

APPROVED
MINUTES
NORTHWEST PROGRESSO – FLAGLER HEIGHTS
REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
FORT LAUDERDALE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
MAY 22, 2013 – 3:30 P.M.

Cumulative Attendance

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	May 2013 - April 2014	
		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Steve Lucas, Chair	P	1	0
Ella Phillips, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Jessie Adderley (arr. 3:40)	P	1	0
Sonya Burrows	P	1	0
Ron Centamore	P	1	0
Nate Ernest-Jones	P	1	0
Alan Gabriel	P	1	0
Mickey Hinton (arr. 3:45)	P	1	0
Brice Lambrix	P	1	0
Sam Monroe	A	0	1
Julia Parker	P	1	0
Richard D. Powers	P	1	0
Yvonne Sanandres (arr. 3:51)	P	1	0
Scott Strawbridge	P	1	0
John Wilkes	P	1	0

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, Economic and Community Reinvestment Manager
Sandra Doughlin, Clerk III, DSD/ECR
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 3:35 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

Chair Lucas welcomed new member Julia Parker, who was appointed to the Board by City Commissioner Dean Trantalis. Ms. Parker is a resident of Progresso Village.

II. Approval of Minutes from April 24, 2013 Regular Board Meeting

Motion made by Mr. Wilkes, seconded by Mr. Gabriel, for approval [as amended].

Mr. Strawbridge noted a correction on p.10, paragraph 3: “atypical” should be changed to “typical.”

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Action Item

III. Fort Lauderdale TMA – Funding Request

Patricia Zeiler, Kevin Walford, and Renee Cross, representing the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Transportation Management Association (TMA), showed a PowerPoint presentation and provided handouts to the Board members. Ms. Zeiler advised that the two routes currently operating within running through the CRA district are two of the most successful community bus routes within Broward County. The Northwest CRA is one of several partner agencies with the TMA.

Ms. Zeiler noted the year-to-date ridership on the Northwest Community Link and the Neighborhood Link, both of which are funded in part by the CRA. The CRA also assists with the funding of the Housing Authority route, which was modified and taken over by the TMA in January 2013. Ms. Zeiler pointed out that the two routes within the CRA have the opportunity to connect the neighborhood to the Tri-County area through a Tri-Rail connection, improving job access for many residents and enhancing the economic vitality of the surrounding community.

She showed a rendering of the new route maps that will be available on the Neighborhood Link, which include timetables. This route will connect all major housing areas within the Northwest quadrant of the City, social services, and other transit connections, including TMA, Tri-Rail, and Broward County Transit (BCT).

Mr. Strawbridge asked why there was no service on Sistrunk Boulevard in the Midtown area. Ms. Zeiler advised that because the TMA receives community bus funding from BCT, they may not duplicate existing BCT routes. She explained that the priority of community bus service is connecting residents to other modes

of transportation; both routes are designed to include developments along 7th and Sistrunk, including the Save-a-Lot store. On-board surveys are being conducted to determine places riders would like to go that are not currently on these routes.

Ms. Zeiler continued that one CRA-sponsored route is served by a bus rather than a trolley, although the bus uses the Sun Trolley brand; additional new non-trolley vehicles will be brought into the TMA fleet as well. She showed the Board a list of costs of the routes, noting that the new route will cover 20.87 miles, 5.82 of which are within the CRA. This means 27.9% of the new route serves the CRA. She concluded that the TMA is requesting a contribution of \$20,088 for the Neighborhood Link for fiscal 2013-14.

Chair Lucas noted that the CRA has previously contributed funds for fiscal 2012-13. Ms. Zeiler confirmed this, noting that the 2012-13 contribution came to \$8132.

Mr. Wilkes asked why there was a 15% increase in the cost of operations for the next fiscal year. Ms. Zeiler replied that the TMA uses a subcontractor who charges an hourly rate, which will be higher in the following year. She explained that due to the age of the fleet and issues with maintenance records, the TMA had only received one bid for this contract; however, they had received questions from five to six vendors, although the lack of sufficient maintenance and upkeep records had not allowed these vendors to feel confident in participating in the bidding process.

She noted that the two new vehicles that will be operating within the CRA district were funded by Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) federal funds. These vehicles will be brought on board within the next four months and will operate on the Northwest and Neighborhood Links.

Chair Lucas added that the TMA's bid process was for both operation and maintenance of its vehicles, which was more cost-effective than separating these two functions. He observed, however, that the current subcontractor has a monopoly on the area.

Ms. Zeiler continued that the Northwest Link, which also operates within the CRA district, will lose 50% of its funding in the next few months. This is a \$250,000 route, which has been funded at 100% by the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA); however, because this was a demonstration project, SFRTA is not permitted to fund this route at a higher rate than 50% after the third year. The TMA is also seeking funds to continue this route. Ms. Zeiler concluded that she would be able to provide a more accurate estimate of these costs by the following month, noting that the request of the Board would likely be close to \$57,000.

Mr. Strawbridge remarked that it was difficult to consider funding routes that operate within the CRA on a piecemeal basis, as they were difficult to visualize. Ms. Zeiler explained that the Northwest Link was a last-minute addition to today's presentation, which had been intended to focus only on the Neighborhood Link. She advised that she could not provide an hourly rate for the routes at this time, as negotiations with the subcontractor are ongoing; however, she pointed out that the cost of maintaining new vehicles within their first three service years is significantly lower than maintaining trolleys that are approaching the end of their life cycle.

She added that the two new vehicles will be rated 350,000 miles/10 years, which demonstrates that they are better-equipped to serve the district and do not have the bench seats featured on the trolleys. Applications have been submitted for replacement vehicles on other routes as well.

Motion made by Mr. Centamore, seconded by Ms. Burrows, to approve the funding request from the [TMA] for \$20,088.

Mr. Wilkes observed that when the TMA had requested funds from the Board in November 2012, the TMA had implemented recognition of the CRA on vehicle signage, as requested. He suggested that this could be expanded. Ms. Zeiler said the signage had been limited on that particular vehicle, as it was leased from BCT. She noted that there are additional sponsorship opportunities, as shown by wrapped trolleys and buses.

Mr. Wilkes continued that the rate of 7.1 passengers per hour has been greatly surpassed within the CRA, which he felt was a justification for continued support of the TMA. Chair Lucas clarified that this figure was the minimum ridership necessary in order to receive funding from Broward County.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 14-0.

Mr. Strawbridge requested that in the future, it would be easier for the Board to see overlap between services if all routes were superimposed on the same map in different colors. He added that in order to promote economic development, as well as for the best possible convenience and efficiency, routes should be merchant-friendly on Sistrunk Boulevard and in other areas within the CRA.

Chair Lucas explained that the TMA has also struggled with the reasons they cannot operate on Sistrunk. He pointed out that 100% of funding on the Northwest Link came from the SFRTA, which dictated that route; now that their funding will be less than 100%, other entities may have a greater say in determining the route. Mr. Strawbridge concluded that he would like to know if

the Northwest Link provided the best possible value for both the CRA's and the TMA's respective missions.

Discussion Items

IV. FY 2012 Annual Report

Mr. Battle distributed copies of the Annual Report, which included a financial overview of expenditures, debt service, and the overall financial health and status of the CRA. He noted that this was the first year in which the Annual Report included all three CRA districts.

The report included a section listing major expenditures from the past fiscal year. For the Northwest CRA, the greatest expenditure was \$6.6 million for the streetscape improvement project, which included construction costs. Debt service and operating expenses have remained basically the same.

He noted that a section of the Annual Report also includes a listing of accomplishments, as well as some pictures of these projects. The financial statements also include TIF revenue generated by the respective CRAs and financial inventories of property. The funds for the three CRAs are separate from one another. Once the draft document is finalized, it is sent to the State, which is the oversight entity for all CRAs within Florida.

Chair Lucas recalled that there had been a discussion of retiring some of the CRA's debt. Mr. Battle said this would happen in September 2013, which meant the retirement of roughly \$13 million in debt would be reflected in the following year's Annual Report.

Vice Chair Phillips requested clarification that all CRAs within the City operate within their own budgets. Mr. Battle confirmed this, explaining that the Annual Report is presented to the City Commission as an overall budget; however, these funds are broken down among the respective CRAs as shown by the reports.

Mr. Wilkes asked to know the balance of the tax increment funds the CRA would receive. Mr. Battle clarified that this was \$4.8 million, of which \$1.3 million constituted the CRA's operating budget. The residual balance is used to pay debt service and other expenses, as well as an overall trust fund account in which funds not spent on projects are placed. He added that because no debt service will be paid on the debt to be retired, more funds will be freed up for projects, including some that may be accomplished in the short term.

Mr. Wilkes asked if the Annual Report must be issued within a given time frame. Mr. Battle explained that the State sets a deadline of March 31 by statute;

however, because the reports are very time-consuming and are prepared by the City's Finance Department, there is no penalty for late submission.

V. Director's Report

Mr. Battle recalled that there have been discussions by the City Commission with regard to spending CRA dollars on Police-related activities, such as surveillance cameras along the Sistrunk corridor. Staff is very interested in pursuing this, and there is some interest in implementing a similar initiative City-wide; however, this activity is not specifically identified in the CRA Plan. This means in the next few months, the Board will be asked to support amendments to the Plan, such as an amendment in support of community policing. This would allow for the expenditure of CRA dollars without conflict with the CRA statute.

He continued that another Plan amendment under consideration is the implementation of public wi-fi. Mr. Battle noted that the surveillance system installed in some newer Housing Authority projects emits a wi-fi signal for its residents. He suggested that this could be a selling point for the business community in range of this system, and could also be used to market upcoming festivals and events within the surrounding community.

Mr. Battle added that a community bus or mass transit hub is not specifically identified in the CRA Plan, although the Plan refers to mass transit as a vital part of the redevelopment area. He suggested that this also be considered as a Plan amendment, which would allow the CRA to use its funds more strategically to link customers to the area's overall economic development.

Mr. Battle recalled that the Flagler Village Community Garden, which had presented to the Board at three recent meetings, was approved for \$30,000 in funding by the CRA Board at their May 7 meeting. He noted that the CRA Board had felt strongly that success in phase 1 of the community garden project would contribute to success in subsequent phases. In addition, the Flagler Village Improvement Association, along with private businesses in the area, is planning activities that may contribute to the success of the community garden. Mr. Battle concluded that this made him more comfortable with spending a larger amount of money on phase 1 than Staff had initially recommended.

He continued that he had attended the International Council of Shopping Centers' national convention in Las Vegas, which is the largest trade show convention for retailers, commercial brokers, and developers in the country. CRA representatives have regularly attended a similar regional event in Orlando, which resulted in the attraction of Family Dollar, Save-a-Lot, and other retailers that are new to the City. Mr. Battle stated that he had reached out to a number of

new contacts, including restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream parlors, and other ventures that the neighborhood wished to attract.

He advised that the City Commission has endorsed an economic development strategy for the City, including a specific retail recruitment strategy for six to seven corridors within the City, including Sistrunk Boulevard, Cypress Creek, and the 17th Street Causeway, among others. The Commission had requested a study on opportunities to bring additional retail to these parts of the City. A consultant to carry out this study is expected to be hired by the end of July 2013, and will interview the Board as a whole, as well as its individual members as stakeholders within the community. The report will be expected by the end of November.

Ms. Sanandres asked what conditions were placed on the funds provided to the Flagler Village Community Garden. Mr. Battle said these details are currently being determined, although he noted that they are likely to include the reimbursement of costs according to the garden's construction budget. The CRA Board may also require the garden to put a bond in place to ensure that the project is completed.

Ms. Burrows asked if Broward Boulevard was included in the City's economic development strategy. Mr. Battle said it was not identified as a retail-specific area, but remains part of the marketing strategy for the entire City. He noted that some areas have a neighborhood retail base, which the City hopes to enhance by the retail strategy.

Mr. Wilkes pointed out that some areas within the community may be competing with others, and pointed out that other development, such as the potential attraction of a Wal-Mart, could harm existing retail, such as the Save-a-Lot. Mr. Battle advised that the retail strategy will be a community-driven process, and he would ensure that the Board has access to the consultant as they develop this overall strategy.

VI. Communication to the CRA Board

None.

VII. Old / New Business

Ms. Burrows asked if there had been any movement regarding the prospective name change for a portion of Sistrunk Boulevard. Mr. Battle said he had not received any notice that this issue might be brought up on a City Commission agenda. He noted that the Board's communication had been passed along to the

CRA Board and the item had been discussed. There had been no further resolution.

Mr. Wilkes suggested that existing public/private partnerships within the community might be brought together so they can work as a unit. He explained that some entities might be working toward similar goals, but may not be aware of the existence of similar groups. Mr. Battle noted that Staff tries to make these groups aware of each other to an extent. He agreed that the Flagler Village Community Garden and Flagler Village Improvement Association might be able to participate in some of these efforts. Mr. Wilkes suggested that an event might be arranged at which these groups could exchange information and make contacts.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

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