



CRA Board Workshop Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 23, 2020 – 2:00 p.m.
Remote Via Webex
Delray Beach, FL 33444

STAFF PRESENT:

Renee Jadusingh	Christine Tibbs	Tara Toto
Ivan Cabrera	Danielle Arfin	Heather Hinkle
Rob Massi	Alexina Jeannite	Lori Hayward

OTHERS PRESENT:

DJ Doody

1. Call to Order

Chair Petrolia called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Shelly Petrolia, Vice Chair Shirley Johnson, Deputy Vice Chair Angie Gray, Commissioner Ryan Boylston, Commissioner Kelcey Cordell Brooks, Commissioner Juli Casale, and Commissioner Adam Frankel.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Deputy Vice Chair Gray, seconded by Vice Chair Johnson, to approve the agenda as presented. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (7-0).

Chair Petrolia welcomed new member Kelcey Brooks to the CRA Board.

4. Discussion – Fiscal Year 2020/21 Draft Budget Review

Executive Director Renee Jadusingh outlined the plan to review the subject matter of the draft budget, noting a full budget presentation would be made in July.

CRA Managed Redevelopment Projects

Ms. Jadusingh explained staff was proposing to continue with the affordable commercial spaces on historic 5th Avenue, both currently in the plan review phase, and the workforce housing initiatives at Carver Square and Corey Isle. She stated a line item would also be included for subsidies for the housing projects, as the intent was to provide quality housing at an affordable rate to the community.

CRA Grant Funding Programs (not including A-Guide)

Ms. Jadusingh stated staff proposes \$650,000 for CRA Grant Programs, to include:

- Curb Appeal (Managed by City Neighborhood Improvements Department)
- Rent Subsidy
- Paint-Up and Signage
- Project Consultancy and Design Services
- Site Development Assistance
- Historic Façade Easement

Ms. Jadusingh explained \$650,000 was budgeted for Fiscal Year 2019/20 and approximately \$400,000 had been projected/awarded to date. The total expenditure for the programs in Fiscal Year 2018/19 was \$181,414. She noted these programs make a significant investment in the business community to help them to thrive and succeed.

City Funding Request for Services and Programs within the CRA District

- Clean & Safe Program - \$2,765,425
- Contractual Services - \$652,970
- Community Maintenance & Beautification - \$721,515
 - Added streetscape maintenance project on NE/SE 5th Ave and NE/SE 6th Ave
- Capital Improvement Projects - \$9,694,248.21
 - Ongoing projects from Fiscal Year 2019/20 include Osceola Park Neighborhood Improvements Phase 1 and SW 4th Street, SW 7th Avenue, and SW 3rd Court Neighborhood Improvements.
- Tennis Tournament Sponsorship - \$905,000

Ms. Jadusingh reviewed the City requests and highlighted the request variances from Fiscal Year 2019/20. She noted three (3) items not included in the City's requests which were temporarily managed by the CRA, including the wayfinding signage design (at a cost of \$100,000), wayfinding signage fabrication and installation (at a cost of \$1,000,000), and the City Transportation, to include the Downtown Connect and FreeBee (at a cost of \$1,400,000). The Downtown Connect contract expires June 30, 2021 and the FreeBee contract expires August 31, 2021.

Discussion

Ms. Jadusingh presented a summary of proposed changes and opened the subject for discussion.

Commissioner Casale asked for clarification regarding the increases to police officer funding.

Ms. Jadusingh stated she would have Police Chief Javaro Sims follow up with additional details regarding the request.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated she felt the police, fire, and transportation were the City's responsibility, and noted she felt the Clean and Safe line item should be reduced to keep from taking away from the CRA's priorities.

Continuing, Deputy Vice Chair Gray asserted she was happy to see the engineer services included but questioned paying for the vehicle. She asked if the CRA was still paying for the economic development department.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that the CRA still has an Interlocal Agreement with the City to pay for the economic development positions and expenses at 50 percent.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked how fire prevention costs are passed on to the CRA.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the fire prevention cost was a long-time request which had finally been funded through the Clean and Safe program four (4) or five (5) years ago. She noted it was not common for CRAs to fund fire positions and stated she would further research the details.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked the Commissioners to consider whether that position should remain in the CRA budget.

Commissioner Boylston stated he saw the funding of police officers as in line with the CRA goals of eliminating slum and blight and making sure neighborhoods are safe, along with championing community programming.

Continuing, Commissioner Boylston noted he was under the impression the CRA Board had already decided not to fund the economic development position. He asserted he was aware it had been filled at the City level, but he thought it was a City expense.

Commissioner Boylston stated he was in support of the CRA funding the transportation programs for one (1) more year to finish out the contracts and to put the City on notice that the CRA piloted the programs, but it needed to be a City program leveraging paid parking funds.

Vice Chair Johnson agreed she thought the Economic Development Director would be funded solely by the City. She asked what area was covered by Clean and Safe, noting she thought they needed to cover the entire CRA if the CRA was covering the cost. She agreed with Commissioner Boylston's comments regarding transportation.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the office of economic development was previously under the CRA and is now under the City Manager's office, but funding remains 50/50. She noted Clean and Safe is primarily the downtown core, but it could be reviewed for changes.

Fire Chief Keith Tomey responded to questions regarding fire department funding in the CRA budget, explaining the funded position is a dedicated fire inspection captain for the CRA. He stated the position had been funded since 2017, and with growth in the need, the work is supplemented with the work of a second inspector.

Chair Petrolia asked for additional information on the budget line item for the fire inspector and Chief Tomey said he would have staff research and return with an answer.

Commissioner Frankel challenged Ms. Jadusingh to get repairs done on the garage elevator if the CRA would be funding garage maintenance. He said not only was it not ADA compliant, it had been inoperable for over two (2) years.

The Board and staff discussed the request from the City to assist in funding garage maintenance.

Vice Chair Johnson stated she understands the need for economic development but wants to look at whether it should be solely a City expense.

Chair Petrolia said she agreed the item should be discussed at future budget meetings. She asked for clarification regarding construction and renovation on the NW 5th Avenue projects.

Continuing, Chair Petrolia said she was happy there is so much interest in the grant programs, but wondered if there was a way to make sure funds are being used to actually cure slum and blight, and not assisting those who would be able to make their own renovations.

Chair Petrolia stated she was open to discussion regarding the requested police increase for Clean and Safe, noting that whatever City expenses the CRA takes on, the less there is to work with in meeting CRA needs.

Chair Petrolia asserted she was open to the City taking care of the tennis tournament and the transportation expense, because they were not curing slum and blight. She commented that as she goes through the proposed budget, there are a number of expenses which are questionable as to whether the City or CRA should be handling them.

Commissioner Boylston asked Ms. Jadusingh to review the three (3) buckets for CRA funding, including economic development, slum and blight, and marketing.

Ms. Jadusingh stated she would add infrastructure to the list as its own category.

Commissioner Boylston stated a majority of the spending, rightfully, is in the slum and blight and infrastructure buckets. He noted most of the marketing projects had been pulled, and economic development was also being reviewed for removal. He asserted maintain some balance was the reason he was comfortable with funding the tennis tournament and some piece of economic development out of the CRA budget.

The Commissioners and staff discussed the need to notice the City that the CRA would not be funding transportation after the end of the current contracts.

Chair Petrolia commented that marketing for one (1) tennis tournament which happens once a year did not meet the standard that she feels the CRA is tasked with.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated she did not remember the Board taking on economic development and marketing over housing. She said for her the three (3) most important priorities would be sidewalks, alleyways, and housing.

Commissioner Boylston said Deputy Vice Chair Gray was right about the priorities of the Board, and noted he likes to see that the Board is increasing programs regarding residents and businesses. He pointed out the mission of all CRAs is to eliminate blight and create a sustainable downtown and encouraging economic growth.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asserted their mentors had built up the downtown, and now it is time to focus on other areas. She encouraged the Board to stay the course and not allow the City to come in with other projects.

Commissioner Boylston asked that the Board keep in mind the Delray Beach CRA has more funding than any other CRA because they had taken a balanced approach.

Commissioner Frankel stated Commissioner Boylston makes good points and noted recent worldwide advertising for Delray Beach thanks to the tennis tournament throughout the year. He noted affordable housing should be the main focus, but they needed to think about the bigger picture as well. He encouraged Board members to check out an ESPN special titled “Coco Gauf: The Lines Are the Same.”

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated she was not against the tennis tournament but did not think it needed to be funded by the CRA.

Chair Petrolia pointed out another area she would like to look at if funding is available is programs for addressing systemic racism in the community. She noted this might be an opportunity for a new vision to not just offer housing, but a path to bring people up and through in the system. She referenced conversations with minority businesses trying to get a loan and said the CRA could be used as a vehicle to provide support. She noted the impact the tennis tournament funds could have in helping people if used differently.

Ms. Jadusingh stated the redevelopment strategy for each area will be different and making change will require additional funding. She noted staff is working with a few businesses and has been identifying issues they run into and pointed out that providing the change they are looking for will require additional staff.

Missy Barletto, Director of Public Works addressed the issue with the garage repair. She stated the long-term repair of the garage was completed in March, and it was up and running for a few months but experienced moisture damage to the control panel. She said it is expected to be out for a few weeks.

Sam Metott, Director of Parks & Recreation, clarified the amount for the streetscape maintenance, noting the number provided was for five (5) years, not annual.

Ms. Jadusingh briefly summarized the points of the conversation. She noted strategy for the grant program will be addressed at a September workshop.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked who had been maintaining NE/SE 5th Avenue previously and said she felt the City should be handling it.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked for a total of the City's requests for the year.

Ms. Jadusingh stated the overall request was about \$13 million this year, down from \$20 million the previous year. She noted actual dollar amounts would be provided in each area in July.

Discussion of Non-Budgeted Items

Ms. Jadusingh stated the CRA acquisition strategy was not currently as aggressive as it had been in the past, noting this fiscal year's allocation had not yet been used. She updated on in-fill lots staff had been pursuing and asked if this was the strategy the Board wanted to continue.

Additionally, Ms. Jadusingh pointed out the Board needed to determine whether staff should be pursuing the old Plumosa site and other acquisition ideas.

Commissioner Boylston said he still supported having a small budget for in-fill lots, because he believed the Board had discussed shifting away from being a land bank. He noted he also wanted staff to continue pursuing opportunities to eliminate slum and blight.

Commissioner Boylston stated he felt the old Plumosa site was in line with the CRA's mission to eliminate slum and blight. He asserted as an empty, condemned school sitting in the middle of a housing community, the 10-acre site could be used to do a project like none the CRA had ever taken on, possibly in cooperation with a partner.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the CRA has options to explore opportunities, such as credit, and stated it might be more palatable over two (2) fiscal years.

Commissioner Boylston stated he would like to see staff explore the option, not taking any funding out of any other existing area. He pointed out Zone Six (6), the location of Plumosa, has had the least amount of funding allocated by the CRA.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray said the School Board owns the property and if it sold, there would probably be housing built. She said she didn't believe the CRA needed to get involved.

Commissioner Boylston argued that at the rate the CRA is building affordable housing, it will run out of lots.

In response to a question from Commissioner Boylston, Ms. Jadusingh said the CRA has less than five (5) or six (6) lots which could be used for single family housing.

Commissioner Boylston stated he saw this as an opportunity to explore workforce and affordable housing opportunities and to look into the future.

Chair Petrolia noted the conversation about the old Plumosa property preceded Commissioner Boylston on the City Commission, and she recognized the passion behind it, but said she is

concerned with the cost of projects already in process. She asserted money is limited and outlined upcoming costs to consider.

Continuing, Chair Petrolia stated she does not have a problem with pursuing the opportunity to learn more about available options but would prefer the School Board was coming in as a partner rather than a seller. She said at first when she thought of the project, she thought it might be workforce housing with teachers and school employees first in line. She noted buying property at market value does not necessarily fit with the CRA goals.

Ms. Jadusingh said she would discuss partnership with the Superintendent of Schools. She noted the cost of demolition also needed to be considered.

Commissioner Boylston agreed with Chair Petrolia's strategy, pointing out they are asking appraised value, not market value. He said the School District shouldn't be building housing, even if it is for teachers, so they need partners, and stated there is a lot of area to be flexible.

Chair Petrolia asked for a consensus regarding exploring the old Plumosa project.

Commissioner Frankel expressed concern regarding the pandemic's impact on the CRA budget.

The Commissioners discussed the project and decided against pursuing the property at this time.

The Commissioners and staff discussed continuing the strategy to pursue the purchase of in-fill lots and agreed by consensus to stay the course.

Ms. Jadusingh provided an overview of the properties owned by the CRA and projects currently being planned. She discussed utilizing containers as a concept idea for temporary activation on vacant CRA parcels on W Atlantic Avenue.

Commissioner Frankel asserted he loved the container idea, and noted it was something they had discussed before. He said he would be a huge supporter and would be happy to help get moving on it if there is a consensus.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray said she would be in favor even though she wasn't previously. She stated she felt the time was right to activate these districts.

Commissioner Boylston stated he was happy to hear that it was being discussed, adding there had been a lot of innovation since he first brought it up. He noted the timing was good for businesses who wanted to come to W Atlantic but were unable to.

In response to a question from Vice Chair Johnson, Ms. Jadusingh stated the property at 8th and W Atlantic was in remediation due to a well issue and a date is not currently available. She said she anticipated it would be an issue through the end of the year.

Chair Petrolia stated she is also 100 percent behind the idea. She said a food truck rental spot would also be great to consider to jazz up the area and bring people in.

5. Other Business

a. Comments by Executive Director

Ms. Jadusingh stated staff proposed a Workshop on September 22 to discuss funding assistance programs and to review funding in high priority sub-areas.

b. Comments by Board Attorney

None.

c. Comments by Commissioners

Vice Chair Johnson thanked Ms. Jadusingh and staff for all of their hard work, and said she was looking forward to the rest of the budget review.

6. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Renee Jadusingh, Executive Director

Shelly Petrolia, Board Chair