

**Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)  
Meeting Minutes February 1, 2022  
(DRAFT)**

2/1/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

**CRA Members Present:** Chair Robin Gibson, Mayor Eugene Fultz, Terrye Howell, Jack Hilligoss,

Staff Present: James Slaton, Executive Director, Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk,

Chair Robin Gibson called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

2. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

3. Agreement With Cobb Construction For Construction Of The Park Avenue Connector Trail.

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:**

The CRA Board will consider entering into an agreement with Cobb Construction related to building the Park Avenue Connector Trail.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the CRA Board consider the following action(s):

1. Approve the agreement with Cobb Construction regarding the Park Avenue Connector Trail.
2. Authorize the Executive Director to execute the appropriate documents, on the CRA's behalf.
3. Authorize an expenditure in the amount of \$824,290.72.
4. Authorize a budget amendment in the amount of \$74,290.72.

**BACKGROUND**

The City and CRA is considering the construction of the Park Avenue Connector Trail, a project first proposed in early 2020. The trail connects Lake Wailes Park Trail to Historic Downtown Lake Wales. Key components of the project include:

- Narrowing Park Avenue between Lakeshore Blvd. & North 3rd St. from two lanes to one lane
- Maintaining Park Avenue as a one-way east to west street
- Allowing the space gained by the narrowing of the street to be rebuilt as the trail
- Complete reconstruction of Park Avenue from curb to curb
- Adding six parallel parking spaces along Park Avenue to serve residents, park users and trail users

The City of Lake Wales held a public open house on August 20, 2020 to receive and incorporate feedback from the community. Additionally, the City held office hours to work directly with impacted residents that live along Park Avenue. Significant concern was raised regarding the loss of existing on-street parking. In order to mitigate the concern, the City incorporated six parallel parking spaces located in two locations along Park Avenue.

The ultimate goal of this trail is to integrate and connect Historic Downtown Lake Wales, Crystal Lake Park, and Lake Wailes Park as recommended in the Dover Kohl "Lake Wales Connected" plan (page 101, Near-Term Action Step 3).

Construction of this project was competitively bid (ITB #21-490), Cobb Construction was the lowest-qualified bidder of two total bids received. Staff met with a representative from Cobb Construction and identified two primary areas to reduce costs associated with the project. These cost saving areas include:

1. Substitution of lighting – The project originally called for the custom lights to be utilized in the Park Avenue Streetscape and 1st Street Streetscape. Due to the significant cost related to the manufacturing of these custom lights and concern that they may not be cohesive with the existing design in Lake Wailes Park, staff recommends substituting the lights. The substitute light product the Lake Wailes Park trail and Downtown Linear Park trail.

2. Landscaping – In October 2020, the City of Lake Wales and Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency authorized the creation of a City Horticulture Department and hiring of a staff horticulturist. Over a year into the program, the City's Horticulture Department has excelled faster than anticipated. Due to the high unit cost of the selected plant material, staff recommends eliminating the landscaping from the contract with Cobb Construction and rather install all plant material in-house at a reduced cost.

The CRA Board of Directors will need to authorize a budget amendment in the amount of \$74,290.72.

There are sufficient funds available to cover the amount needed via budget amendment, shown below in the Fiscal Impact Overview chart. Staff attributes cost overruns due to a number of circumstances, including COVID- 19 related supply chain issues, inflation, and the significant amount of work available.

The City Commission has authorized the usage of City funds for the project at its regular meeting on February 1, 2022.

## **OTHER OPTIONS**

The CRA Board of Directors may direct staff to not move forward with the Park Avenue Connector Trail.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Cobb Construction will be compensated a fixed fee of \$1,474,290.72. The project will be funded via several avenues, as broken down below:

Overview of Park Avenue Connector Trail Funding:

Funding

State Grant \$ 200,000.00

Recreation Impact Fees \$ 300,000.00

Loan via CRA \$ 750,000.00

CRA Fund Balance \$ 74,290.72

Utilities \$ 50,000.00

Streets \$ 100,000.00

Total Cobb Construction \$ 1,474,290.72

\*\*Staff anticipates an additional \$28,000.00 to be expended from CRA Fund Balance to fund the installation of the Park Avenue Connector Trail landscaping. This expenditure will be brought before the Community Redevelopment Agency at a future date.\*\*

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item. Increased construction costs have resulted in the need for a budget amendment. This was discussed.

Mayor Fultz made a motion to approve this item. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Commissioner Hilligoss "YES"

Chair Robin Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 4-0.

#### 4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton, Executive Director, said that by the beginning of April we should have funds in hand from our loan for some of the projects soon to be underway.

Chair Gibson asked about the timeline for construction. We need to accommodate our business owners as much as possible.

Mr. Slaton said we will hit some season but will do our best to avoid conflict and communicate with the business owners.

#### 5. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50p.m.

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Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

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City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk