

## **COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING**

A Regular CRA Meeting was held on May 12, 2025 at 5:00 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall and Via GoToMeeting (646) 749-3122 - Access Code: 855-960-693. Commissioner Steven Spina, Ph.D. called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

Roll call was taken. Present were members Lance Smith, Jodi Wilkeson, Charles Proctor, Kenneth Burgess, Steven Spina and Mayor Melonie Bahr Monson. City Manager William Poe and City Attorney Matthew Maggard were also present.

Staff present: Chief of Police Derek Brewer, Public Works Director Shane LeBlanc, Planning Director Todd Vande Berg, CRA Director Gail Hamilton, HR & Risk Management Director Sandra Amerson, Finance Director Ted Beason, IT Specialist Krista Crews and City Clerk Ricardo Quinones. Utilities Director John Bostic III attended virtually

Mayors Youth Council Present: Na-Kowa Ryals

### **1. CITIZEN COMMENTS - NONE**

### **2. BUSINESS ITEMS**

#### **2.1 Approval of CRA Meeting Minutes - April 28, 2025**

***Charles Proctor motioned to Approve the April 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Jodi Wilkeson. Motion Passed, 5-0.***

#### **2.2 Rejection of Bid for 5th Avenue Landscaping and Oakside Cemetery Project**

CRA Director Gail Hamilton explained that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) would not release State Road 54 until the milling and cleaning was complete. The City could not obtain a right-of-way permit until April 2026. After discussions with the City Manager and Public Works Director, Staff recommended rejecting the bid.

Ms. Hamilton proposed taking First Street, the cemetery portion, and the Eighth Street portion of the project, which involved redoing sidewalks and lighting on Eighth Street and redoing the front of the cemetery on First Street. They planned to bid these parts themselves. The Public Works department was examining Fifth Street to see if there was anything they could do before bidding some of the work, including irrigation. Ms. Hamilton emphasized that they wanted to move forward with everything except 54/Fifth Avenue, hence the recommendation to reject the bid.

Discussion followed regarding the possibility of the Public Works Department doing some of the work themselves to reduce costs.

Concerns were raised about the amount of money spent on planning without visible results. Ms. Hamilton acknowledged the frustration and mentioned that various departments were working with purchasing to find ways to prequalify contractors and potentially reduce bidding time.

Discussion followed regarding working with the FDOT contractor to potentially complete some work during their scheduled road closure to minimize disruption for merchants.

***Jodi Wilkeson motioned to reject the bid based on the explanation provided by the CRA Director. Seconded by Kenneth Burgess. Motion Passed, 5-0.***

#### **2.3 Presentation of 2024 CRA Audit - Annual Comprehensive Financial Report**

Finance Director Ted Beason, presented the 2024 CRA Audit and answered questions the Board. It was noted that a \$1,760,000 balance was carried into the next fiscal year. Restricted only to legal expenditures of the CRA.

***Lance Smith motioned to approve the 2024 CRA Audit. Seconded by Charles Proctor. Motion Passed, 5-0.***

### **3. CRA DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

CRA Director Gail Hamilton reported on the following items:

- **Sign Design Program:** The director met with designers who had developed a preliminary sign program. It was emphasized that this would be a city-wide program, not just for the CRA. The new plan would include more graphics to better explain the concepts.
- **Funding for Signage:** The CRA provides a \$1000 grant to help businesses meet signage standards, which can be more expensive.
- **Challenges with Existing Signs:** There was a discussion about how to address businesses that already have signs that don't meet the new standards, using Bob's Tires as an example.

- Theater Project: The director reported that architects had been chosen and had signed their contract for the theater project. Surveys of the building were scheduled for May 16th, using lidar for interior and exterior scans. After preliminary work, the architects planned to hold a workshop presentation for the council.
- CRA Legislation: The director provided an update on CRA bills in the state legislature. The House had abandoned their bill, giving CRAs a reprieve for another year. The director thanked the council for their efforts in contacting representatives about these bills.
- Business Support: There was a discussion about potentially incorporating business education or advertising requirements into CRA grants to help ensure the success of businesses in the CRA district. The director agreed to work on incorporating these ideas into the grant program for review at the next meeting.
- Smart Start Program: The council discussed the possibility of requiring or encouraging new businesses to participate in the Smart Start program, a six-week course that provides education on business management.

#### **4. MAIN STREET ACTIVITY REPORT**

CRA Director Gail Hamilton provided some updates:

- Theater Project: Architects have been chosen and have signed their contract. Surveys of the building have been ordered and will be conducted on May 16th using lidar for both interior and exterior scans.
- Workshop Presentation: Once the architects complete their preliminary work, they plan to schedule a workshop day, coinciding with a council meeting, to present their findings to the council.
- Budget: It was mentioned that there was a budget of 2.5 million dollars, of which \$630,000 was spent on the building itself.
- Project Focus: The main focus of the project is to preserve the facade, restore the marquee, and ensure the facade of the building is maintained.

ADJOURN 5:43 PM

Submitted by Ricardo Quiñones