



Joint Delray Beach City Commission/
CRA Board Workshop Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 25, 2022 – 2:00 p.m.
Arts Warehouse
Delray Beach, FL 33444

CRA STAFF PRESENT:

Renee Jadusingh, Esq.	Tracy Waterlander	Ivan Cabrera
Christine Tibbs	Lori Hayward	Alexina Jeannite
Kim Phan, Esq.	Gina Clayton	

CITY COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Terrence Moore	Lynn Gelin	Katerri Johnson
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OTHERS PRESENT:

Joseph Sanchez	John Janusz	Gus Doyle
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1. Call to Order

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

City Commissioners Present: Mayor Shelly Petrolia (joined late), Vice Mayor Shirley Ervin Johnson, Deputy Vice Mayor Adam Frankel, Commissioner Juli Casale, and Commissioner Boylston

CRA Board Members Present: Chair Shirley Ervin Johnson, Vice Chair Angie Gray, Deputy Vice Chair Juli Casale, Commissioner Ryan Boylston, Commissioner Adam Frankel, and Commissioner Shelly Petrolia (joined late)

Absent: Commissioner Kelcey Brooks

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Deputy Vice Chair Casale, seconded by Commissioner Boylston, to approve the agenda. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed (5-0).

4. Discussion

a. Presentation on Point-To-Point Transportation Service and Delray Full-Service Center

Ivan Cabrera, CRA Redevelopment Manager, presented the Point-To-Point Transportation Service Program. He reviewed the timeline, which because in January 2019 when the CRA issued the RFP. He noted the agreement was executed in September 2019 and the Freebee Pilot Program commenced. He stated that there have been four amendments to the agreement and the CRA has been on a month-to-month agreement since August 2021. He stated representatives from Freebee were present to answer any questions.

Mr. Cabrera showed the expanded service area to address concerns of elder residents. He reviewed the metrics, which demonstrate increased demand, including transporting 15,000 passengers in March and April 2021. The peak months are December - July. He reviewed the demographics, the analysis of the extended service area, the economic impact. Demand from the expanded area has grown by four (4) times from the date of expansion. He showed some examples of current Freebee advertisers.

Renee Jadusingh, Executive Director, stated the CRA Board has been in discussion about what it would look like to transition this program back to the City. She noted that she met with the City Manager last month, which is what lead to today's joint workshop.

b. Discussion Point-To-Point Transportation Service

Chair Johnson opened the floor for discussion.

Terrence Moore, City Manager, said, from a fiduciary standpoint, they would offer recommendations to support the transition financially as part of the FY23 proposed budget process. He stated they would continue to work with the CRA on cost projections to continue the program. He acknowledged, prior to his arrival, there was discussion about this process being timelier, but he asked for consensus to bring recommendations back to the Board in a prudent manner. He noted the transition could become effective October 1, 2022.

Deputy Vice Chair Casale asked why the City can't continue to pay for service to the extended areas and have the CRA continue to have Freebee operate in the CRA districts. She noted she is not sure the City should take over the program entirely.

Commissioner Boylston noted that they are always looking at items from a budgeting aspect but said the main question is who is best to manage the program. He believes it should be funded and managed by the City.

Vice Chair Gray said she has not seen as many cars in the Northwest Southwest communities and asked Freebee if they scaled back. She believes it should be a City Transportation program and transitioned from the CRA. She acknowledged the hard work of the CRA staff to manage the program to date.

John Janusz and Gus Doyle, representatives from Freebee, approached the podium to respond. Mr. Janusz said the as the demand and service area has grown, it has increased the wait times and distance that the vehicles of travel. There is more demand than supply of vehicles.

Vice Chair Gray asked whether they believe the expansion requires more vehicles.

Mr. Janusz responded that, prior to the pandemic, the ridership was 400 passengers on the busiest days and 250-300 passengers on the other days. He said that was only 50% of the pickups that were requested so the demand was high even then. He noted their auto-pairing system ensures it is equitable for all. He believes the City would see an exponential growth in ridership.

Vice Chair Gray asked about their satisfaction with advertisement.

Mr. Janusz replied that Delray Beach is their most successful sponsorship area out of the twenty (20) areas they service in South Florida.

Commissioner Frankel stated he is a proponent, and many riders are going downtown to spend money. He is an advocate for the advertisement in order to reduce the bottom line. He shared his personal experience with Freebee. He believes there should be more vehicles during nighttime or weekends. He said the program is working.

Commissioner Petrolia noted the reason it has remained with the CRA is because of the ease of funding. She said the service offers an opportunity to come into the City. She supports the continuation of the program, whether that be under the City or under CRA's management.

Chair Johnson stated she would like to see the program continue but noted the CRA Board is interested in turning the program over to the City. She suggested that the City prepares for the transition of the program and funding by October 1, 2022.

Mr. Moore reiterated his request to have time the upcoming budget process to identify the specific funding sources.

Deputy Vice Chair Casale asked about the annual cost and the number of new vehicles.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that there is a financial analysis that was completed previously that can be provided.

Mr. Carbrera stated that five (5) vehicles is approximately \$401,000 annually, or approximately \$80,000 per vehicle. He noted one option presented by Freebee at a previous meeting was to add 1-2 vehicles to the current service area, which would increase costs by \$80,000-\$160,000 annually. He said another option is to add 2-3 vehicles and to expand the service area, which would increase costs by \$160,000-\$240,000 annually.

Commissioner Petrolia said the City should also consider additional vendors and a rebid to ensure they are not missing an opportunity.

Mr. Moore acknowledged the suggestion and noted the directive.

Ms. Jadusingh noted there needs to be consideration and a solution for the gap in the end of the contract in August 2022 and the transition deadline of October 1, 2022.

Ms. Gelin said the CRA follows the City's purchasing policies and if the City is rebidding a new contract, there is a provision for an extension of the current contract. The CRA would be able to exercise that term of the current contract so there is continuity of service.

Chair Johnson noted that before the next agenda item is addressed, she wanted to clarify public comments at workshops. They do not invite public comments during workshops but acknowledged the public attendees in the room.

Ms. Gelin stated that Joseph Sanchez, COO of the Palm Beach County School Board, was in attendance in the overflow room to answer any questions. Additionally, she noted members of the School Board staff were present as well.

d. Discussion Delray Full-Service Center

Mr. Moore said they visited with school leadership regarding building at the former Carver High School / Delray Full-Service Center. He noted there is a summary located in their packet that was first presented in October 2021 and is available online for the public. He said he's had many conversations with Janet Meeks, the City's Education Coordinator, to understand the dynamics and discussions about the current improvement plan at the Center. He shared they received information today regarding fee consideration agreements.

Ms. Gelin responded that they received the draft documents today, but the City was made aware of some of the fees previously.

Mr. Moore recommended that all parties involved be afforded an opportunity to review and evaluate specifically what's currently happening. He noted he has been meeting with Ms. Meeks and the educational leadership of Palm Beach County and has a scheduled meeting with the Full-Service Center leadership this week.

Deputy Vice Chair Casale asked Mr. Moore if the operations are going to cease over there until a decision has been made to proceed.

Mr. Moore responded that he anticipates a discussion about this at the next Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Boylston said the real discussion today is the three buildings that the City Commission fought for. He believes whatever goes into those buildings should be community-driven. He recommended engaging the community. He shared ideas that the community has suggested in the past for the Village Center.

Vice Chair Gray asked Mr. Sanchez asked what they have planned for the location.

Mr. Sanchez responded that a new 20,000 square foot building will be constructed, which will include trade-related spaces and classroom space. There are plans to provide eight (8) additional classrooms to provide ESL and GED opportunities for students.

Vice Chair Gray asked what would happen if the City does not accept the buildings.

Mr. Sanchez replied that he is not sure, but they would likely have to go back to the drawing board to look at options.

Vice Chair Gray asked about the deadlines.

Mr. Sanchez said the deadlines are not firm but are more to guide a decision and commitment to the community. He also noted the timeline from demolition to construction is approximately a year.

Commissioner Petrolia read a statute from the interlocal agreement. She stated Ms. Meeks has expressed concern about the process and changes that have occurred. She noted Village has low attendance in the high school level but could be a great model. She said the City needs a clear master plan for the buildings. She recommended taking a step back to form a clear picture of how this can meet the City's needs and the School District's needs.

Chair Johnson agreed with Commissioner Petrolia and Deputy Vice Chair Casale. She said the relationship with the School Board and the City has been one-sided. She believes the School Board makes decisions with little input from the community. She stated the City should have input on the properties and agrees there needs to be a pause.

Commissioner Boylston said the new building would offer classes to high school students. He said the education committee he sits on has looked at the data and identified the top needs for the next 10 years.

Consensus was reached to invite Ms. Paula Newman-Rocker, a member of the Carver High Historical Preservation Society, to speak. She stated that if the City is going to maintain the historic buildings, they need to publicly decide as soon as possible so the organization can attract donors and try to qualify for historic funding. She said all the stakeholders need to be at the table to make a joint decision.

Ms. Gelin said they don't currently own the buildings. She said the City or CRA has never taken or accepted property and then declared that property historic as it can often lead to litigation. She noted to remain mindful that the School Board is a partner of the City. She suggested the Commission could consider designating a group of individuals and tasking to make recommendations for use of the properties. She noted to bring the buildings to code will be a huge expense.

Vice Chair Gray agreed with Ms. Gelin's recommendation. She asked Mr. Sanchez whether the School Board would still consider historic preservation of the buildings even if the City did not take them over.

Mr. Sanchez responded yes. He said they have no plans to demolish the buildings and said they would remain as is until a solution is determined.

Vice Chair Gray expressed concerns about the maintenance of the large buildings. She believes the School Board will preserve the buildings without an expense to the City.

Mr. Moore said specific considerations and recommendations will be brought to the City Commission.

Commissioner Petrolia said if there is not an interest in the buildings within the time constraints, that they work with the School Board members on the preservation to secure grant funding.

Commissioner Boylston stated he is 100% behind the City taking ownership of the buildings.

Commissioner Petrolia noted if the decision comes down to the entire lot vs. Buildings 1 and 12, she would pick Buildings 1 and 12 and let Building 2 go.

Chair Johnson said to Mr. Moore that it is a great challenge but acknowledged the deep history.

5. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Renee Jadusingh, Executive Director

Shirley Ervin Johnson, Board Chair