



CRA Board Workshop Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 25, 2021 – 2:00 p.m.  
Arts Warehouse  
Delray Beach, FL 33444

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Renee Jadusingh	Tracy Waterlander	Ivan Cabrera
Christine Tibbs	Kim Phan	Rob Massi
Nikki Temple	Lori Hayward	

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

DJ Doody	Jason Spiegel	Ali Levin
Carol Howard	Annetta Jenkins	Crystal Spears
Reg Hoskins		

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

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

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion** by Commissioner Petrolia, seconded by Commissioner Boylston, to approve the agenda as presented. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed (7-0).

**4. PowerPoint Presentation for May Workshop Meeting (informational purposes only)**

CRA Executive Director Renee Jadusingh explained the May Workshop *PowerPoint* presentation was included with the meeting backup materials for information only.

Ms. Jadusingh asked that a moment of silence be observed in honor of George Floyd on the one (1) year anniversary of his death.

## 4. Discussion

### a. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Draft Budget Review

Ms. Jadusingh introduced the discussion on the CRA's preliminary work plan and budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. She explained the budget would be adopted in September. Ms. Jadusingh shared a *PowerPoint* slide depicting spending by project and by subarea between 2012 and 2020. She noted that the audit of Fiscal Year 2020 had recently been completed, and the total spent on projects was \$14,744,191. She pointed out that may have been the largest annual amount allocated to projects ever.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the discussion would start by subject. She reviewed a brief budget roadmap for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, including:

- CRA Managed Redevelopment Projects
  - CRA 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Activation
  - NW Atlantic Avenue Redevelopment Projects
  - Affordable Housing Initiatives
- CRA Grant Funding Programs (not including A-GUIDE)
- CRA Programs
  - Arts Warehouse
  - Green Market
- City Funding Requests for Services and Programs within the CRA District
  - Clean and Safe Program
  - Contractual Services
  - Community Maintenance and Beautification
  - Capital Improvement Projects
  - Tennis Sponsorship
  - Transportation Related Services

#### CRA Managed Redevelopment Projects

Ms. Jadusingh stated the plan included continuing redevelopment of the affordable commercial space on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, including \$1.5 million for 98 NW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and \$2 million for 95 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. She provided a brief status update on the two (2) projects and noted funding in the coming year would be for construction. Ms. Jadusingh stated the CRA had recently gone through a competitive bidding process for an architectural firm to design small offices in the NW 600 block and noted that staff was recommending starting to put aside funds for construction of the project. She added that the architect would be presenting at the June meeting.

Continuing, Ms. Jadusingh explained that in the current fiscal year, staff had started to explore temporary uses of the NW 800 block, such as a container park. She updated on the remediation process and stated a conceptual process was ongoing to determine what was feasible on the site. She stated that depending on how the assessment comes back, work in Fiscal Year 2021-22 could include site work preparation, container bidding, marketing, and vendor recruitment.

Ms. Jadusingh noted the CRA had recently approved contract with Pulte Homes to develop 20 single-family homes at Carver Square, and that project would continue into the next fiscal year. She stated the project was at no cost to the CRA.

### **CRA Grant Funding Programs**

Ms. Jadusingh outlined the CRA grant programs, not including the A-GUIDE, including:

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

Ms. Jadusingh reviewed the spending for the grant programs, including:

- Fiscal Year 2019-2020
  - \$442,124.93 awarded
  - \$128,210 expended
- Fiscal Year 2020-2021
  - \$850,000 budgeted
  - \$162,453.44 actual awarded to date
  - \$528,215.44 projected awards based on applications
- Fiscal Year 2021-2022
  - To be Determined

Ms. Jadusingh explained a Workshop to review the A-GUIDE funding requests would be held in the near future.

### **CRA Programs**

Ms. Jadusingh noted that programming at the Arts Warehouse had halted because of COVID-19, but plans were in the works to get back into encouraging community growth and empowerment through engagements with local artists, residents, and community members. She stated programs would include art exhibitions, education and outreach, special events, resident artist studio programs, special event partnerships, and facility rentals for private and corporate use. She discussed ways staff looked to increase multicultural efforts.

Continuing, Ms. Jadusingh stated there would be a future discussion about the Green Market location for Fiscal Year 2021-22.

### **City Funding**

Ms. Jadusingh explained funding requests from the City were due by May 31. She briefly reviewed the list of programs the CRA funds through the City, and then discussed typical

funding for each of the programs, noting the line items were subject to change based on the request received.

Ms. Jadusingh pointed out that while the requests were not yet submitted, staff could anticipate requests for ongoing Capital Improvement Projects, including:

- Pompey Park Construction Documents
- Osceola Park Neighborhood Improvements Phase 1 and 2
- NE 3<sup>rd</sup> Street/Avenue Improvements
- SW 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW 6<sup>th</sup> Street, SW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Court Neighborhood Improvements

Continuing, Ms. Jadusingh discussed preliminary cost estimates for the Pompey Park project. She stated the CRA had started to put aside funds since the total amount was so large. She noted the phasing was supposed to start in 2023 and reviewed the estimate, including:

- Phase 1A (12-18 months)
  - New Community Center
    - \$13,000,000
- Phase 1B (6-8 months)
  - Aquatics – new family and lap pools
  - New parking lot
  - New plaza
  - Drainage
    - \$4,000,000
- Phase 2 (6 months)
  - New sports fields
  - Courts
  - Other amenities
    - \$6,000,000
- Estimated Total: \$23,000,000

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked if Pompey Park had to be done in the phases as listed, and the order presented.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that she would have to check with City staff, this was just the breakdown that was provided.

Ms. Jadusingh reviewed the history of funding provided by the CRA for the Tennis Tournament. She stated the request had not yet been received, but was anticipated to be \$905,000, which had been the request the past three (3) years.

Continuing, Ms. Jadusingh explained the wayfinding signage project would still likely be in the fabrication and installation phase. She noted the CRA had approved designs and had been working with City staff on implementation strategy. She stated that funding for the fabrication and installation was included with an Interlocal Agreement in April. Ms. Jadusingh added that the City was looking at how to incorporate signs outside the CRA District. She explained there



was also an approval process with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) which needed to go forward to install the gateway.

Commissioner Petrolia asked for clarification on the location of the gateway sign, and whether the City making gateway signs in other areas would be part of the conversation.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the location of the gateway sign to be funded by the CRA, which would replace the sign just north of George Bush on Highway 1.

Commissioner Petrolia responded that if there were other signs outside the CRA needing replaced, she hoped the City was listening and would incorporate that into the conversation. She asserted that it would be better to do it all in one fell swoop rather than piecemeal.

Ms. Jadusingh asked CRA Redevelopment Manager Ivan Cabrera the average cost per sign.

Mr. Cabrera stated each sign was \$7-9,000.

Ms. Jadusingh noted the gateway signs were larger and had a higher cost.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated the project was overdue and asked if trying to coordinate with the City to do all the signs at the same time would delay the project further.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that she was hoping the City would be able to find the money. She stated she thought it would all have to go forward at the same time, but maybe it could be phased, with the CRA phase starting this fiscal year and the other signs starting next fiscal year.

### **Transportation**

Ms. Jadusingh discussed transportation related budget items, noting that the will of the Board during past conversations was for the City to take over and manage the point-to-point Freebee contract at the end of current agreement. She explained the service agreement started June 25, 2019 and expires on August 30, 2021 and allows for one (1) more option to renew for an additional year. She noted the cost with advertising was \$401,559.96.

Continuing, Ms. Jadusingh reviewed options for the point-to-point transportation program, including:

- Option 1: CRA renews current service agreement with Freebee until August 2022 and includes funding for the service in the FY 2021-22 budget.
- Option 2: CRA terminates the service agreement with Freebee in August 2021.
- Option 3: CRA terminates the service agreement with Freebee in August 2021 and provides funding to the City of Delray Beach for comparable service.

Commissioner Casale asked how much the app was getting used.

Mr. Cabrera reported briefly on ridership and demand. He stated Freebee continued to be a great asset for the community, with growth month to month. He noted that even with COVID-

19 protocols in place, Freebee had transported over 15,000 passengers in March and April, which was higher than pre-pandemic numbers. He shared statistics on the total passengers, completed rides, total requests, completed requests, and average wait time from September 2019 through April 2021.

Continuing, Mr. Cabrera reviewed an analysis of the extended service area. Highlights included 10 times growth in the Lake Ida area, showing more locals using the service, and three (3) times growth in the A1A area. He noted that as of April 2021, the expanded service area accounts for 6.5 percent of overall ridership and continued growth was projected.

Mr. Cabrera stated the CRA had received 35 emails asking that the Freebee be extended east of the Intracoastal, specifically to Seagate Towers.

Commissioner Casale asked if there was a way to charge a minimal fee through the app. She stated she was not thinking of anything like Uber, but something small to cover part of the expense of the service.

Jason Spiegel with Freebee responded that anything was possible, they could definitely incorporate that if it was the direction of the Board. He asserted they do not want to deter people from using the service because the goal was getting people out of their cars, but at the same time he was not sure what type of revenue would be generated. He stated Delray Beach was the highest ridership of the 20 locations Freebee operates to date, including places throughout south Florida.

Mr. Spiegel added that there was an economic development component, as the businesses were really benefitting from this type of service.

Chair Johnson asked for clarification on the area that was added.

Mr. Cabrera stated that the original area was the CRA District except where the speed limit exceeds 35 miles per hour, which is restricted by Florida Statute. He explained that the area was then expanded based on feedback from the community and Board direction to include the Lake Ida neighborhood.

Chair Johnson asked if the service was being used by a lot of tourists who went to the beach and then wanted to get back to their hotels without having to walk.

Mr. Cabrera stated there was some demand for that. He referenced the ridership numbers.

Chair Johnson clarified that the area was still within the CRA District west of I-95.

Mr. Cabrera confirmed this was correct. He noted the Florida Statute did not allow the service to cross I-95.

Chair Johnson asked if there was an increase in use by senior citizens.

Mr. Cabrera stated that was a good question, but he would have to request the information, as the data was not currently broken down by age.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked for clarification as to whether they were discussing Lake Ida Road or the Lake Ida neighborhood.

Mr. Cabrera explained the previous limitation was Lake Ida Road, but it was expanded north.

Commissioner Frankel stated he was amazed to hear that Delray Beach was the highest ridership. He noted that he would look to expand it, not end the service, and asked how much of a cost savings to the City and the CRA the advertising represented.

Mr. Cabrera responded that the savings was \$180,000 per year.

Commissioner Frankel asked if it was possible that an expanded service could pay for itself with advertising. He stated he liked that people were being picked up, then spending money in the local restaurants and businesses. He noted that it was economic development, as it was intended to be, unlike some previous modes of transportation.

Mr. Spiegel agreed that was an important point. He stated when someone jumps into a Freebee, their money is kept local, whereas if they jump in their car, they can go anywhere. He responded to the advertising question briefly and noted that during the pandemic Freebee had met the guaranteed minimum even though there was not advertising income. He stated that now that we are coming out of the pandemic, more businesses want to advertise, and he thinks the cost will be lowered further.

Commissioner Frankel stated it might be interesting to see what could be done if they expand the service going into the summer season.

Mr. Spiegel pointed out the advertisers were all local businesses.

Commissioner Frankel added that the wraps were tasteful and artistic, and looked great.

Chair Johnson stated that the City was fearful the CRA would drop the Freebee and leave them to take it on. She asserted it was an issue the City Commissioners might want to discuss.

Commissioner Frankel noted that he was not talking about expanding the area, but the number of physical cars on the road.

Chair Johnson asked if it was going to be a benefit, why not have it be a benefit to the City, as opposed to the CRA footing the entire bill. She suggested maybe subsidizing the CRA areas and incorporating City areas. She noted they did not want to get into any statute limitations by going outside the CRA District.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated she knew they had this discussion every year, but the City used to take care of transportation, and somehow the CRA had gotten the responsibility over the years. She asserted paying for transportation takes away from things the CRA should be doing to remove slum and blight.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated that they have repeatedly discussed that it should be with the City. She noted additional money would be needed if the CRA expanded the service and stated

that the Board should be looking at giving it back to the City to handle. She added that the City also had a larger department to handle maintenance and similar issues.

Chair Johnson stated that the data would be presented to the City, and noted that with the data Mr. Cabrera had presented, the City might recognize that the service is a goldmine and was not just for the CRA District.

Commissioner Boylston stated that the CRA could work with the City to expand the program. He asserted that he was in favor of using tax dollars to fund transportation, and economic development was definitely within the mission of the CRA, along with slum and blight. He noted the Freebee gets people to jobs, not just to dinner.

Continuing, Commissioner Boylston added that for any expansion of the program, whether it was the service area or the addition of cars, he would like to see the City come to the table. He stated that in his opinion, the CRA was putting the program in place, and it was the City's responsibility to come in and expand the program through an Interlocal Agreement.

Commissioner Petrolia stated that she agrees with her colleagues about the program and sees Freebees every day throughout the Southwest community. She asserted that the change had really made a positive difference. She stated she agreed that because Delray Beach is one (1) of the heavier usage communities that they should consider expansion, and that should not be the CRA responsibility.

Continuing, Commissioner Petrolia stated with increased calls, the average wait time would also increase. She noted that if they do not increase the number of cars on the streets, they would see more frustration due to people waiting. She added that she was open to discussion on the City versus CRA expenditure.

Commissioner Casale stated that she was in agreement that the City should be funding the program. She asked if there was more information about how many of the riders were tourists and asked for clarification on the rides requested but not completed.

Mr. Spiegel explained the process that occurs when someone requests a ride. He noted that if they are not willing to wait the time frame given, they will cancel and take other transportation. He added that he had done a report on local versus tourist use and it was majority local use.

Commissioner Petrolia stated that if the CRA were to look at a nominal fee, the number of passengers would put a fairly big dent in the cost, however she was not sure it would be the right thing to do because it would become more complex. She noted there was an opportunity there to keep in the back of their minds, though.

Chair Johnson added that a fee also might reduce ridership, because for some riders even \$1 would be prohibitive. She thanked staff for the data and stated now that it is a success, they should consider handing it to the City to do something better with it.

Ms. Jadusingh stated that the expanded area was intended to be a pilot to bring people into the CRA District. She noted that there needed to be a discussion, perhaps at the June meeting, about what to do next. She stated that there were funds in the budget to take on an extension

of the contract if that was the will of the Board, and that would give the City time to determine what to do.

Chair Johnson asked for clarification on the dates.

Ms. Jadusingh explained that a one (1) year extension of the contract would put them into August 2022.

Chair Johnson stated there was also an opportunity for the City to gauge the vital uses of the service and modify it. She asserted this was an item that could be turned over to the City.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated it would be crazy if the City needed another year to budget for the program.

Ms. Jadusingh stated she would put the item on the June CRA agenda, and in the meantime would speak with City staff.

### **Budget Discussion**

Ms. Jadusingh asked if there was discussion on the budget presentation.

Commissioner Petrolia stated she had questions on the grant section. She noted the difference between the budgeted and projected amount used and asked if there were plans for those unused funds.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that there was not a plan yet, but she had been talking with CRA Financial Director Lori Hayward about bringing back another budget amendment to shift funds as needed. She stated Pompey Park and 98 NW 5<sup>th</sup> would both need additional funds.

Commissioner Petrolia stated that she was going to recommend that the CRA not lose sight of the large project in front of them. She added that she was not certain why it would take until 2023 just to get to a point where Pompey Park was in the construction phase.

Continuing, Commissioner Petrolia responded to a question from earlier in the meeting regarding the order of projects planned at Pompey Park. She explained there was a definite reason for the order, which started with the Community Center because the old Community Center could remain standing while the new was built. She stated that would allow for moving to the new center before continuing with the next phases of construction. Commissioner Petrolia asserted she was not sure the order could be done in reverse because of the locations of the aquatic center and other outdoor elements.

Commissioner Petrolia asked if getting additional money into the Pompey Park fund sooner would help the City to break ground sooner. She stated she would like to see more done in a shorter time if possible.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that the design contract was recently awarded, and she would have to speak with City staff to see if things could be moved faster. She stated that she thought the CRA could budget half or more of the project cost in Fiscal Year 2021-22, they might be able to

commit as soon as next year. She stated she knew the design work was moving forward as quickly as it could.

Chair Johnson asserted what was most important was that the CRA keep their eyes on the money, because it was being discussed in 2019, and suddenly after COVID-19, the money was not there.

Ms. Jadusingh clarified that the money was always there. She noted the first part of the project was the construction design, which the CRA had funded. She stated that right now there is \$4 million in the budget for Pompey Park, some of which was going to the intermediary repairs which are happening now.

Chair Johnson stated that her perception was that the money was not there and asked if the actual problem was that the work was not being done.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the process the design documents had gone through, including the bid, time in the Purchasing Department, and bid award.

Chair Johnson stated it was just her wanting to have it done yesterday, and her perception of how long these things take was a little skewed.

Commissioner Petrolia asked if there was any potential to look for matching fund grants or other funds to support the large build. She stated now would be the time to do that in order to expand the pool of available funds later.

Commissioner Petrolia asked for clarification on where the Community Maintenance and Beautification funds to the City goes.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the funds went into the Curb Appeal program administered by the Neighborhood Services Department of the City. She outlined the process briefly.

Commissioner Petrolia stated there was a time when going downtown you would see a bright pop of color from annuals in the CRA District, but she does not see that so much anymore. She asserted that maybe the CRA could use the streetscape fund to help those streets they are trying to spruce up, as they needed to do better about that. She asserted that it makes a huge difference when trying to invite business into an area.

Ms. Jadusingh explained the streetscape was to maintain improvements the CRA had done and noted that what Commissioner Petrolia was referencing was more the Clean and Safe District. She provided a brief history of the fund and stated she could speak with City staff about using some of the funds for that pop of color.

Commissioner Petrolia asked if the CRA tells the City what they are looking for when contracting with them.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that generally the City would let the CRA know what they needed.

Commissioner Petrolia asked who to talk to in order to make the improvement.

Ms. Jadusingh stated she would speak to Neighborhood Services.

Chair Johnson expressed concern regarding the cleanliness of the City and aggressive panhandling. She stated that there was a desire to have a clean City, but they were far from it, and maybe there needed to be a workshop with the City regarding the Clean and Safe program. She added that the garage and sidewalks were awful.

Ms. Jadusingh discussed the CRA contribution to maintenance of the garage and stated that she could invite City staff to the June meeting if that was the direction of the Board.

Commissioner Frankel stated the elevator in the Federspiel Garage still was not operational. He noted it was his annual reminder that the elevator never works. He asserted that he had no idea why it did not work, and stated he hoped Ms. Jadusingh could have better luck.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray thanked the others for bringing up the Pompey Park project. She stated a few years ago, she and Ms. Jadusingh and former CRA Commissioner Pamela Brinson had gone to Tallahassee to lobby for dollars, and since that time the City had asked their lobbyist to help in trying to get funding. She asked for an update, and said if there was not funding coming, they should discuss considering debt services or grants.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that Pompey Park was in the City's request to the State, but she would have to check in with City staff for an update. She noted that CRA Grants Manager Alexina Jeannite was always looking for grants for different categories. She stated there were more projects, so at some point there would need to be discussion about a strategy to get those funded.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated a few years ago, seven (7) portables were donated to Catherine Strong Park. She reviewed groups that had used the portables over time, but in the past two (2) years Parks and Recreation had shut them down because they were a wreck. She asserted that as a result, those nonprofits did not have anywhere to go, and to her it was sinful that the donation was not taken care of. She asked if staff could look at what needed to be done to get those portables back up and available for use.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that if the item was something the Board wanted to include in the budget, she could look into what the cost would be. She stated she did not know the condition.

Chair Johnson stated she did not think the portables were fixable. She noted that she had been told the occupants could no longer occupy them, and once those units were allowed to deteriorate, it was not something you would want to put money into.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked if Chair Johnson had been inside the portables.

Chair Johnson stated she had not seen the interior, but the outside lets her know that if there is rain or rodents, it is not reclaimable and it would be demolition by neglect. She asserted that there were opportunities for facilities for those displaced organizations and a park for the Southwest neighborhood. Chair Johnson stated that she thought they should look at removing those trailers, if it was within the CRA's jurisdiction, because if she lived in that neighborhood, she would be pounding on the podium each time she could about them.



Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated that the portables were donated to the City.

Chair Johnson responded that they could try to reduce slum and blight, but if they are the source of it, she thought they were defeating their own purpose. She stated that was an underserved community in her opinion and should have pocket parks and thought the CRA should be working with the City to make sure that all resources were maximized. She thanked Deputy Vice Chair Gray for bringing the matter to the Board's attention.

Commissioner Casale stated the students at Atlantic High School could not use the pool at Pompey Park because it was not large enough. She asserted that they should make sure the next pool was large enough for the students to use. She noted she had spoken with the Atlantic High School swim coach and it was unfortunate that students without resources were unable to participate on the swim team because swimmers were responsible for their own transportation to practices in Boca Raton.

Continuing, Commissioner Casale stated she wanted to acknowledge the accomplishments of the CRA. She asserted it was remarkable impressive that in Fiscal Year 2020-21, the CRA had spent over \$14 million, almost double what was spent the year before. She thanked staff.

Ms. Jadusingh thanked the Board for their support. She stated a lot of the work was much needed infrastructure.

Chair Johnson pointed to the Carver Square project and noted that while the presentation stated there was no cost the CRA, the cost of the land should be considered.

Ms. Jadusingh agreed. She noted the CRA had purchased the land and remediated it, and the development was many years in the making.

Chair Johnson reiterated that there was a cost to the CRA, and it should be acknowledged so that residents knew.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that the presentation could be updated with the information regarding acquisition and clean up.

Chair Johnson stated that staff had also done land use work prior to beginning with Pulte Homes on the project.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked for clarification on the Pompey Park discussion. She stated the project had never been fully funded, and there were questions of the Board to that effect.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that as the phases of the project came about, the CRA put funds in place. She stated that in years past there was a need for design and master planning, and the money was put in place for that, then the need was for the construction documents, and the CRA put up money for that phase. She asserted the CRA had been very responsive as the needs have come up to put funding in the budget and noted that while all of the funding is not in place yet, it is the first go-to when there are additional funds to allocate.



Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated there were people in the community saying the project was fully funded and she wanted to clear the record by noting that the CRA had been funding the phases for the past three (3) years.

Chair Johnson stated there always appears to her to be a disconnect, noting that the City had a Pompey Park workshop, but she did not believe the CRA was asked any questions regarding their part. She asserted that was a disservice, because the City Commission did not get a full picture of beginning to end. She said it would be nice to have a workshop where all parties involved could contribute to the conversation.

Commissioner Casale asked for clarification on the increase in support for the tennis tournament which had taken place in Fiscal Year 2017-18.

CRA Financial Director Lori Hayward stated that prior to that time, that was how much the CRA Board wanted to fund, but in 2017-18 the City asked for a one (1) time increase to cover shortfalls in the budget. She stated in 2016-17 the amount was half, and the City and CRA were co-sponsors, and she believed that amount was the intent.

Chair Johnson responded that she thought the tennis tournament was another item to be worked out between the City and CRA.

Commissioner Brooks stated he was very excited about the Pompey Park project after visiting the fields for a workout and seeing how nice they could be. He noted he was looking forward to a pool that could accommodate all of the kids, even those at Atlantic High School. He added that it was a great opportunity.

#### **b. Delray Beach Community Development Corporation Updates**

Ali Levin, Community Development Corporation (CDC) Acting Executive Director, presented a brief history of the CDC and an update on the program. She explained the program was created in the 1960s to revitalize neighborhoods, and now there are approximately 4,000 CDCs across the United States. She discussed the relationship with the community and stated the program had been in Delray Beach since 1992 and after a hiatus, was becoming increasingly active.

Ms. Levin shared some examples of the more than 300 homes built by the CDC. She stated that Board President Yvonne Odom had recently put together a new Board to reestablish in the community to meet the growing needs. She shared a *PowerPoint* slide outlining the members of the team and their roles.

Annetta Jenkins, CDC Consultant, spoke briefly about the history of the relationship between the CDC and the CRA, including partnering on the original Atlantic Grove project, which she said won awards on the State and National level and continues to be a fine example of mixed-use development.

Ms. Jenkins shared a map of the focus areas of the CDC, including previously red-lined areas of the community. She discussed the opportunities around correctly valuing communities and

stated there was much more work to be done in the neighborhoods. Ms. Jenkins reviewed the goals of the CDC, including:

- Improve opportunities for home ownership
- Improve the neighborhood housing quality
- Encourage business development
- Stimulate financial investment
- Create and retain jobs

Ms. Jenkins discussed the value of residents having a stake in their community. She discussed programs of the CDC, including:

- Homeownership Program
- Homebuyer's Club
- Repair and Restore Program
- Affordable Rentals and Rent-to-Buy Program
- Financial Capability Workshops
- Workforce Development

Ms. Jenkins discussed next steps for the CDC and invited the CRA to sit in on their upcoming strategic planning session. She stated the CDC was committed to having a best practice organization with the capacity, technical ability, and connection to resources to support Delray Beach once again.

Commissioner Casale pointed out the number of things the CDC had accomplished in its early days and asked the reason the organization had taken a hiatus.

Ms. Jenkins responded that like a lot of nonprofits, the CDC took a hard hit through the recession. She stated they continued operation and remained in good standing with the State and IRS but did not have much real estate development happening. She commented on locating resources to provide for housing opportunities and needs in Delray Beach. She stated she hoped the CDC could come again, as they are interested in collaboration with the CRA.

### **c. Habitat for Humanity Updates**

Crystal Spears, Director of Neighborhood Revitalization with Habitat for Humanity, presented an overview of the program, along with Reg Hoskins, Chief Financial Officer. She explained the Habitat for Humanity mission, vision, and principles, and discussed how the program works and its qualification process.

Ms. Spears stated Habitat for Humanity South Palm Beach, which covers Boca Raton, Delray Beach, and Boynton Beach, had built and sold 155 homes since 1981. She noted 57 homes had been built in Delray Beach, with two (2) future builds in process.

Continuing, Ms. Spears reviewed affordable housing challenges the community is facing, including difficulty in land acquisition, rising costs, and income instability. She shared photos of past projects.

Ms. Spears discussed the Neighborhood Revitalization program, a holistic approach that expands Habitat for Humanity's traditional partnership with new homeowners and volunteers to make a larger impact in the communities served. She explained the reach, including:

- A Brush with Kindness: Exterior maintenance for homes (i.e. pressure clean, prime and painting, landscaping)
- Critical Repair: projects that ensure safety of homeowners (i.e. roofs, impact windows, doors, air conditioner, water heater)
- Community Asset Projects: Sims Center, Boys & Girls Club, Wayne Parton Center, YMCA, Florence Fuller Center
- Platform for Veterans Build and Rock the Block: mass transformation projects
- Safe at Home: Aging in place program
- Mass Volunteer Engagement

Ms. Spears provided a history of the Neighborhood Revitalization program in the area, noting that 313 projects had been completed since 2011 in eight (8) focused neighborhoods. She expanded on the Aging in Place program, noting the initial steps begin with a home repair evaluation by a Certified Aging in Place Specialist. She shared photos of past projects.

Ms. Jadusingh added that this year for Rock the Block, CRA has been in conversation with Habitat for Humanity and the City's Neighborhood Services Department about focusing the project on the Southwest Neighborhood where construction is taking place.

Commissioner Boylston asked Ms. Spears to discuss some of the advantages of partnering with Habitat for Humanity on their programs.

Ms. Spears discussed income guidelines, qualifications, and the collaborative effort of working with Habitat for Humanity.

Commissioner Petrolia commented on residents having issues with nails in their tires in the area around Corey Jones Isle and other construction sites. She asked staff if there was anything the CRA could do to offer assistance.

Chair Johnson stated that in comparing the three (3) organizations, her main concern was that when organizations are assisting residents with knowledge of what is required to own a home. She stated that one (1) of the great assets of the Community Land Trust (CLT) is to prepare the homeowners, but she did not see that in the CDC or Habitat for Humanity presentations.

Ms. Spears explained Habitat for Humanity owners have to do 300 hours of sweat equity, where they work on the building of the home, but also twice a month they attend financial literacy classes, insurance classes, home maintenance classes, and meetings with community organizations to prepare them for long term home ownership.

Chair Johnson asked if she was correct in believing that Habitat for Humanity was not available to support owners who ran into trouble.

Ms. Spears stated that she stays in contact after the fact and the organization offers owners a variety of resources to connect those struggling to the proper avenue for support.

Ms. Jenkins responded that Chair Johnson made an excellent point. She stated that it goes to the heart of what CDCs do, focusing on affordable housing with a commitment to building community. She noted that a premier program of the CDC was development of a Homebuyers Club to take people through a lengthy process with 10-12 formal classes to learn financial literacy and what it takes to be a homeowner.

Continuing, Ms. Jenkins stated it was about more than just getting into a home, but how to become part of the community, to volunteer and become civically engaged, register to vote, help neighbors when they need it, and get involved with the schools. Ms. Jenkins noted that the CDC members were residents of the community and open to partnerships. She stated you cannot raise expectations in the community unless you collaborate.

Ms. Levin added that in the 1990s, the Delray Beach CDC also had a buy-back program, following the buyers to work with the homeowners to keep homes from going through the foreclosure process.

Chair Johnson expressed concern that COVID-19 had put extreme pressure on this type of housing unit, and people wanted to relocate to South Florida. She asked if there were restrictions regarding walking away from the program.

Ms. Jenkins responded that traditionally housing developed through the CDC utilizes restrictive covenants. She acknowledged gentrification pressures, especially close to the water, and stated that she speaks to residents regarding the difference between a piece of real estate and a community. She discussed efforts to restrict properties long term.


Chair Johnson asked if the CDC had first rights to repurchase.

Ms. Jenkins stated that they did.

Chair Johnson stated that the programs were doing wonderful things for the residents, but sometimes the dollar figure looks really good and everything that you have worked for goes down the drain. She added that she was surprised no one discussed reverse mortgages, because in her interactions with the community she was shocked to learn how many senior citizens had gone to a reverse mortgage.

## 6. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

  
Renee Jadusingh, Executive Director

  
Shirley Ervin Johnson, Board Chair