

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
DANIA BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2020 – 5:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Lewellen called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Present:

Chair:	Lori Lewellen
Vice-Chair:	Lauren Odman
Board Members:	Chickie Brandimarte
	Bill Harris
	Tamara James
Interim Executive Director:	Kathleen Weekes
City Attorney:	Thomas Ansbro
CRA Secretary:	Thomas Schneider

2. Citizen Comments

Pastor Paul Wiggins, 215 NW 5th Avenue, noted he looks forward to meeting with the new Executive Director and CRA staff to discuss creating a business district within the CRA to bring restaurants and opportunities for professional hair salons and barbers.

3. Administrative Reports

3.1 Administrative Report

Interim Director Weekes introduced Muriel Bryan, the new Economic Development Manager, and Laura Maria Vienna, the new PATCH Market Coordinator. She reviewed the information included in the agenda packet, and addressed re-branding signage.

4. Presentations

There were no presentations on this agenda.

5. Consent Agenda

Items Removed from Consent Agenda: #5.5

5.1 Minutes:

Approve Minutes of August 21, 2020 CRA Board Virtual Special Meeting
Approve Minutes of August 25, 2020 CRA Board Virtual Meeting
Approve Minutes of September 24, 2020 CRA Board Subcommittee Virtual Meeting

5.2 Travel Requests: None

5.3 RESOLUTION NO. 2020-CRA-015

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ("CRA") OF THE CITY OF DANIA BEACH, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE PROPER CRA OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDDING WITH WEISS, SEROTA, HELFMAN, COLE & BIERMAN, P.L. TO PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES AS SPECIAL COUNSEL TO THE CRA; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; FURTHER, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

5.4 RESOLUTION NO. 2020-CRA-016

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CITY OF DANIA BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ("CRA"), AUTHORIZING THE PROPER CRA OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE PERSONAL SERVICES AGREEMENTS FOR A ONE YEAR PERIOD WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDDING FOR A FARMERS MARKET MANAGER AND FARMERS MARKET PROMOTIONS COORDINATOR IN RELATION TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ("USDA") AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICES ("AMS") GRANT AWARD FOR THE FARMERS MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM ("FMPP") IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FORTY TWO THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SIXTY SEVEN DOLLARS (\$42,167.00) AND TEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED THIRTY FIVE DOLLARS (\$10,335.00) RESPECTIVELY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; FURTHER, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Vice-Chair Odman motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, with the exception of Item #5.5; seconded by Board Member James. The motion carried unanimously.

5.5 RESOLUTION NO. 2020-CRA-017 *Amended*

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ("CRA") OF THE CITY OF DANIA BEACH, FLORIDA, RECOMMENDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE DANIA BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY'S REDEVELOPMENT PLAN TO PROVIDE GRANTS FOR RESIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO RENTAL, MORTGAGE AND UTILITY ASSISTANCE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; FURTHER, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Attorney Ansbro read the title of Resolution #2020-CRA-017.

Chair Lewellen commented the Plan has to be amended in order to do the rental assistance program. She has concerns because there is going to be a review of the entire Plan at some point when the new CRA Director comes on board, and it makes her wonder if there were other programs that were done in the past that were not in the Plan. She has asked to review programs for the last six years to make sure what we are doing is not against the law.

City Attorney Ansbro noted they are reviewing resolutions and actions taken to make sure they are consistent with the Plan that exists; they are about halfway through the process.

Chair Lewellen also has concerns with mortgage assistance being included in the program. Banks are actually deferring payments until the end of the loan. She would rather not include this with the rental assistance program and felt mortgage relief should be removed.

Interim Director Weekes explained they wanted to include mortgage assistance in the amendment to the Plan because if it is needed in the future, we would not have to do another Plan amendment. We already have revitalization and rehabilitation as part of the CRA redevelopment program and thought it would be better to strengthen the language during the update.

Chair Lewellen said she understands how the rental assistance came into existence. She wants to make sure the Interim Director works with City staff to come up with the criteria so that everyone citywide has the same criteria; something should be put together so we can approve it. The County Plan is a very detailed plan; ours needs to be looked at.

Board Member James noted she spoke with outside counsel David Tolces of Weiss Serota. If it makes it easier to say this amendment is for rental assistance and not mortgage assistance, she is fine with that. She knew all along we would have to amend the Plan; it is all legal, ethical and moral, according to our legal team. She would support items being removed from the amendment.

Vice-Chair Odman questioned what would happen when there is unused money from the \$250,000 allocation on the CRA side.

Frank DiPaolo, Director of Finance, said the funding is going into the CRA budget for that purpose. It would be up to the CRA Board and the City Commission to utilize those funds, whether they be redirected within the CRA or reallocated to the City.

Vice-Chair Odman noted she wanted to make sure that we were able to put a provision in place since she was concerned it was unusual; however, this is not a peculiar thing to do and it has been done in many other cities. It was explained to her that a disaster of this magnitude, COVID, was not anticipated and it is not unusual for the Plan to need to be amended. She agreed with Chair Lewellen that it is very necessary for the CRA and City work together on the program.

Interim Director Weekes said she has been working with the City Manager and checking with other cities to see what is possible and what is being done in Broward County.

Chair Lewellen wanted clarification if only the \$250,000 through the City would be reimbursed by the County.

Finance Director DiPaolo explained he could not confirm as additional information is still being sought. If we went through the County to administer the program, we would have to use their guidelines for the CARES Act. If we can utilize the County, it is a possibility funding would not be approved. More conversations will be held with the County to try to understand the depth of

funding reimbursement. Money is on the table and we really need to try to take advantage of it. If we do not utilize the County, either City or CRA staff would have to administer the program or contract it out.

Board Member Harris asked if we would have to hire an outside accounting firm to make sure there is no comingling of funds and the program is administrated correctly.

Finance Director DiPaolo responded the City could administer the program itself with its own staff; a program would have to be developed and duties distributed. It would make sense, however, to use a firm that has the ability to do something like this.

Board Member Harris asked if anyone knows how long the turnaround time is for all of the required documents for the CARES Act application.

Board Member James said she has been following this closely, and the first thing CRA staff did was to reach out to the County. The County said they were understaffed and would not be able to administer the program. She questioned when Finance Director DiPaolo reached out to the County.

Finance Director DiPaolo responded the Assistant City Manager spoke to the County this week.

Board Member James stated she was in favor of the County administering the program to relieve City staff; unfortunately, the County is understaffed and the City does need to set up guidelines.

Candido Sosa-Cruz, Assistant City Manager, said we are in communication with the County; we received an email that they would administer our CARES Act funding, but it has to be the same identical plan Broward County currently has in place. We are looking at whether they will administer the City funding.

Chair Lewellen questioned whether the County would administer both the CRA and the City's programs.

Assistant City Manager Sosa-Cruz responded the idea is for one agency to administer both programs; he will get a clear answer on that tomorrow.

Board Member Brandimarte said if it must be administered the same as the County, then our Plan cannot be amended.

Assistant City Manager Sosa-Cruz replied it is only for the rental assistance program.

Board Member Brandimarte said she cannot grasp that this is only for renters, and questioned what happens to the homeowners.

Chair Lewellen noted the money goes directly to the landlord to pay the rent, not to the renter.

Board Member James asked if the City has reached out to the Housing Office yet.

Assistant City Manager Sosa-Cruz said no; communication with the County has been through the Broward County City Managers Association.

Board Member James asked if it has to go through the Housing Office. She wanted to know what part the Housing Office has to do with the rental assistance program.

Chair Lewellen noted she has reached out to the Housing Authority. She understands that anyone receiving funding from a housing program, that the rent is being paid, and currently there are no evictions.

Board Member James said she is not talking about HUD, but about the Broward County Housing Office.

Board Member Harris noted he understands the big banks have been very understanding with mortgages.

Chair Lewellen said the amendment should be amended to remove mortgage assistance and a motion made for the unused money to return to the City and for the criteria guidelines.

Vice-Chair Odman suggested voting on separate motions.

Chair Lewellen suggested we start the process of CRA and City as far as criteria and wait on the amendment until everything is resolved, then bring it back.

Interim Director Weekes said the way we wrote the Plan, we worked on the elements of the Plan. We would still have to bring back to the Board the resolutions and documentation filled with the criteria. We could amend the Plan and not do mortgage or utilities; they were included in case there was a need in the future. She added this is also on the City Commission agenda tonight.

Board Member Harris said if it would work better through the County, we should do it, but people need help now and we need to expedite this. It would behoove us to do it through the County; reimbursement would be critical.

City Attorney Ansbro recommended, since we are not in a position to do mortgage or utility assistance, to amend the Plan amendment to remove that language and add the condition that unused monies would return to the City.

Board Member James said if we remove the language, we would have to come back to add it. She felt we should keep these two items in the Plan amendment, but not funded and no money allocated.

Chair Lewellen noted her concern is adjusting the Plan.

Board Member James reiterated she only wants to use the money for rental assistance, but keep the Plan amendment intact.

Board Member Harris said the issue is with the reimbursement and the funding; we should have one program citywide to expedite funding. Right now, rental assistance is key; we could start accepting applications next week. It is critical we move on this with the County.

Chair Lewellen suggested amending the Plan to just rental relief right now. If we need another program in the future, we can adjust the amendment and funding at that time. She does not know the ramifications of including it at this point. We can amend the Plan again if it is needed.

Board Member James noted she is okay with taking it out as long as the Board does not mind amending the Plan again, maybe twice in one year.

Vice Chair Odman motioned to adopt Resolution #2020-CRA-017, as amended to remove mortgage and utility assistance, and to add language that any funds remaining once the program is concluded, if they are derived from City funds, would be returned to the City; seconded by Board Member James. The motion carried on the following 5-0 Roll Call vote:

Board Member Brandimarte	Yes	Vice-Chair Odman	Yes
Board Member Harris	Yes	Chair Lewellen	Yes
Board Member James	Yes		

6. Proposals and Bids

There were no proposals on this agenda.

7. Discussion and Possible Action

There were no discussion items on this agenda.

8. Board Member Comments

Board Member Brandimarte welcomed the new members of the CRA staff.

Board Member James also welcomed the new members of the CRA staff.

Vice-Chair Odman felt the Plan amendment was a major move forward for the CRA.

Chair Lewellen welcomed the new CRA employees.

9. Information Items

There were no items on this agenda.

10. Adjournment

Chair Lewellen adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

ATTEST:


THOMAS SCHNEIDER, CMC
CRA SECRETARY

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT
AGENCY


LORI LEWELLEN
CHAIR – CRA

Approved: November 10, 2020

