Community Redevelopment Agency
Regular Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
January 29, 2025
5:00 PM

1. Call To Order

Chair R. Henderson called the Community Redevelopment Agency meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Present: Reynolds Henderson, Cathy Mosley, Susan Bakalo, Bruton Campbell-Work.

Absent: Lynnie Hatcher

Also in attendance: City Clerk Rafael Ali, and Executive Director Josh Ervin.

A. Invocation
B. Pledge of Allegiance

2. INTRODUCTION/WELCOME OF NEW BOARD APPOINTEE BRUTON "BRUT" CAMPBELL-WORK

The CRA Board welcomed Mr. Campbell-Work to the CRA.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT
A. Financials

Mr. Ervin present on the Financial Report.

A motion was made to approve the financial report by Mrs. Mosley and seconded by Mrs. Bakalo; the motion passed without objection.

4. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT TRACKING SHEET
A. Tracking Sheet

Mr. Ervin presented it on the Growth and Development Tracking Sheet.

Mrs. Bakalo asked if anyone had requested roofs. Mr. Ervin answered no.

Mr. Ervin mentioned that he is willing to do anything necessary to get the word out.

Mr. Ervin stated that the new owners of Boogies have a request for the board.

Mr. Ervin explained that the grant is outside his authority to award.

A motion was made to move the item 7A to the front of the agenda by Mrs. Mosley and seconded by Mrs. Bakalo; the motion passed without objection.

7 A. 660 Baldwin Avenue Special Consideration Commercial Site and Building Improvement Grant Award

Mr. Ervin stated that Boogies was recently acquired and the new owners are doing renovations.

Mr. Ervin stated that they would like to make improvements to the floors.

Mr. Ervin explained that our criteria do not allow him to award these grants for interior improvements.

Mr. Ervin stated that the owners, under our special consideration criteria, are able to come to the board and present their request.

Mr. Ervin stated that the owners are here and are ready to make their request.

Mr. Ervin mentioned that currently, there are a couple of generations of floor covering.

Mrs. Bakalo asked if we have the authority to fund interior improvements. Mr. Ervin confirmed yes, under the special consideration criteria.

Kelly Miser, owner of the property stated that before closing on the property, they created a budget for the property and outlined what needs to be done for the refurbishment.

Mrs. Miser mentioned that she heard from the community that the CRA has these grants available for business owners.

Mr. Miser stated that the focus is to get the floors done to open in March.

Mr. Campbell-Work asked if they are eligible for exterior improvements as well.

Mr. Ervin stated that they will be capped at $15,000 for the next 3 years.

Mr. Henderson thanked the applicant for attending.

Mayor Campbell asked the board to turn their mics on and speak into them.

A motion was made to approve the 660 Baldwin Avenue Special Consideration Commercial Site and Building Improvement Grant Award up to the $15,000 by Mrs. Bakalo and seconded by Mr. Campbell-Work; the motion passed without objection.

5. OLD BUSINESS
A. Update on Parking Study and Pay App #3 Request

Mr. Ervin opened the floor to the consultant, John Foster, to present on the Parking Study and Pay App #3 Request.

Mr. Foster gave an update on the parking study.

Mr. Foster stated that he is finishing up the findings and recommendations.

Mr. Foster mentioned that every single on-street space is mapped on ArcGIS, along with every parking lot in the downtown area.

Mr. Foster stated that ADA parking spots have been identified.

Mr. Foster mentioned that the only public parking is on-street parking.

Mr. Foster stated that county activity does not impact the downtown area.

Mr. Foster stated that 108 people responded to the survey.

Mr. Foster mentioned that 85% of respondents visit downtown weekly, and 51% visit daily.

Mr. Foster stated that we received responses from people who visit the downtown area.

Mr. Foster mentioned that 97% of respondents drive.

Mr. Foster stated that ADA parking has come up many times.

Mr. Foster explained that he doesn't think we need more parking, but rather we need to use the existing spaces efficiently.

Mr. Foster mentioned that he talked to a lot of people in the community.

Mr. Foster stated that there have been many public meetings about downtown.

Mr. Foster mentioned that there was a little finger-pointing.

Mr. Foster stated that no one wants to see parking meters downtown.

Mr. Foster mentioned that there are a lot of large cars and trucks taking up spots.

Mr. Foster stated that it is hard to identify which vehicles are customers and which are workers.

Mr. Foster stated that we need to plan for the future.

Mr. Foster stated that we need to try and maintain the feeling of the town.

Mr. Foster stated that the recommendations are being focused on blocks 13, 24, 15, 16, and 17.

Mr. Foster discussed that our solutions must align with our goals.

Mr. Foster stated that at one point, there were parking meters downtown.

Mr. Foster stated that the presentation is the week of February 24th.

Mr. Foster stated that the plan is to plan for the future.

Mr. Foster stated that planning for the future is a key element that they are focusing on.

Anthony Vallee, City Councilmember, stated that the county purchased the Thrift Way property that is north of 90 where Boogies used to be.

Mr. Vallee stated that there may be an opportunity to collaborate with the county by leasing parking there or assisting with the paving and getting some spots allocated.

Mr. Vallee stated that the parking lot is pretty close to that property.

Mr. Vallee stated that there is a natural opportunity for collaboration.

Mr. Vallee stated that the downtown district is going to expand north of 90, so keep that in mind for parking.

The board thanked Mr. Foster for joining.

Mr. Ervin stated that he requests the board approve the invoice.

A motion was made to approve the invoice by Mr. Campbell-Work and seconded by Mrs. Mosley; the motion passed without objection.

B. Update on CAA interest in 27 Crescent Drive

Mr. Ervin provided an update on CAA's interest in 27 Crescent Drive.

Mr. Ervin stated that he reached out to Mrs. Steele.

Mrs. Steele stated that she is present to try and figure out a solution for the property.

Mr. Steele stated that she is interested in Crest Drive.

Mrs. Steele stated that she wants to bring the arts to downtown DeFuniak Springs.

Mrs. Steele stated that she has a contact who is a architect and willing to develop a scope of services if the board wants to move forward with developing an RFQ. Mrs. Steele stated that she would like to help facilitate.

Mrs. Bakalo stated that she would like to figure out a way to get them into the building.

Mr. Henderson stated that he would like to find a way to figure this out.

Mr. Henderson asked if Bradley can put something down on paper about what he can do for the property.

Mr. Henderson stated that then, by the next meeting, we can vote on that.

Mrs. Steele stated that Bradley can streamline what the Cultural Arts Alliance needs.

Mr. Henderson stated that, knowing his background, that would be very helpful.

Mr. Henderson explained the importance of spending public money correctly.

Mr. Henderson asked Mr. Ervin to give Mr. Campbell a overview on where we are on the project.

Mr. Ervin stated that we purchased 27 Crescent Drive a couple of weeks ago, and the Cultural Arts Alliance stated that they would like to be in this building.

Mr. Ervin stated that the property needed some work to be done on it prior to the Cultural Arts Alliance taking over the building.

Mr. Ervin stated that he reached out to a local contractor to see what the work on the building would cost, and they gave him a quote of $315,000.

Mrs. Steele shared the Cultural Arts Alliance's vision for the building.

Mr. Henderson asked what the quote we received from Dewberry was.

Mr. Ervin answered that it was for $15,000.

The board thanked Mrs. Steele for attending.

C. Update on Historic Design Standards and consultant introduction

Mr. Ervin stated that we hired GMT to help establish some historic design standards.

Mr. Ervin stated that he wants to bring them here to introduce them to the board.

Mr. Ervin stated that there is going to be a workshop today at the Chautauqua Hall of Brotherhood to explain the project.

Mr. Henderson asked if the board members are having meetings with the consultant.

Mr. Ervin stated that everyone has been invited.

Mr. Henderson stated that if you have the time, everyone on the board should meet with them.

D. Update on 111 and 129 N 6th Street Parcels

Mr. Ervin stated that he is still waiting to sign the closing documents, and the county is eager to get started on the demolition.

Mr. Henderson asked what the hold-up is.

Mr. Ervin stated that he is not completely sure.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request to advertise Request for Qualifications(RFQ) 25-01-CRA for John V. Lawson Amphitheater Design

Mr. Ervin presented on the RFQ for the amphitheater design.

Mr. Henderson asked if this is a standard RFQ.

Mr. Ervin stated yes, this is a standard RFQ.

Mr. Vallee asked if the RFQ included the information developed by the Tree and Beautification Board for the park, including the survey that was done.

Mr. Ervin stated that those are going to be the documents that will be handed in to the consulting firm.

A motion was made to approve the Request to advertise Request for Qualifications(RFQ) 25-01-CRA for John V. Lawson Amphitheater Design by Mrs. Bakalo and seconded by Mrs. Mosley; the motion passed without objection.

Malinda Henderson expressed the need for a indoor venue.

B. Request to issue Task Order 25-01-CRA to Dewberry for conceptual designs/preliminary engineering for the Veterans Memorial Project

Mr. Ervin presented the Request to issue Task Order 25-01-CRA to Dewberry for conceptual designs/preliminary engineering for the Veterans Memorial Project.

Mr. Ervin stated that he would like to get a price from Dewberry on the task order.

Mr. Ervin stated that we should leverage the city's continuing engineering services agreement that they have with Dewberry.

Mr. Ervin stated that there is going to be 2 or 3 concepts per location.

Mr. Ervin stated that this will all be brought to the city council for approval.

Mayor Campbell stated that he believes the motion was specifically for Chipley Park.

Mr. Ali read the motion and stated that the motion does read that the location was for Chipley Park.

Mr. Vallee stated that the motion stands by itself, but the intention was that we want to be able to build it somewhere, and we don't want to limit ourselves.

Mr. Vallee stated that he just wants to see it built.

Mr. Henderson stated that he wants to make sure that when we hire Dewberry to do something, it is what the council wants to do.

Mr. Ervin stated that the motion was clear, but the presentation was for all three locations.

Mr. Ervin stated that he is just asking the board if they are okay with him moving forward with a task order.

Mr. Vallee stated that the board can approve Josh to do the three and then have him get clarification from individual Councilmembers.

Mr. Henderson answered yes.

Mr. Ervin stated that he will get the proposals and bring them back February.

C. Request to approve proposed Goals and Standards for FY 25

Mr. Ervin presented on the proposed Goals and Standards for FY 25.

Mr. Ervin stated that he put together some standard performance measures, goals, and objectives to satisfy this statutory requirement.

Mr. Ervin stated that this is something that we will have to do moving forward.

Mr. Ervin stated that this is a form that he has put together.

Mr. Henderson stated that he would like to see more measurables of the things that we do.

Mr. Henderson stated that the more we can show what we are doing, the better it will be for opportunities and grants.

A motion was made to approve the Request to approve proposed Goals and Standards for FY 25 by Mrs. Bakalo and seconded by Mrs. Mosley; the motion passed without objection.

Mr. Ervin stated that there is going to be a training event on March 6th, 2025, by the Florida Redevelopment Association.

Mr. Henderson stated that if some of us can't attend, it would be great to have the slides.

Mr. Ervin stated that he would like the board to decide when they can meet with the city council.

Mr. Vallee stated that he recommends doing something before budget time and before summer.

Mr. Vallee stated that it would be good to have two meetings in the first half of the year. Mr. Vallee stated that we can have them routinely on a quarterly basis.

Mr. Vallee stated that communication is important because we will know what the different boards are working on.

Mr. Vallee stated the importance of collaborating with different entities.

Mr. Vallee stated that everyone has to help each other.

Mr. Henderson stated that it would be good to get information from the council on what they think about the projects coming up.

Mr. Vallee stated that the armory is a building that we are not using.

Mr. Vallee stated that cleaning up the alleyways will help resolve hazards in the alleys, as well as making them look better.

Mr. Vallee stated that community captains would be a great idea to have within the community.

Mr. Vallee stated that this will be a great way to engage within the community.

Mr. Vallee stated that he strongly supports this.

Mr. Ervin stated that he is going to get with the city to get a date for the dual workshop.

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

9. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mrs. Henderson stated that annexation came up during the citizen workshop held by the city manager and the planning director.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:33 PM.

Approved:

Chair Reynolds. Henderson

ATTEST:

Minutes taken by Rafael Ali
City Clerk
Proper notice having been duly given

THE CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS
CORPORATE
SEAL
1901