Community Redevelopment Agency
Regular Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
May 14, 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, Bruton Campbell-Work, Rob Hamilton

Absent:

Also in attendance: City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Executive Director Josh Ervin, and Administrative Assistant Sumie Gabbard.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A. April 23, 2025 CRA and CC Joint Workshop

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2025 CRA and CC Joint Workshop by Mrs. Mosley and seconded by Mr. Hamilton; the motion passed without objection.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT
A. Item

Mr. Ervin presented the Financial Report.

He noted that there were no significant items to report at this time.

Mr. Ervin informed the committee that the annual audit is nearing completion. Once finalized, all unreconciled funds from the previous fiscal year will be carried forward and addressed through a budget amendment.

Mr. Henderson inquired whether the account is interest-variant.

Mr. Ervin responded that interest revenue is reflected in the financial report and confirmed that approximately $12,500 in interest revenue has been recognized this year.

Mr. Hamilton stated that is on page 23 of the report.

A motion was made to accept the financial report by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mrs. Mosley; the motion passed without objection.

4. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT TRACKING SHEET

A. Item

Mr. Ervin presented the Growth and Development Tracking Sheet.

5. OLD BUSINESS
A. Update on HB 991/SB 1242

Mr. Ervin stated that support for HB 991 and SB 1242 has diminished, and no changes have been approved at this time.

He explained that the bill was written to indicate that if a project is not included in the approved budget, it cannot be undertaken.

Mr. Adkinson noted that the most significant issue with the bill was the language that talked about the ability to collect any new debt.

B. Downtown Undergrounding

Mr. Ervin stated that he met with staff regarding this project.

He noted that, following those discussions, there appears to be strong support for moving the project forward.

Mr. Ervin explained that the board could either issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or utilize the City's Continuing Engineering Services Agreement by issuing a task order to evaluate all necessary elements in the alleyway.

He added that the direction would ultimately depend on the Board's approach.

Mrs. Mosley asked if there is an estimate on how long a project like this would take.

Mr. Ervin responded that the timeline would depend on what is discovered once work begins in the alleyways.

He estimated that the project would likely take approximately three years to complete.

Mr. Hamilton recommended using the City engineers to initiate the project, noting that going out to bid would significantly delay progress.

A motion was made to use the City Engineers by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by a Mr. Campbell-Work; the motion passed without objection.

C. Parking Study Final Plan

Mr. Ervin presented on the Park Study.

He stated that the study will go before the City Council for acceptance.

A motion was made to accept the Parking Study Final Plan and approve the final payment by Mr. Campbell-Work and seconded by Mr. Hamilton; the motion passed without objection.

D. Update on RFQ 25-01-CRA ongoing negotiations

Mr. Ervin provided an update on RFQ 25-01-CRA and ongoing negotiations.

He stated that this pertains to the Amphitheater project.

Mr. Ervin noted that the conceptual phase of the project has been submitted.

He shared that he has requested the team to prepare a full proposal to bring before the Board.

Mr. Ervin mentioned that assumptions may change as the conceptual plan continues to develop.

He expressed confidence that a complete proposal will be ready for presentation at the June meeting.

Mr. Henderson asked if any action is currently required.

Mr. Ervin responded that no action is needed at this time.

6. REQUEST TO BE ON THE AGENDA
A. Dr. Mendy Henderson, Forward DeFuniak – National Trust Preservation Funds Grant

Mrs. Henderson presented on the National Trust Preservation Funds Grant.

She stated that one of the goals of the grant is to preserve and capitalize on the unique history and preservation efforts of the area.

Mr. Henderson noted that a committee was formed with representatives from various organizations passionate about historic preservation.

Mrs. Henderson explained that Mr. Ervin identified the development of historic standards as being beyond the scope of what the small committee could accomplish alone.

She noted that some individuals do not fully understand the need for historic standards.

Mrs. Henderson emphasized the importance of the committee identifying and communicating why historic standards are necessary.

She added that many of the attendees at the previous workshop were unfamiliar with the history of the City of DeFuniak Springs and the importance of having historic district standards.

Mr. Henderson stated that the committee has decided to host an introductory workshop to better prepare participants before the consultant returns.

Mrs. Henderson shared that the committee has prepared a summary of the grant application, which will be submitted electronically.

She stated that the committee is requesting additional participation and is also asking for approval of a support letter for the application.

Mrs. Henderson thanked the CRA for its continued support.

Mr. Hamilton asked what the grants are intended to cover.

Mrs. Henderson responded that the grant funds are designated for hosting public meetings.

Mr. Hamilton then asked what the motion would be.

Mr. Adkinson clarified that the only action needed is to execute the support letter.

A motion was made to approve the letter of support for the National Trust Preservation Funds Grant by Mr. Campbell-Work and seconded by Mrs. Mosley; the motion passed without objection.

Mrs. Henderson stated that the funding will be used primarily for advertising.

Mr. Adkinson cautioned that care should be taken when supporting a private entity with public funding, as similar situations have caused issues for CRAs in the past.

7. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
A. Comm. Hamilton
1. Parking Committee

Mr. Hamilton discussed the idea of establishing a parking workgroup.

Mr. Henderson asked if Commissioner Hamilton would like to be part of that group.

Mr. Hamilton stated that he wants to involve business owners and Main Street representatives in the conversation.

Mr. Ervin added that there are plenty of opportunities for this workgroup to meet, and ultimately, the City Council can convene to make any final decisions regarding downtown parking.

2. Abatement Program

Mr. Hamilton stated that he wants to provide Mr. Ervin with direction on how the process will look with the City.

He clarified that he intends to guide Mr. Ervin on the process and how he would like to begin.

Mr. Ervin mentioned that he has already met with Mr. Townsend regarding this matter.

Mr. Hamilton asked if the abatement process waives liens.

Mr. Adkinson responded that liens are not automatically waived but indicated there is a possibility of waiver if that is the direction the magistrate chooses to take.

3. Eco-friendly upgrade

Mr. Hamilton stated that the CRA Board should be provided with iPads to reduce the need for paper.

He added that this approach would be more cost-effective.

Mr. Hamilton expressed his desire to move forward with the purchase of iPads.

He explained that the idea is to acquire iPads for board use.

Mr. Henderson stated that he does not want to carry an iPad around and explained this may be something that can be kept at city hall for when we have meetings.

Mr. Ervin mentioned that he prefers a device with internet availability and access to a Google Workspace account.

He added that the IT Director has provided a cost breakdown for this proposal.

Mr. Hamilton asked if City Council members bring their own iPads to meetings.

Mr. Ervin responded that he believes they do.

Mr. Hamilton stated that he does not think a stylus pen is necessary and that a keyboard alone is sufficient.

Mr. Ervin noted that it is up to the Board to decide whether they want to have keyboards.

Mr. Hamilton affirmed that keyboards are needed.

A motion was made to approve the purchase of iPads and the keyboards by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. Campbell-Work; the motion passed without objection.

Mr. Henderson asked for an update on the status of the RFP.

Mr. Ervin responded that the RFP is still out for bid, with submissions due by Friday, July 30th. Once received, the bids will be reviewed and scored accordingly.

8. CITIZEN COMMENTS

No citizen comments.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.

Approved:

Chair Reynolds. Henderson

THE CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS
CORPORATE
SEAL
1901

ATTEST:

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