

**MINUTES OF THE CRA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
IN CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL
100 E. BOYNTON BEACH BLVD.
BOYNTON BEACH, FLORIDA 33435
HELD ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2017, AT 6:30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Linda Cross, Chair
Robert Pollock, Vice Chair
James DeVoursney
Allen Hendricks
Thomas Murphy, Jr.
Rick Maharajh
Cindy Falco-DiCorrado

Michael Simon, Director, CRA
Theresa Utterback, Development Services
Specialist
Lisa Edmondson, Prototype, Inc.
Thuy Shutt, Assistant Director CRA
Matthew Meinzer, Consultant
Amil Donith, Consultant

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll was called, and it was determined a quorum was present.

III. Agenda Approval

- A.** Additions, Deletions, Corrections to the Agenda - None
- B.** Adoption of Agenda

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the agenda was approved as presented.

IV. Assignments:

- A.** Pending Assignments from April 11, 2017 CRA Board Meeting
 - 1. Review and Revise Current CRA Special Events Grants - **Table until budget is finalized.**

Mr. Simon said there is no longer a budget for special event grants. The CRAAB and the CRA Board both decided to discontinue the grants. He said staff will either decide to terminate the item on the agenda or keep it open.

- 2. Review and Revise Vendor Policy for other CRAs/Non-Profits

Mr. Maharajh reported he met with the City's Director of Economic Development David Scott and learned that the City is rewriting some vendor policies. They thought it would be best to wait and look at that policy, and then integrate it into the CRAAB policy, making one document. When the policy is done, Mr. Scott will be invited to attend a meeting to share the new policies.

Mr. Simon advised that the main focus of this assignment is for recommendations on policy on how to select or operate special events with regard to non-profit or for-profit vendors specifically. He gave several examples and explained the current policy. Criteria would need to be in place for staff to say a non-profit would qualify for a discounted fee. A clear policy would also be needed for two or three retail vendors of the same type, such as ice-cream vendors.

The CRA Board wanted this board to evaluate whether a policy is needed, and if so, what it would be. Mr. Maharajh remarked that he and Mr. Scott are trying to establish a benchmark for a policy.

B. Reports on Pending Assignments - None

C. New Assignments from CRA Board Meeting July 11, 2017 - None

V. Consent

A. Approval of Advisory Board Minutes - July 06, 2017

Motion made by Dr. DeVoursney, seconded by Vice Chair Pollock, to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2017 meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Information Only

A. Financial Report Period Ending July 31, 2017

Mr. Simon said that the expected surplus that is a result of the year end will be in roll-over.

B. Neighborhood Policing Program 3rd Quarter Reports for FY 2016-2017

Sergeant Henry Diehl is with the Neighborhood Officer program that is funded by the CRA through an Interlocal agreement. He referred to the quarterly report which was available to staff and board members.

Sergeant Diehl mentioned that the crime statistics for the second and third quarter show a slight decrease. They are working at Carolyn Sims Center with a program called "Sweat with a Cop" for the upcoming school year. He described the sports-based program for latch-key children.

Sergeant Diehl answered a question about a complaint filed by Gutter Smith relating to prostitution and drug activity across the street from his business on 234 NE 6 Avenue. He said he goes out several times a day to monitor illegal activity, and so far there has been none. He does a drive-by and sometimes parks and watches the area.

Mr. Simon mentioned that the use of the Neighborhood Officer doing that duty has been a topic of discussion among various agencies and has been determined to be appropriate. As to the prospect of that activity undermining community unification and causing people to not want to talk to the police, Sergeant Diehl explained that when they get information, they pass it on to the appropriate unit in the Police Department. They were instructed through the chain of command to watch the area on NE 6 Avenue, and it has alleviated the problem at hand. He said he goes up and down the streets in the area. He reviewed many of the activities they have been participating in in the community.

C. Rescheduling September CRA Meeting Date

Mr. Simon explained that the meeting venue is not available on September 7, 2017, and suggested changing it to September 6.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board meeting was changed to September 6, 2017.

D. Special Meeting to Discuss RFP/RFQ for Ocean Breeze East on August 29, 2017 at 6:30 pm.

Mr. Simon explained that a special meeting was called due to the amount of time that this type of review normally takes. It also provides a time cushion before the budgeting deadlines.

Chair Cross introduced new CRAAB member Cindy Falco-DiCorrado, and Mr. Simon introduced Thuy Shutt, new CRA Assistant Director.

VII. CRA Board Items for CRA Advisory Board Review and Recommendations

A. Old Business

1. Discussion and Consideration of the Budget for FY 2017-2018

Mr. Simon reviewed the documents, pointing out the budget items that were allocated per the CRA.

Mr. Simon reported that since Ms. Shutt has been onboard, they have been working on a more formal process for non-profits seeking assistance from the CRA. Rather than

soliciting requests for funding from an agency, they will do a notice of funding availability, a formal application process, and a funding cycle review. The process should be helpful for grant applicants who have little or no experience.

The rehabilitation project with Habitat for Humanity and other potential projects will be brought back to the board for suggestions. So far, matching funds has not been a requirement; rather, the income level of the applicant has been the criterion. They are discussing options based on income level, matching funds, age group, etc. Even so, they want to keep the program simple.

Dr. DeVoursney commented that there is a project planned by FDOT for 2018 to repave part of Federal Highway and repaint the bicycle lanes. He wondered if the City could use this opportunity to beautify Federal Highway, and he was directed to the CRA for discussion. He suggested a line item for that in the budget.

Mr. Simon mentioned that there is an issue regarding the Palm Tram on Ocean Avenue and Boynton Beach Boulevard - when they run ahead of schedule, they sit idle in front of the intersection, blocking the right-hand turn lane. Traffic is then pushed onto oncoming traffic, and it also creates difficulty seeing pedestrians. Mr. Simon discussed this with a representative from Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council who was hired by FDOT as their community liaison. However, FDOT does not want to allow for off-lanes because it makes it harder for the buses to get back into traffic.

Mr. Simon suggested research as to what the CRA can do and how funding would be assigned to it over this year and next year. He also talked about the Seacrest Boulevard Improvement Project and potential bike lane enhancements.

Ms. Susan Oyer, 140 SE 27 Way, discussed the issue of non-maintenance of the medians. She wondered if the CRA, along with the City, could look into fixing the irrigation in order to maintain the vegetation in the medians. Shade trees are also needed on Ocean Avenue and US1. She added that the bus stops are too close together. She suggested wildflowers as an alternative to other vegetation and said the Wildflower Society could possibly be involved.

Mr. Simon advised that the CRA does not do maintenance, but they could consider supplementing the City's efforts to improve the medians.

Mr. Hendricks brought up the issue of pedestrian safety from Hurricane Alley and the 500 Ocean Project to the Marina District. He believed the City needed to claim some responsibility for that. There is also a lot of street work needed on Boynton Beach Boulevard and Seacrest Boulevard.

Regarding the budget, Mr. Hendricks objected to the elimination of the community grants program, which could have grown. He also suggested matching grants for exterior paint, sod, irrigation, and driveways, and wanted the City to do that also where appropriate.

Chair Cross verified that \$50,000 was targeted for the rehab project and that line items can be revisited and reallocated.

Mr. Simon explained that the special events grant program had difficulty finding applicants who were applying who could meet the statutory requirement of the CRA - economic development, slum and blight, etc. He emphasized that a project has to have a direct link to the goals and objectives of the CRA Plan and the statutory requirements for spending. In addition, the criteria in the grant itself were constantly being applied for and approved by the board, which offered numerous waivers or “overlooked” the majority of program criteria. He stressed that it is important to keep the funding clear.

Chair Cross and Mr. Simon both further explained the relationship/history between the CRA and special events and the CRA guidelines for events.

Some of the budget line items that have nothing allocated have been taken over by the City or have been finished.

Motion made by Dr. DeVoursney, seconded by Vice Chair Pollock, to recommend to the CRA Board to approve the budget, but with consideration for what can be done to augment and enhance the Federal Highway Corridor in conjunction with the FDOT repavement of the Federal Highway. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

2. Social Media Outreach Program

Matthew Meinzer and Jmil Donith, social media business consultants for the CRA, gave a PowerPoint presentation with the following highlights:

- A branding logo for the CRA
- Have 23 businesses participating, including art galleries, restaurants, professional offices, etc.
- Target of 30 businesses by the end of September
- Graph of time spent for various tasks including video editing, graphic design, website help, etc.
- Graph of newest businesses
 - Training the businesses accounts for more hours than actual promotion
- Overview of metrics
 - Twitter, Instagram and Facebook follows/likes
 - Details on Hurricane Alley program - huge increase on Instagram follows
 - Amanda James gallery - video was very successful on Facebook, resulting in sales
 - Healing Heart - started a blog to share on Facebook and their website
 - Bark Avenue - “insta-stories” on Instagram
 - Yoga Fit - sharing events on Facebook
- Future projects

- Cross-promotion and collaboration with other businesses involving interaction on social media
- Project SeaHorse (CRA program) and SplashDown
- Testimonial video from small businesses participating the program
- Goal is to get businesses to eventually do the marketing on their own

Ms. Donith said they have doing a lot of posting for the CRA, and look forward to working with cross-platforms. Hopefully all the businesses will work together in the future. Regarding you-tube videos, she said that will be a step in the future.

Mr. Simon spoke very positively about the program and the consultants. The CRA gets a bonus by being associated with the businesses going onto social media. He said the funding for Mr. Meinzer ends in September, and funding for Ms. Donith ends in December. If desired, the CRA Board and this board can recommend continuing the program under the Economic Development grant program. He noted that the CRA won nine awards at FFEA for marketing, video, photography, events, banners, etc., and the Parks and Recreation Department won another six awards.

Mr. Simon recommended having both positions instead of just one in order to enhance creativity.

Ms. Shutt commented that this program is very economical compared to other programs. The cost benefit is great, and it reaches out to the younger generation, who like to patronize local businesses and use technology for shopping.

Mr. Simon suggested that the CRA acts like a Chamber of Commerce for the small businesses in the District, and is the only resource some businesses can go to. There is no DDA (Downtown Development Authority).

Ms. Susan Oyer related how the teenaged girls in the summer camps at Artsy Living post on Facebook and other social media for the owner. She suggested getting several people who are competent in various social media and have them work with the City and the CRA to “pump out” information. Devise a common hashtag to identify the posts, such as #newtoPalmBeach. She said Pirate Fest and Barney Bash should be tied in.

Motion made by Mr. Hendricks, seconded by Vice Chair Pollock, to recommend to the CRA Board that they continue the program for a full year for both positions.

In response to a question, Mr. Simon noted that the cost to do that would probably be \$80,000. They are not full-time positions - they are consultants - so they do not receive benefits. If the board wants to recommend bringing them on as benefitted employees, he would research the cost of that.

Mr. Hendricks wondered if there was a way for the businesses to contribute, so they do not get “too comfortable” with free services. Discussion ensued on how to continue the program:

- Engage the businesses, get them rolling, and then ask how they can give back to the CRA or wean them off the program
- Make the program year-to-year
- After the first year, have the businesses pay a nominal fee to continue
- Do not want to lose touch with them in order to continue the cross promotion
- Do not want to be their only source for advice
- Leave them with a short video refresher of how-to's
- Consultants will still be around after the initial learning period to give advice

Mr. Maharajh said he could help develop the metric for the modules if needed.

Mr. Simon asked all board members to repost anything from the CRA to help spread the word. The board asked him to go ahead researching options regarding hiring the consultants.

Ms. Utterback is doing follow-up interviews and said they are all in the learning process. They are aware they need to learn how to do the social media marketing because they want to control what they are saying and doing.

Mr. Simon pointed out that the success of the businesses is a boon to the CRA. He talked about various ways they can have promotions.

In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

B. New Business

1. Consideration and Discussion of the Letter Submitted by the Community

Caring Center Boynton Beach, Inc. (CCC), for their property located at 145 NE 4th Ave, Boynton Beach, Florida

Chair Cross stated that the CCC currently resides in a corner of the Cottage District and has identified some property that they would like to acquire and construct a new building on. The appraised value of the corner property is currently \$171,000. In order for them to move, they want to give that property to the CRA, take the CRA property, and have the CRA assist them in building with matching funds.

Mr. Simon explained there are three 50 x 120 foot lots; two are owned by the City, and the CRA owns the third one. The CRA bought it with the thought that the lot might be a relocation site for the CCC, or at least a corner within the General Commercial node of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Corridor. The CCC is now on a lot with a non-conforming use, and the new lot would be a unique conditional use. The value of the

three parcels was about \$150,000 when purchased; the CRA purchased the one lot for \$32,000.

Mr. Simon continued that the CRA is ready to make recommendations or final decisions on the amounts of money, the partnership with the CCC, and value versus acquisition. He noted it would be a \$.75 million improvement to a vacant corner. The question is how can the CRA assist them financially and in what comfort level can the CRA try to monetize that assistance.

Chair Cross confirmed that the property is in the Martin Luther King Jr (MLK) Corridor, but not on the Boulevard. Mr. Simon visualized that redevelopment of the area would stretch between NE 10th Avenue or MLK Boulevard all the way back to NE 9th Avenue in one project. The property would allow for a street to cut through MLK Boulevard to NE 9th Avenue. In effect, that would open the door for other development opportunities.

Assuming there was a swap of the properties, they would need roughly half of the \$785,000. Some of the money (\$200,000) could be taken out of the project fund for MLK Corridor, and other monies from acquisition funding or an Economic Development Grant. Mr. Simon affirmed that CRA staff and the City support the acquisition/relocation to get the CCC out of the residential location and the Cottage District.

In return for approximately \$400,000, Mr. Simon remarked that the CRA would get the Cottage District corner, a new facility in an area on now-vacant property, and redevelopment on the MLK Corridor. They would move an activity that is not compatible with the district that it is in to an acceptable area, and would add service to a community that needs it. The CCC can offer job training and retail. The contribution of the CRA would allow the CCC to pursue additional funding to continue their vision.

Dr. DeVoursney disclosed that he is a board member of the CCC, but has no financial stake in it. He believed the location would be very helpful for them and the community.

Mr. Simon described the nearby businesses and explained the City ownership of the adjacent and nearby properties. He said he is recommending to the City to consider transferring ownership of the two other lots and then transferring them back.

Motion made by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Ms. Falco-DiCorrado, to recommend approval of the property acquisition as detailed in the letter.

Although he expressed approval of the idea, Mr. Hendricks wanted to understand what the Master Plan is for the MLK Corridor and for the rest of the CRA District so he can make more informed decisions. Mr. Simon commented that the Cottage District Project, the Heart of Boynton District part of the plan, and the Corridor part of the plan all support this action.

Mr. Maharajh suggested a workshop on the Master Plan and/or a tour of the area. Mr. Simon will look into it. He then reiterated the CRA's purpose and action parameters.

In response to a question by Dr. DeVoursney, Ms. Shutt explained the requirements for a potential grocery store on the site. She noted that a small 5,000 square foot store would require about one-third of an acre including parking.

Mr. Simon pointed out that the cost of land on Federal Highway would be prohibitive for the CCC if they had to obtain another site.

Mr. Murphy proposed an amendment to the motion to limit the amount of money to \$400,000 to come out of the Acquisition budget and the MLK Corridor budget in order to get it funded.

Vice Chair Pollock opposed the idea of a grocery store, thinking people would not feel safe getting to it.

Ms. Falco-DiCorrado thought the CCC facility would enhance the neighborhood and fill a community need, especially feeding people.

Ms. Falco-DiCorrado seconded the amended motion, which passed in a unanimous voice vote (7-0).

VIII. Public Comment - None

IX. Future Agenda Items

X. Adjournment

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

[Minutes transcribed by J. Rubin, Prototype, Inc.]