

APPROVED
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
SEPTEMBER 11, 2012 – 11:00 A.M.

Attendance

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair	P
Jessie Adderley	A
Sonya Burrows	P
Ron Centamore	P
Nate Ernest-Jones (arr. 11:35)	P
Alan Gabriel	A
Mickey Hinton	A
Brice Lambrix	A
Richard D. Powers	P
Yvonne Sanandres	P
Vanessa Santiago	P
Scott Strawbridge	P
John Wilkes (arr. 11:29)	P
Samuel Williams	P

Currently there are 15 appointed members to the Board, which means 8 would constitute a quorum.

It was noted that a quorum was present at the meeting.

Staff

Alfred Battle, Director, CRA

Sandra Doughlin, Clerk III, CRA

Bob Wojcik, CRA

Thomasina Turner-Diggs, CRA Project Coordinator

Lisa Edmondson, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes from July 25, 2012

Motion made by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to approve the minutes from July 25, 2012. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Action Item

III. 2012-2013 CRA Budget

Mr. Battle explained that the Board is being asked to review and approve the CRA budget for the coming 2012-2013 fiscal year, which extends from October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013. The budget was presented to the City Commission in July, as a portion of the overall City budget, by the City Manager.

He recalled that the Board had been presented with projected revenues and expenses at their July 25 meeting. At that time, the Board had been provided with an approximate figure of just over \$4.8 million in anticipated revenues for the Northwest CRA; at present, this figure has increased to nearly \$5 million for the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

He referred the members to a spreadsheet prepared by the property appraiser and confirmed by the City's Finance and Budget Department. The spreadsheet shows the millage rates associated with the breakdown of tax increment financing (TIF) revenues. In fiscal year 2011-2012, taxable values were down; however, some of the millage rates have slightly increased, which accounts for a 2% increase in this year's taxable values.

The operating budget for 2012-2013 is roughly \$2,010,000, which is consistent with a \$40,000 increase in the CRA's marketing and advertising budget, as previously discussed. Mr. Battle noted that this will bring the total marketing and advertising budget to \$81,000, which is twice the original budget for this line item. He explained that there will be an increase in promoting and assisting special events, such as Build a Better Block, Midtown Summerfest, Light Up Sistrunk, and others.

No Staff positions have been lost in the CRA, although Mr. Battle noted that one individual recently retired after several years of service with the City. The CRA's engineering position remains in the budget, although this position has not yet been filled. He pointed out that the budgeted salary for this position is at the entry

level, and the engineer would only be paid for his or her work on CRA-related projects, such as neighborhood enhancements to be undertaken over the next few years. The CRA has received grants from the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) toward the installation of streetscape improvements and other infrastructure projects.

The CRA is included in Fort Lauderdale's overall reorganization plan as part of the Economic Development Department. Mr. Battle explained that the CRA has always been part of this Department, which is itself now a part of the Department of Sustainable Development. This larger Department includes Planning and Zoning, Building, Code Enforcement, Economic Development, CRA, Business Improvement District, and Housing and Community Development. Mr. Battle also advised that he has a leadership role in the Department of Sustainable Development, which gives the CRA a strong voice at the table to ensure the City addresses its concerns.

He moved on to the tax increment analysis, clarifying that the percentage change reflected in this section is not accurate: the only change has been the 2% increase mentioned earlier.

Chair Lucas asked if the CRA's overhead is down. Mr. Battle confirmed this, stating that this change is related to savings on the position from which an individual had retired. It is also due to the consolidation of several former Departments into the Department of Sustainable Development, which means other City Departments will also contribute to rent.

He continued that transfers are also requested in addition to the budget. The first transfer the CRA has asked to make, which is for \$300,000, will be presented to the Board at its upcoming regular meeting. The CRA would like to use these funds toward a small business retention and improvement program. This program would provide money to build out and renovate existing buildings, primarily on Sistrunk Boulevard.

The program's parameters would be similar to other development programs the CRA has funded: it would cover 80% of the cost of a buildout, or no more than \$250,000, whichever is the lesser of the two. The payment would be a forgivable loan for improvements that the buildings' tenants cannot take with them if they choose to relocate. This would help existing tenants become more successful, while at the same time preparing the space in the event that other tenants may occupy it in the future. Tenants and landlords would apply for assistance, and the agreement would include language addressing the possibility of releasing the space if it becomes available. This would exercise some control by the CRA over prospective tenants with which they are not entirely comfortable.

He noted that other allocations include the façade grant program, in which there has been a great deal of interest by existing property owners along the Sistrunk corridor. \$161,000 is allocated for an annual payment for the Avenue Loft project per the development agreement, and \$10,000 is needed to pay for commitments within the Midtown development assistance project.

Mr. Wilkes arrived at 11:29 a.m.

Mr. Battle advised that he has also included information about the City's Annual Action Plan in the members' information packets. This Plan has been formally instituted by the City Commission and includes an affordable housing study. Consultants on this study will make presentations to the City this week, and a consultant will be selected by October or November, to start work on this study by the end of the year.

He stated that another part of the Annual Action Plan is a crime reduction strategy and action plan, which includes collaboration between City Staff and the Police Department. The CRA is expected to have an opportunity to comment on how this action plan will be implemented.

Mr. Battle continued that the fund balance portion of the budget discusses TIF revenues that have been accumulated and carried over for a number of years. The current cash balance is \$5.9 million. Other project accounts, such as the façade program and maintenance, engineering, and design services, transfer their money for these programs to the trust fund balance, which presently has \$811,000 in uncommitted funds. This money is uncommitted and can be used for anything with which the Board deems desirable.

There is also a bond fund balance containing approximately \$2.5 million, which can only be used for infrastructure and construction-related activities. There are immediate plans for the use of these funds that are consistent with changes to the Northwest CRA Plan, including implementation of zoning changes and purchase of properties.

Mr. Ernest-Jones arrived at 11:35 a.m.

Mr. Williams commented that the CRA still owns some properties along Sistrunk Boulevard. Mr. Battle confirmed this, adding that some of these properties are large enough to meet specifications for development. These properties are primarily located to the west of 9th Avenue.

Mr. Wilkes asked if restructuring and paying down the bond might be accelerated. Chair Lucas said there is a plan for this which will be discussed later in the year. Mr. Battle added that paying down and refinancing this loan would be consistent with amendments to the redevelopment plan. This means the CRA will need to specifically amend its plan, which will probably be done at the end of 2012. Mr. Wilkes commented that due to existing lower interest rates, delaying this refinancing might not be in the CRA's favor.

Motion made by Mr. Strawbridge, seconded by Mr. Williams, to recommend the approval of the budget for 2012-2013. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Information Items

IV. Communication to CRA Board

None.

V. Old / New Business

Mr. Battle stated that the Board's regular meeting would be held on September 26. The agenda for that meeting is expected to include presentations on upcoming projects, as well as more information regarding the small business retention and recruitment program and a follow-up discussion on zoning amendments.

Chair Lucas asked that the Board also hear an update on properties owned in and around the CRA.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]