

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
DANIA BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2021 – 5:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair James called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present:

Chair:	Tamara James
Vice-Chair:	Marco A. Salvino, Sr.
Board Members:	Joyce L. Davis
	Lori Lewellen
	Lauren Odman
Executive Director:	K. Michael Chen
City Attorney:	Thomas Ansbro
CRA Secretary:	Thomas Schneider

2. Citizen Comments

There were no comments at this meeting.

3. Administrative Reports

3.1 Administrative Reports

Director Chen reviewed the information included in the agenda packet, consisting of an update on economic development, the monument signage program, Art in Community Grant Program (historical makers), Broward College community concert (to be re-scheduled), and the \$250,000 allocated to distribute to residents to relieve COVID impacts. He noted Broward County has declined to assist the CRA with this program and Miami Dade Affordable Housing Foundation is willing to help. The greatest need for residents now is household expenses rather than rent assistance. He addressed the qualifications to be used and the expenses to be covered under this program, and asked the Board for their input.

Board Member Odman questioned what determines how the money received is spent.

Director Chen noted there is not a proposal currently for determining how the money is spent, and he explained all of the qualifications that would be required.

Board Member Davis asked how this would be managed on a month-to-month basis.

Director Chen responded this had been part of the discussion with Miami Dade Affordable Housing Foundation and he addressed the next steps to be taken if the Board approves. The Board would have final approval of the program once it has been finalized.

Board Member Lewellen noted the foundation would need to be paid and asked if we know how much they have been paid in the past for administering such a program. She also questioned monitoring of how the money is spent because we want to make sure it is being spent the way it is supposed to be.

Director Chen said he understands the concern; we are trying to design this so it will not become an administrative nightmare. We could incorporate paid receipts into the program and we would require they prove they have a demonstrable decrease in household income.

Chair James noted it would not be possible to monitor how the money is spent; you cannot micromanage this. She felt this proposal is amazing compared to the program we first came up with.

Board Member Lewellen said she is concerned this would set a bad precedent. She asked if anyone has checked with utilities as to whether they are in arrears.

Director Chen noted that is one of the program requirements.

Board Member Lewellen said she is concerned about residents at the poverty level and this could be seen as additional income. She questioned the proof of loss of employment.

Director Chen explained how this would work.

Board Member Lewellen added she is concerned this would incentivize someone to not look for another job.

Director Chen felt the base benefit would not discourage someone from seeking employment.

Board Member Lewellen questioned using the money for food distributions instead of just giving people money. Her concern is accountability with taxpayers' money. She also questioned someone outside the CRA district applying for the program.

Director Chen noted residency would be verified.

Board Member Lewellen asked about the status of citywide Wi-Fi.

City Manager Garcia noted a status update would be given at the beginning of March; we have started research and possible partnerships.

Board Member Lewellen questioned item #7, and noted it is very broad; she is uncertain about this.

Director Chen responded our intent is to get money in the hands of people who need it the most. This condition can be clarified or removed.

Board Member Lewellen felt there would be a problem using taxpayer money for only the CRA district. People outside the district in need and not benefitting from this would be very upset.

Vice-Chair Salvino noted he has an issue with the program only being in the CRA district. He questioned how we would know whether someone is receiving unemployment or food stamps. He addressed current COVID stimulus relief. He agreed with having a food distribution program and issuing gift cards similar to food stamp cards where receipts are required. As it is set up now, not citywide and the lack of accountability, he does not see how this would work.

Board Member James addressed the initial discussion where the City would have a mirror program, which never occurred. Regardless of programs, there will be resources dedicated only for the CRA area; CRA budget funds can only be spent in the CRA area. This program was not intended to track expenses considering the small amount residents would receive. She noted she likes this program and it would be impossible to police people and every single expense. She does not have a problem with the \$400 per month stipend. Either we help people or we do not; we are on the CRA Board to serve the CRA portion.

Board Member Davis said she is about helping people; she wanted to give gift cards at Christmastime. It is about helping those in need, but she felt there is an issue with accountability. Due diligence can be done and copies of utility bills should be provided since we are using taxpayers' dollars. She agreed with the Vice-Chair's idea of providing cards where receipts of purchases would be required. We have to tighten up on the accountability and try to help people as much as possible.

Director Chen noted we can figure out a way to address all of the concerns expressed, except perhaps the issue of making it citywide. He addressed accountability requirements included in the program, and foundation administrative fees.

Board Member Lewellen addressed the mirror City program, utility bills, and food distributions. There is a lot that can be done with the \$250,000 rather than just handing it out. We need to look at the CRA Plan to make sure this would be covered. She felt Director Chen should get together with the Finance Director to have a conversation about these funds. She wants to help people, but we have to make sure this is not a free-for-all and administrative nightmare. She would rather see a food distribution program.

Chair James noted as is, there is not support for this program. With fine tuning and input from the Board, she asked if this is something Director Chen should explore.

The Board consensus was to have Director Chen explore this program further.

Board Member Salvino suggested the Board's ideas be submitted to Director Chen to use as a basis to work from.

Chair James felt the Board should have individual meetings with Director Chen to address all of their concerns.

Director Chen noted he will reach out to find individual dates and times for discussion.

Director Chen reviewed the updated memo regarding the CRA Mission Statement included in the agenda packet. There will be a CRA workshop on the Mission Statement on February 25th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Director Chen provided an update on the Mission-to-Market program.

4. Presentations

There were no presentations at this meeting.

5. Consent Agenda

- 5.1 Minutes:
Approve Minutes of January 12, 2021 CRA Board Virtual Meeting
- 5.2 Travel Requests: None
- 5.3 Approve Memorandum of Understanding with Alliance of Entrepreneur Resource Organizations (AERO)

Board Member Lewellen motioned to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Board Member Davis. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Proposals and Bids

There were no proposals on this agenda.

7. Discussion and Possible Action

- 7.1 Request for a 90-day extension to the CRA - Trion Agreement to enable the fully executed construction contract for commencement of the Trion at Dania Beach (Soleste Cityline) project - Executive Director Chen

Director Chen reviewed the information included in the agenda packet and explained Trion was not able to meet the October 2020 deadline due to the COVID impact. They are requesting an extension until April 30, 2021.

Board Member Lewellen motioned to approve the 90-day extension for the Trion project; seconded by Vice-Chair Salvino. The motion carried unanimously.

7.2 Job Fair - Vice-Chair Salvino

Vice-Chair Salvino noted he had been talking to Dr. Cheryl White, who has done a lot of wonderful things. He explained the second-chance job fair and asked Director Chen to work with Dr. White on this program, with approval of the Board.

Dr. White addressed the Board and noted she hopes she can meet with Director Chen. She noted behind every criminal offender there is a family, and no one else in the state is doing this kind of program.

Director Chen noted he looks forward to meeting with Dr. White as he is very interested in this program.

The Board consensus was for Director Chen to work with Dr. White and bring something back to the Board.

8. Board Member Comments

There were no comments at this meeting.

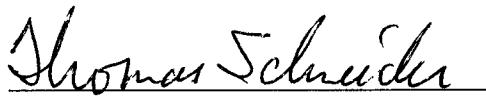
9. Information Items

There were no items on this agenda.

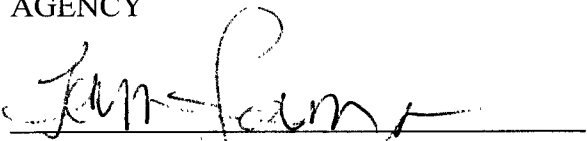
10. Adjournment

Chair James adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

ATTEST:


THOMAS SCHNEIDER, CMC
CRA SECRETARY

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT
AGENCY


TAMARA JAMES
CHAIR – CRA

Approved: March 9, 2021