COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY(CRA)
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
1350 BALDWIN AVENUE, CITY HALL
MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2026

Chair J. Sconiers called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m followed by the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Josh Sconiers, Vice Chair Glen Harrison, Commissioner Danny Cosson, and Commissioner Todd Bierbaum. Also present were Executive Director Koby Townsend, Program Manager Chris Strawn, CRA Administrative Assistant Kayla Digges, and CRA Attorney Clay Adkinson. Commissioner not present: Amy Heavilin.

ITEM 2 - PROPOSED CHANGES TO GRANT PROGRAMS

2A. Facade Renovation Assistance Program (FRAP)

Executive Director K. Townsend stated that the grant programs would be reviewed and discussed.

Program Manager C. Strawn introduced the Façade Renovation Assistance Program (FRAP).

Commissioner T. Bierbaum asked whether nonprofit organizations would be eligible for the FRAP program.

Program Manager C. Strawn responded that nonprofit organizations are eligible.

Commissioner G. Harrison asked whether painting improvements would be limited to the front of a building.

Program Manager C. Strawn explained that any painted area visible from the public right-of-way may be considered for funding.

Commissioner G. Harrison requested clarification regarding outdoor seating areas.

Program Manager C. Strawn responded that outdoor seating areas intended solely for aesthetic purposes would not be eligible for funding under the program.

Executive Director K. Townsend stated that he is evaluating the grant programs with a focus on supporting permanent property improvements and long-term community investment.

Commissioner G. Harrison asked what type of improvements are necessary for occupancy.
Program Manager C. Strawn stated that all projects will be presented to the Board for review. The program will primarily focus on exterior building improvements. Applicants seeking funding for interior improvements will need to submit a special request for Board consideration.

Executive Director K. Townsend reiterated that all applications will be presented to the Board for consideration. Staff will provide a recommendation sheet indicating whether each application is recommended or not recommended; however, the final decision rests with the Board.

Commissioner G. Harrison stated that his primary concern was ensuring consistency in the application of the program requirements.

Executive Director K. Townsend asked whether the Board would like stronger language included to state that a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is required by the Building Department.

City Attorney C. Adkinson explained that requiring a CO could present challenges, as the Building Official would not be able to withhold a Certificate of Occupancy for reasons beyond those established in the Florida Building Code.

City Attorney C. Adkinson suggested that the language should instead specify that assistance may be available when improvements are necessary to remediate conditions that could result in a property being condemned, provided such determination is supported by the Building Department.

Commissioner D. Cosson stated that the CRA utilized approximately $120,000 for blight-related projects during the previous year, which aligns with the CRA's original purpose. He added that one of the most impactful projects the CRA could undertake is the alleyway improvement project.

MOTION by Commissioner D. Cosson to remove 2A and focus on the alleyway **NO SECOND**

Chair J. Sconiers requested direction from staff.

MOTION by Commissioner T. Bierbaum second by Commissioner G. Harrison approved FRAP with the additions to remove section 3 and include nonprofits

Susan Smith, with the Women's Club, requested assistance with repairs to the Women's Club building.

Chris Gazowski, the Women's Club historian, expressed interest in applying for the FRAP grant.

Jaden Broadway, Main Street Executive Director, stated that she believes many merchants on Main Street would apply for the grant.

Shirley Gillary stated that she was pleased to hear Mr. Townsend confirm that the programs are intended to serve the entire CRA District. She noted that areas beyond downtown would also benefit significantly from the programs.

VOTE: Josh Sconiers, Aye; Glen Harrison, Aye; Todd Bierbaum, Aye; Danny Cosson, Nay. Ayes 3, Nays 1. Motion carried.

2B. Residential Safety & Renovation Program (RSRP) Income-Based

Program Manager C. Strawn introduced the Residential Structural Rehabilitation Program (RSRP) grant.

Commissioner T. Bierbaum stated that he would like to see the income eligibility requirement adjusted to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Commissioner G. Harrison agreed that the income threshold should be increased.

Commissioner D. Cosson stated that the maximum grant award of up to $30,000 was too high.

MOTION by Commissioner T. Bierbaum second by Commissioner G. Harrison. To approve the RSRP grant with the modification to up the household income to 80%.

Robert Curry expressed appreciation for the increase to 80% and raised concerns regarding the alleyway project.

Ms. Parker brought attention to the income-based section of the program not allowing her to qualify.

Shirley Gillery expressed appreciation for the program and emphasized the importance of keeping the community safe.

VOTE: Josh Sconiers, Aye; Glen Harrison, Aye; Todd Bierbaum, Aye; Danny Cosson, Nay. Ayes 3, Nays 1. Motion carried.

3C. Residential Redevelopment Assistance Program (RRAP)

Program Manager C. Strawn introduced the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) grant.

Chair J. Sconiers asked how long homeowners would be required to maintain ownership of the property after the grant-funded work was completed.

Program Manager C. Strawn responded that there is currently no minimum ownership or occupancy period associated with the grant.

Commissioner T. Bierbaum stated that he does not believe a time limitation should be imposed.

MOTION by Commissioner T. Bierbaum second by Commissioner G. Harrison. To approve the RRAP

Shirley Gillery stated that she owns properties within the CRA boundaries and believes the program will benefit many members of the community.

Robert Curry expressed a desire to see more outreach and promotion of the grant programs to encourage additional applications.

VOTE: Josh Sconiers, Aye; Glen Harrison, Aye; Todd Bierbaum, Aye; Danny Cosson, Nay. Ayes 3, Nays 1. Motion carried.

ITEM 3 - FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET

3A. FY2027 Budget Draft

Executive Director K. Townsend stated that the amended budget includes a carryforward of just over $1,000,000 from actions approved by the previous Board. He also noted the addition of a new budget line item of $40,670 for the City administrative fee, which was funded through internal budget amendments and offset by reductions in personnel services where funds were no longer needed.

Mr. Townsend stated that, moving forward, he would like to keep the three grant programs budgeted separately so the Board can clearly track funding allocations for each program.

Chair J. Sconiers asked why the streets and alleyway projects had been placed on hold.

Executive Director K. Townsend responded that staff is gathering input from business owners and residents to identify additional downtown improvements that should be incorporated into the overall project plan.

Executive Director K. Townsend stated that he would present a preliminary budget draft to the Board at the next meeting.

4A. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None at this time

5A. ADJOURNMENT

Chair J. Sconiers adjourned the meetings at 4:43 p.m

THE CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS CORPORATE SEAL 1901

Minutes Approved by,

Josh Sconiers, Chair

Attest,

Kayla Digges, CRA
Administrative Assistant