



CRA Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 4, 2019 – 3:00 p.m.
City Commission Chambers – 100 NW 1st Avenue
Delray Beach, FL 33444

STAFF PRESENT:

Jeff Costello	Joan Goodrich	Patrick McCullum
Renee Jadusingh	Lori Hayward	Elizabeth Burrows

OTHERS PRESENT:

Price Battanton	Angela Campbell	Joan Greenberg	Caryn-Gardner Young
David Tolces			

1. Call to Order

Chair Petrolia called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Shelly Petrolia, Vice Chair Shirley Johnson, Deputy Vice Chair Angie Gray, Commissioner Adam Frankel, and Commissioner Ryan Boylston.

Treasurer Bathurst attended via telephone.

3. Public Comment

Price Battanton, 20 Tamrin Road, said his experiences with Executive Director Jeff Costello have been that he is a consummate professional. He stated he hoped the relationship with Mr. Costello ended on a positive note.

Dorothy Ellington, Delray Housing Group, stated she and Mr. Costello started at the same time in City Hall almost 30 years ago, and she hates to see him go. She wished him well.

George Long, 46 N. Swinton Ave., said Mr. Costello has considerable institutional knowledge, and that should be understood. He noted Mr. Costello had been helpful to him on several occasions.

4. New Business

a. Acceptance of resignation letter of the Executive Director

Board Attorney David Tolces stated the first consideration would be to accept the letter of resignation tendered by Mr. Costello on May 28 and discuss the effective date.

Motion by Deputy Vice Chair Gray, seconded by Vice Chair Johnson, to accept Mr. Costello's resignation with an effective date 30 days from the date of the letter.

Commissioner Frankel stated he felt it was important to discuss the next steps before determining the effective date. He said Mr. Costello has offered 90 days.

Mr. Costello stated staff is in place to carry forward, and he hopes the Board will look within to fill the position.

Commissioner Frankel asked that Assistant Director Renee Jadusingh share her preference regarding the timeline required to get her up to speed.

Ms. Jadusingh stated Mr. Costello has been preparing her, as they work hand-in-hand on most projects, and she felt 30 days would be ample time.

Commissioner Boylston stated Mr. Costello could fill any amount of time, and then a plan could be discussed to fit that time.

Mr. Costello stated based on the discussion, he would amend his letter to tender his resignation as of June 28.

Motion by Deputy Vice Chair Gray, seconded by Vice Chair Johnson, to accept Mr. Costello's resignation with an effective date 30 days from the date of the letter. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (7-0).

b. Discussion – Potential appointment of successor Executive Director

Chair Petrolia explained the options available to the Board moving forward, including appointment of a successor, naming an interim, or going out for RFP.

Mr. Tolces stated the agenda was set up for discussion only, and the item would be put on the next agenda for a vote.

Commissioner Boylston stated it made sense to him for Ms. Jadusingh to serve as the Interim Executive Director. He said moving forward, he would like to discuss making the position a City Manager hire as is the case in other communities.

In response to a question from Deputy Vice Chair Gray, Commissioner Boylston clarified he would recommend hiring for the position and inviting Ms. Jadusingh to apply.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated she would like to appoint Ms. Jadusingh to the position and not go out to hire. She said Ms. Jadusingh has proven herself in the position and has also worked in other municipalities with worse issues than the Delray Beach CRA.

Vice Chair Johnson stated she has been very impressed with Ms. Jadusingh since she first met her, long before the Board took over the CRA. She shared a story regarding a project Ms. Jadusingh handled in her previous position, and said the residents are very happy with Ms. Jadusingh.

Continuing, Vice Chair Johnson said she agreed that Ms. Jadusingh should be hired to fill the position, rather than spending money looking for a hire.

Commissioner Brinson stated Ms. Jadusingh is passionate about bringing the community together, and said she works from the heart.

Commissioner Frankel stated he would be in agreement, noting other recent promotions came from within. He said he expected Ms. Jadusingh would be a superstar.

Commissioner Bathurst thanked Mr. Costello for his service. He said his first thought would be to do the same as with the City Manager and follow a process to see who else is out there. Commissioner Bathurst stated he thought Ms. Jadusingh is an excellent candidate for the position, but he was considering a process to move forward.

Chair Petrolia stated she would recommend a compromise, with a four-month interim appointment to see how things are going before making a decision. She noted this is how the Assistant City Attorney position was handled, and that her recommendation would be that a search would not be initiated during the interim period.

Commissioner Boylston stated he was more comfortable with that recommendation.

Commissioner Bathurst stated he agreed.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray said she would not be supportive of that recommendation, as she wouldn't want to go through that process if it were her.

Vice Chair Johnson said she would like to add that Ms. Jadusingh has already been on trial for the year that she has been on staff. She noted she would like to see the chain of command worked through for the time Mr. Costello remains in place.

Mr. Costello stated he and Ms. Jadusingh had already discussed the interim period, and she had been brought on with succession planning in mind. He said he would be in place to assist with the transition.

Mr. Tolces said regardless of the title that was decided upon, a contract would be required. He noted a contract similar to Mr. Costello's would be brought forward at the next meeting. Mr. Tolces recommended each Commissioner meet with Ms. Jadusingh prior to that meeting.

Vice Chair Johnson asked for clarification on Commissioner Boylston's recommendation to put the CRA Director under the purview of the City Manager.

Commissioner Boylston stated the move would be with the intent to minimize politics within the position, noting the position is treated like a department head in other cities. He said the position would be accountable to the City Manager rather than the Board.

Vice Chair Johnson stated she would be against that plan. She said she thought the CRA should be autonomous, and the Board has made great progress.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated she would not be in favor of a plan to put the Executive Director under the City Manager. She said she thinks there are a lot of issues on the City level as it is, and the change would give too much control.

Commissioner Brinson asked for clarification on the recommendation.

Chair Petrolia clarified the discussion was regarding changing the position of Executive Director to that of a department head under the City Manager.

Commissioner Boylston said he was simply opening discussion on the topic, noting some cities have gone this way to allow the Executive Director to focus on their job rather than having to worry about counting votes. Commissioner Boylston referenced Mr. Costello's recent review, noting the Board was not on the same page.

Commissioner Brinson stated the Board has not been on the same page about a lot of things but agrees to disagree.

Commissioner Boylston stated it would be difficult to do a job when the employee is receiving seven very different reviews, so he was just throwing the idea out.

Continuing, Commissioner Boylston said this discussion is like what happened a year ago, when the City Commission looked at other cities and saw that the City Commissioners sit as the CRA Board in other cities, so changes were made.

Chair Petrolia stated she understood the discussion but felt the review piece was a very small part of the picture. She noted a change would be less about the review process and more about management efficiency. She stated she understands independence is a concern, but ultimately the City Manager would be responsible for getting things done.

Commissioner Bathurst said he would be open to discussing the reporting structure in the future, but felt it was a separate issue from moving forward with the Executive Director position at this time.

Vice Chair Johnson stated the Board members all have different perspectives, and as they have gotten to know the CRA, those perspectives have changed and developed. She noted she has developed her opinion of the Executive Director through meetings with staff members.

Chair Petrolia asked if there was a consensus to move forward with discussing the organizational chart at the next meeting and found that there was not.

Commissioner Frankel thanked Mr. Costello for his handling of a tough job with class. He said he appreciates the time and effort that was put in and said at times he felt he was kicked more than he should have.

Commissioner Boylston stated he had quite a few people call him in the past week, providing positive information regarding Mr. Costello's accessibility and his promptness in responding to emails and calls. He said he has always appreciated this and knows others do, as well.

Vice Chair Johnson commended Mr. Costello for his accomplishments in the five years he has served as Executive Director and thanked him for bringing Ms. Jadusingh on board. She stated the CRA is at a place where some heavy lifting is required, and she will be in a position to handle these situations.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray thanked Mr. Costello for his service and said she knows his heart was in it.

Commissioner Brinson stated she wishes Mr. Costello all the best.

Chair Petrolia stated Mr. Costello will be at the next meeting and said he has been nothing but a consummate professional, going well beyond what she would expect. She said he has worked to change and move with the Board, and she appreciated his time, effort, and heart. She noted there would be additional opportunities to speak in the next weeks.

Mr. Costello thanked the Board for their goals and vision, and said he was proud of the accomplishments of the CRA over the past 12 years he has served with it. He said foundations are laid, an excellent team is in place, and he is looking forward to a new opportunity to have an impact.

5. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Renee Jadusingh, Executive Director

Shelly Petrolia, Board Chair