being held today and tomorrow at the TCC and planning is on schedule. Mr. Jones expects to receive within the next four weeks copies of the site analysis and economic feasibility studies that Hunter is currently conducting. The next series of meetings will begin on December 5 with an eight-hour workshop from 1:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the TCC and will be more definitive as to elements of the master plan. A public forum will be held on December 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the TCC at which the first draft of the master plan will be presented. The master plan will be presented to the public on January 3 at 6:30 p.m. at the Leo Rich Theater at the TCC. The February Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 14, at the TCC and will include a public hearing so that citizens may provide their comments to the Board. The Rio Nuevo Citizens Advisory Committee will also provide their recommendations at that time. After that, the Board’s recommendations would be submitted to the Mayor and Council for their meeting on February 26 which would also include a public hearing. The goal is have the Mayor and Council endorse the decision of the board and adopt as public policy the Rio Nuevo Master Plan. There was discussion about the ratings developed by citizen groups and the endorsements.

4. Archeological and Historical Research

Ms. McCune provided an update on the archeological work by:
• Identifying the locations of excavations;
5. **Next steps with the Smithsonian Institution**

Mr. Jones reported on the October 25, 2000, visit by the Smithsonian Institution officials at which local officials were present to welcome them. A formal presentation was provided on the responsibilities and benefits of the Smithsonian affiliation. The Arizona State Museum has subsequently signed a memorandum of understanding to become an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the Arizona Historic Society is drafting a memorandum of understanding. Other Rio Nuevo projects have also expressed an interest in becoming affiliated with the Smithsonian. Benefits of affiliation include receiving:

- Smithsonian traveling exhibits.
- Artifacts of national importance on a temporary basis.
- Outreach and education programs.
- The right to use the Smithsonian logo as a tag line.
- Membership in the local organization will entitle people to join the Smithsonian for an additional fee.

If there is sufficient interest, a consultant could be hired to assist local entities interested in forming a consortium to affiliate with the Smithsonian. Mr. Jones estimated that $5,000 would cover the cost to organize a consortium, develop a memorandum of understanding and cover the application fee.

Motion by Mr. Poster, seconded by Ms. Eckstrom and carried by a vote of 11 to 0 to approve the concept of forming a consortium to affiliate with the Smithsonian Institution, but the hiring of a consultant would have to come back to the board for approval.

6. **Rio Nuevo Environs Land Use**

Mr. Jones reported on land use plans and future plans the City has for adjacent neighborhoods. The current operative plan is the Downtown Plan, which was updated in 1995 to the City Center Plan, which was rolled into the Rio Nuevo Plan. It includes:

- Enhancing downtown’s existing residential neighborhoods.
- Providing incentives for compatible infill or housing.
- Emphasized downtown’s historic resources.
- Major investment activity for regional retail.

Two items that were not rolled into Rio Nuevo were:

- A branch campus of the University of Arizona.
- A major, regional commercial activity center.

Ms. Nottingham provided information on community development plans. Mr. Jones reported that the Department of Justice will provide a Weed & Seed grant of $20,000 for economic development in the Westside Neighborhood that may be augmented by the City.

Mr. Poster has been working as a consultant on the 5th/6th Street planning process and noted that neighborhoods with good plans were better prepared to express their goals and participate in the larger planning process. Neighborhoods in and around Rio Nuevo do not seem to be prepared to use their plans as effectively.

A resolution motion was made by Mr. Poster, seconded by Ms. Eckstrom and carried by a vote of 11 to 0 to have Mr. Jones prepare a memo to Mayor and Council, for the Chairman’s signature, recommending that the Mayor and Council direct the necessary resources of city staff to work with individual neighborhoods in and around Rio Nuevo to assist them in developing their own internal policies for the protection and the participation of their neighborhood.
7. Acquisition of 26-72 E. Congress St.
Mr. Jones reported that the City of Tucson has entered into a one-year, renewable lease agreement with the General Services Administration for the properties on the south side of Congress Street between Stone and Scott at a cost of $100 per month. It is planned that the Rio Nuevo District will have a master lease for properties and then use District funds to prepare the properties for redevelopment. A request has been made to the General Services Administration that they declare this property as surplus and available for sale.

8. Future Agenda Items
Mr. Poster requested information on three items for the next meeting:
- A report from staff on the tax increment over the past year showing totals by months and, if possible, a projection for the next two years.
- Regarding the passage of Proposition 301 which increases the sales tax by 0.6 percent, that money will accrue to the District and he would like a report from city staff regarding the implications and these funds are to be handled. Staff will consult with the city’s bond attorney and advise.
- The amount of CBDG funds used to pay back the 108 federal loan that was used to acquire the Rio Nuevo property. Mr. Poster would like to see funds equal to that amount reimbursed to CBDG or an amount equal to that be directed to projects for low and moderate income families in the District.

9. Call to the Audience
Mr. Fernando Castro of South Tucson noted that original Rio Nuevo plans called for representatives from South Tucson to attend quarterly meetings; however, meetings are held almost every month. As December is a busy month, he suggested that the December meeting be cancelled. By consensus, the board agreed to cancel the December meeting and requested that the January meeting packet material be provided prior to December 25 so there would be sufficient time for review prior to the January 10, 2001 meeting.

An audience member expressed concern about the impact of the project on neighborhoods. Mr. Poster noted that part of the job of the consultant was to study that subject.

A member of the audience member said he was president of Barrio Historico Neighborhood Association. On October 2 he requested test results from Mr. John Updike regarding the Chevron site, but nothing has been received to date. There is a high incidence of cancer in the area. Mr. Jones will follow up on that request.

10. Next Meeting (Jan 10, 2001)
The next meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2000 at the TCC, Leo Rich Theater.

11. Adjournment
Ms. Eckstrom moved and Mr. Poster seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried unanimously at 6:50 p.m.