

**Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)**  
**Meeting Minutes May 11, 2021**  
**(APPROVED)**

5/11/2021 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

**CRA Members Present:** Chair Robin Gibson, Commissioner Williams, Mayor Fultz, Commissioner Howell, Commissioner Fitzgerald

**Staff Present:** James Slaton, Executive Director; Albert C. Galloway, Jr., City Attorney; Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk

Chair Robin Gibson called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00 p.m.

2. Minutes - April 13, 2021

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

By voice vote:

ALL: "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

3. Election Of Chair And Vice-Chair

Mayor Fultz nominated Robin Gibson to serve as Chair. Commissioner Howell seconded the nomination.

There were no other nominations.

By Roll Call vote:

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Fitzgerald "YES"

Deputy Mayor Gibson "Abstain"

Motion passed 4-0 with one abstention.

Mayor Fultz nominated Terrye Howell to serve as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Fitzgerald seconded the nomination.

There were no other nominations.

By Roll Call vote:

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Fitzgerald "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

#### 4. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Sara Jones, resident with Lincoln Avenue CDC, reported on the events on May 1. The Market and groundbreaking event. She reported on other activities that the Lincoln Avenue CDC have been involved in.

#### 5. Presentation - Lake Wales Connected Update

James Slaton, Executive Director, said an update on the Lake Wales Connected Plan might be helpful for the new board members. He reviewed the elements of the plan including the action steps and road map of the steps to revitalize our downtown.

Michael Manning, Management Analyst, presented a slide show about the plan. He gave an update on the Park Avenue project and the Market plaza. Final construction documents on the Market plaza will be ready in early June. The next item is First Street. He reviewed the plans for First Street. Survey work and traffic counts are under way. He then reviewed the plan to add more trails including one on Park Avenue. This will connect the downtown with the Lake Wailes Park. He shared a map with planned trails. A goal is a trail along Scenic Highway. He then explained some of the proposed changes to the market place plaza. Mr. Manning then described the plans for pedestrian improvements in the Northwest Area. They would like to add more murals.

Darrell Starling, CRA Coordinator, shared some of the efforts to help with the reconstruction of Grove Manor and improve affordable housing in the northwest area. He explained about our partnership with the Keystone Challenge Fund and the grant from CenterState Bank that will be used to help with down payment assistance. Mr. Starling also explained that there is an effort to help homeowners get clear title to their homes.

Mark Bennett, Development Services Director, explained that they are working on Downtown design standards with Dover Kohl. We will be applying for a community planning technical assistance grant to help conduct a zoning study for the Northwest Neighborhood. This will be on an upcoming Commission agenda. Mr. Bennett then shared slides of some improvements completed through code enforcement. He then shared about some new businesses downtown.

Mr. Slaton commended staff for their hard work. He said not everything in the plan can be implemented by the CRA. Other entities such as Polk State College have to do their part. We need to develop partnerships, such as with Lake Wales Heritage, to help with some of the action items. Some items such as public art will always be ongoing.

The Chair commended the staff and City Manager for the progress they have made.

Commissioner Howell asked about the \$1million request from the Housing Authority for Grove Manor. Mr. Slaton said yes, we need to discuss and evaluate that request before we decide in July. Is that the best use of those funds. That will be brought back to the Board. The Chair said that Grove Manor is lagging behind. We need a working relationship with the Housing Authority. He recommended a joint meeting with the board to address concerns and encourage them to move forward. Mayor Fultz agreed with this as we need to know what's going on with them so we can decide what direction to go in. Commissioner Fitzgerald agreed

and said she would like to hear from some of the residents. Chair Gibson said we should be straightforward about their concerns. Mayor Fultz said most of the concerns he hears about downtown are about the Hotel and Grove Manor. Having an understanding and a conversation will help. Commissioner Howell said she was in favor of the meeting.

There was discussion on how to revitalize the Lincoln area and to recognize long time families.

6. Keystone Phase II Affordable Housing Building & Rehabilitation Project

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of this memorandum is to obtain approval of the Keystone Phase II Housing Building and Rehabilitation project.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the Executive Director to enter into a development agreement with Keystone Challenge Fund for the Keystone Phase II Housing Building & Rehabilitation project, with funding not to exceed \$125,000. This development agreement is subject to review by the City Attorney.

**BACKGROUND**

**KEYSTONE CHALLENGE FUND OVERVIEW AND PLANS FOR REDEVELOPMENT**

Keystone Challenge Fund is a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) that serves to develop affordable housing specifically in low-income communities.

For over 28 years, Keystone has provided affordable housing to low and moderate-income homebuyers to connect families with homeownership. As a result, nearly 4,200 families have become homeowners throughout Polk County.

**KEYSTONE PHASE II AGREEMENT**

Keystone has submitted a development agreement for the Phase II housing project. This agreement will outline the responsibilities of all parties involved, plus provide the details for reimbursement and payment. Specific provisions are listed below.

- Lot 1 - Keystone shall acquire this lot from the owner for \$10,000 and construct a single-family residence.
- Lot 2 - Keystone shall acquire this lot from the owner for \$40,000 and, after acquisition, demo the home at an estimated cost of \$6,000. Keystone Challenge Fund will also pay closing cost estimated to be \$3,000.
- Lot 3 - Keystone will rehabilitate this property at a cost of \$45,574.
- Lot 4 - Keystone will rehabilitate this property at a cost of \$27,455.

Additionally, Polk County Housing and Neighborhood Development will provide \$240,000 and SouthState/CenterState Bank will provide \$30,000 in down payment assistance. These funds will be used towards the construction of the new houses on Lots 1 & 2.

**LAKE WALES CONNECTED PLAN ACTION STEPS**

| Action # | Description   |
|----------|---|
| 9        | Partner with housing contractor to build infill housing in the Northwest Neighborhood |

**REVENUE VALUE**

| Jurisdiction       | Millage |
|--------------------|---------|
| Polk BoCC          | 6.899   |
| City of Lake Wales | 6.7974  |
| Total              | 13.6964 |

Assessed Value (Less Homestead Exemption)      Tax Increment Revenue

\$ 120,000.00 (per home)(assumed)                      \$ 1,643.57 (per home)

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

CRA Investment    \$125,000  
Tax Increment Revenue                                      \$6574.28/Year (4 homes)

Total Return on Investment                      (ROI)              19.01 Years

Note – The assumed home valuation for the renovated homes will be \$120,000 each.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Lake Wales CRA - \$125,000

**OTHER OPTIONS**

Not accept the CRA staff recommendation

[End Agenda Memo]

Darrell Starling, CRA Coordinator, reviewed this item. He showed before and after photos of rehabilitated houses

Chair Gibson said building and lumber has gotten expensive.

Mayor Fultz said he was excited about this. The current lots will be a shining star for affordable housing.

James Slaton, Executive Director, said these houses will improve property values and this effort will bring private investment.

Chair Gibson asked about funding. Mr. Slaton said we need a budget amendment for this project. This item is later on the agenda.

Commissioner Howell made a motion to approve the project. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion.

By Voice Vote:

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Fitzgerald "YES"

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

7. Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of this request is to consider the establishment of the Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board authorize the Executive Director of the CRA to enter into an agreement with Keystone Challenge Fund for the Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program with funding not to exceed \$68,000. This agreement is subject to review by the City Attorney.

### **BACKGROUND**

Within the Northwest Neighborhood, there are a large number of homes needing new roofs, paint, and landscaping. Senior citizens who have been in the neighborhood for years own many of these homes.

Because many of the older residents in the neighborhood cannot fund home improvements, the CRA is creating this program. The Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program would fund the rehabilitation of four homes specifically for seniors in the Northwest community.

The Keystone Challenge Fund will manage the program. To be eligible, applicants must be a resident in the Northwest neighborhood (please see map), be at least 65 years old, and own the home.

The program is a partnership between Keystone and the Roosevelt Academy construction program (that will provide a small garden). Aetna Healthcare will donate funds toward the project and provide health care to the residents if needed.

### **LAKE WALES CONNECTED PLAN ACTION STEPS**

Action # Description

26 Explore potential for funding forgivable loans or grants for painting and other exterior improvements among nearby homes to enhance the appeal of close-in neighborhoods.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

\$68,000

### **OTHER OPTIONS**

Not accept CRA staff recommendation.

[End Agenda Memo]

Darrell Starling, CRA Coordinator, reviewed this item.

Chair Gibson said he is glad Roosevelt is a partner and commended teacher Ray Cruze.

Chair Gibson confirmed that he has the funding. Mr. Starling confirmed this.

Mayor Fultz made a motion to approve the program and agreement. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

By Voice Vote:

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Fitzgerald "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

8. CRA Budget Amendment

[Begin Agenda memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of this request is to consider amendments to the CRA budget for affordable housing projects.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the CRA Board approve a budget amendment for the transfer of funds within the CRA Fund from CRA-Community Development to CRA-Economic Development.

**BACKGROUND**

As outlined in the Lake Wales Connected Plan, the CRA staff has started several affordable housing initiatives. To support these activities, staff requests that the following budget amendments occur:

From: CRA Community Redevelopment

105-559-300-883-200: Development Incentives \$150,000.00 Budget: \$450,000.00

- Amendment: \$150,000.00
- Revised budget: \$300,000.00

105-559-300-334-915: Contract Services-MainStreet \$35,000.00 Budget: \$100,000.00

- Amendment: \$35,000.00
- Revised budget: \$65,000.00

To: CRA Economic Development

105-559-200-661-150: Land-Affordable Housing \$75,000.00 Budget: \$ 50,000.00

- Amendment: \$ 75,000.00
- Revised Budget: \$125,000.00

105-559-200-661-950: Land-Strategic Development \$110,000.00 Budget: \$100,000.00

110,000.00

- Revised budget: \$210,000.00

**ACTION STEPS**

Action # Description

- 9 Partner with housing contractor to build infill housing in the Northwest Neighborhood.
- 27 Identify properties owned by the CRA of the City and explore joint ventures for new housing
- 38 Provide first-time homebuyer counseling and education
- 39 Provide down payment assistance and low-interest mortgages for infill housing.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Gibson reviewed the Restaurant incentive program and how it is paid out. So this money is still there. Mr. Slaton confirmed that. The money he is proposing to transfer has not been allocated yet.

Commissioner Howell made a motion to approve the budget amendment. Mayor Fultz seconded the motion.

By Voice Vote:

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Fitzgerald "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

9. Lease Agreement With Mears Motor Leasing/The Bancorp

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:**

Staff is requesting CRA approval to lease-purchase one (1) vehicle for CRA/Horticulture through the City's master lease agreement with Mears Motor Leasing/The Bancorp and classify various vehicles/equipment as surplus for future disposal.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the City Commission take the following action(s):

1. Approve the sixty (60) month lease-purchase of the vehicles listed on the attached Schedule A from Mears Motor Leasing/The Bancorp.
2. Authorize the Executive Director to execute the necessary documents on behalf of the City.
3. Authorize a budget amendment in the amount of \$1,325.30.

**BACKGROUND**

The City Commission approved funds for the vehicle lease-purchases during the April 20, 2021 Commission Meeting. The proposed new vehicle is as follows:

1. Quantity one (1) 2021 Ford F150 pickup truck for the CRA/Horticulture department.

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board of Directors approved a budget amendment at its regular October 13, 2020 meeting to add a Horticulturist. The purpose of the Horticulturist position is to aid in the development of key CRA projects, in accordance with the Lake Wales Connected Plan, and is a key role in ensuring that the CRA's goal of becoming a "City in a Garden" is realized and successful. To better facilitate horticultural operations, a new vehicle will need to be purchased. This vehicle purchase will be divided between the General Fund and the CRA utilizing funds from the non-appropriated fund balance.

Staff recommends the lease-purchase of these vehicles for the following reasons:

- If these new vehicles were purchased outright under the Charlotte County, Florida contracts, the total purchase price would be \$28,543.00. Under the Mears Motor Leasing/Bancorp agreement, these vehicles can be financed at an annual cost of \$3,180.72. An outright purchase would result in a current-year decrease in cash flow of \$28,543.00 compared to \$3,180.72.

- As with all purchases, if the City were able to purchase items without the use of financing this would result in the lowest overall cost, but the greatest single annual cash flow decrease.

The vehicle will be purchased under the Charlotte County, Florida contract. Purchases made from Charlotte County, Florida contract are exempted from the competitive sealed bid requirement outlined in our Purchasing Ordinance, Sec. 2-418, which allows the City to capitalize on economy of scale and reduces the timeline of acquisition.

#### **OTHER OPTIONS**

- 1) Defer purchase of the vehicle until the FY'22 budget preparations.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

If the CRA Board approves the vehicle lease agreements, the City is committed to yearly lease payments totaling \$3,180.72. If revenues are insufficient in future years, an option would be to return the vehicles under the non-appropriation of funds clause. If it becomes necessary to exercise this option, however, the

individual departments would suffer the loss of the vehicles and equipment.

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Mayor Fultz made a motion to approve the lease agreement. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion.

By Voice Vote:

Mayor Fultz "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Commissioner Fitzgerald "YES"

Chair Gibson "YES"

Motion passed 5-0.

#### **10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

James Slaton, Executive Director, said we are still waiting on news to receive \$750,000 CDBG grant for Housing rehabilitation. Those funds will be available next year.

The Chair asked Mr. Slaton if he will set up a joint meeting with the Housing Authority. Mr. Slaton said he will.

Darrell Starling, CRA Coordinator, reported on efforts to establish a neighborhood association. They are looking for a President for this group. Mayor Fultz expressed support for the idea.

#### **11. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m.



---

Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

---

City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk