

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)
Meeting Minutes October 13, 2020
(DRAFT)

10/13/2020 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

CRA Members Present: Chair Robin Gibson, Commissioner Curtis Gibson, Mayor Gene Fultz, Commissioner Howell, Commissioner Goldstein

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

Chair Robin Gibson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Chair Robin Gibson read a statement:

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 20-69, issued by the Office of Governor Ron Desantis on March 20, 2020, extended by Executive Order No. 20-112, and further extended by Executive Order No. 20-114, municipalities may conduct meetings of their governing boards without having a quorum of its members present physically or at any specific location, and utilizing communications media technology such as telephonic or video conferencing, as provided by Section 120.54(5)(b)2, Florida Statutes.

Citizens may submit comments and Questions at WWW.LAKEWALESFL.GOV/COMMENTS for either a specific Agenda Item or for Communications and Petitions.

Albert Galloway, Jr., City Attorney, read a statement on Procedures for this partial virtual Public Meeting.

Mr. Galloway asked the Board Members, "are you comfortable with all the notice provisions set forth and these uniform rules of procedures we have established for this Virtual meeting? The Board answered affirmatively.

2. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

3. Minutes - September 15, 2020

Mayor Fultz made a motion to approve the minutes of September 15, 2020. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

By Voice Vote:

ALL: "YES"

4. Mainstreet Presentation

Karen Thompson, Director of Main Street, gave a slide show presentation on Main Street updates. She reviewed each committee and gave updates.

The Organization Committee works the nuts and bolts such as fundraising, supervises her and cultivating community partnerships. They started the Benefactor program. Ms. Thompson said she started three years ago and this program was started to enlist the entire community to be involved. The benefactors are involved

in everything. The City of Lake Wales is the biggest benefactor. They encouraged everyone to "invest" in downtown rather than memberships.

The Goals and Objectives for 2020-2021 will include a 20 year Strategic Plan and a New Organization Business Plan. They will work with the Northwest Community to develop a vision and strategy for redevelopment of that area.

Ms. Thompson said that Main Street is an accredited program. There are lots of criteria including board member involvement and she is proud of this.

The Promotion Committee is all things out there. They did the "Shop Local & Win" campaign and are planning a Shop Small Saturday event the Saturday after Thanksgiving. They are over the Farmer's Market and the quarterly newsletter. They will begin looking for advertisers to help cover those costs. The newsletter will include a map of downtown in the center. They are developing a "Look Book" for possible new businesses.

There will be Merchant/Business meeting on October 28 at 8:30 a.m. at the Market Place Cafe. Ms. Thompson shared a list of possible upcoming events that they are planning.

The Design Committee is over all things design. She shared plans for a new mural at Central Avenue and Stuart Avenue. They oversee the "Downtown Done Right" award. They will meet soon to award this year's winner. She described the America in Bloom program to help with downtown landscaping. There will be costs for this. There is a Secret Garden coming that will be a destination. There is a facade grant program underway that will be sponsored by Duke Energy. Ms. Thompson reported on plans for public art which includes a contribution from Chair Robin Gibson.

Economic Vitality Committee is more behind the scenes. Ms. Thompson explained they are involved with business retention and recruitment. They want to work with the City on re-branding as we are a "City in a Garden" with our Olmsted roots. They want to partner with the City on improving the streetscape. The goal is to raise the tax base. She reported that with all these efforts and resulted in more than \$3 million in real estate transactions leading to an increase in the tax base. Bottom line is that Main Street is Economic Development at its core.

Chair Robin Gibson asked about the Benefactor program and what response they are getting. Ms. Thompson said it is growing as they are seeing the benefits of investing downtown. She commended the board singing the praises of Main Street. Ms. Thompson said they have been successful with grants although they have taken a hit this year.

Commissioner Goldstein asked if Main Street has a relationship with the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Thompson confirmed that they do and they meet regularly. Commissioner Goldstein said he felt we needed more meetings like this. He would like to know if there are ways the board can help. We need to make Lake Wales more of a destination.

Commissioner Curtis Gibson encouraged collaboration with other entities and get a community buy-in. He said he understood that events have held things up. He said some events should continue so long as they follow CDC guidelines. Mr. Slaton agreed and said they will soon begin to allow small scale events on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Thompson said the merchants will be so happy.

Mayor Fultz said he is glad our public-private partnerships are going well. He is glad that people still want to invest in our downtown even during this pandemic. He is glad Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson pushing this.

Chair Robin Gibson said he would like more updates on what is going on and they can be informed as to progress. Commissioner Goldstein agreed and suggested that these updates be quarterly. Ms. Thompson agreed.

James Slaton, Executive Director, said he will review the contract and see what the reporting requirements. In regards to the contract he might review it and recommend streamlining it and make it easier to read. Ms.

Thompson has surpassed her obligations as far as showing matching funds. He would like to simplify it. Chair Robin Gibson said the financial aspects were written by Ken Fields. The structure set up has worked well but if we can make it easier to understand then that would be good.

Mr. Slaton said we will give a 60% design update in November.

5. Restaurant / Food-Related Incentive Program Status Update

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS

In 2016, an economic analysis of the Community Redevelopment Area was conducted which revealed that there is an unmet consumer demand for specialty foods within the NW Redevelopment Area and Downtown Main Street District. The Restaurant Incentive Program is intended to attract food-related service providers, restaurateurs and specialty food providers to locate, relocate or establish another location in the Downtown Main Street District and NW Redevelopment area. This program is designed to incentivize private investment. Staff to give a status update on the program.

RECOMMENDATION

BACKGROUND

The Food-Related Incentive Program offers dollar-for-dollar matching funds to assist in establishing food-related businesses in the NW Redevelopment Area and Downtown Main Street District. Matching funds are a grant that can be used to offset the cost of eligible leasehold improvements necessary to establish and operate a food service or restaurant business.

The Food-Related Services Incentive Program is for leasehold improvements to an existing property in order to make it functional for a food-service business. Funds may not be used for normal maintenance or repair. Specific improvements for which grant funds may be used include, but are not limited to:

- Electrical/ Plumbing upgrades
- Installation of attached fixtures
- Grease traps
- Utility connections
- Venting systems
- Sprinkler systems
- Solid Waste and recycling management
- Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing engineering services
(not to exceed 20% of the grant total)
- Monitoring man-hole system installation

Improvements must be consistent with the City of Lake Wales Land Development Regulations and Engineering Standards. Any improvements visible to the exterior in CRA may be subject to Section 23-227 Certificate of Appropriateness and issued by the Historic Regulatory Board.

As a condition of approval, Applicants agree that improvements made using these funds will stay in place a minimum of five (5) years. If improvements are replaced within five (5) years of construction completion, the grant recipient must pay a pro rata portion of the grant proceeds invested in the project for the number of months remaining.

Applicant is responsible for obtaining or having obtained all required local and state approvals and permitting for work undertaken.

Once a maximum grant for any property has been awarded, businesses occupying that property, or the building owner cannot reapply for another grant for the same location for a five (5) year period.

Grant Recipients agree to allow the LW CRA to photograph the project for use in future

publications.

[End Agenda Memo]

Karen Thompson reported that Melanie's Seafood is completed, awarded and up and running.

The Rose Bud Inn Cafe is not completed. She has no new updates on that.

The Ranch Taproom is not yet completed. They are working fast.

Wales Pointe is not completed but is going full steam ahead.. They are working on the front appearance and are going before the regulatory board.

One Scenic and Central is not completed yet but getting closer. \$350,000 is encumbered.

Mr. Slaton asked how much has actually been spent. Ms. Thompson said only Melanie's Seafood. This is a reimbursable grant program.

Mr. Slaton said this report is helpful to track expenditures and know what's going on. He said that possibly in the future we might put time limits on incentives. Commissioner Goldstein said right now with the effects of COVID we need to give the applicants some leeway but in the future its a good idea. Chair Robin Gibson said that Melanie's is doing well. That money was well spent. Getting the money at completion is a pretty good incentive. Ms. Thompson said there is still plenty of interest in the program.

Commissioner Curtis Gibson agreed that Melanie's is a big success and he sees that they are working at the Taproom and moving forward. He asked where these businesses can be. Ms. Thompson said its Lincoln Ave and downtown. Commissioner Curtis Gibson recommended opening this to other entrepreneurs. Mr. Slaton agreed and said let's finish objective one then yes lets look at other areas.

Karen Thompson announced that the Lake Wales Connected Plan has been awarded the Outstanding Planning Study for Small Cities by the Florida Redevelopment Association. She will do a press release on this. This award will be on their website and in their book of winners. Commissioner Goldstein said he would like to share this with the Florida League of Cities. Commissioner Curtis Gibson said this was mentioned at a recent TPO meeting.

Chair Robin Gibson said that the director for the northwest area does not need a lot of experience working with a Main Street or downtown. We have all the experience here already. This person needs to be able to communicate. Mr. Slaton said that passion for the work was important as well.

6. Agreement With Dover, Kohl, & Partners – Historic Downtown Design Standards

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS

The purpose of this agenda item is to consider an agreement with Dover, Kohl, and Partners for the creation of Historic Downtown Design Standards.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the approval of the agreement.

BACKGROUND

Lake Wales has traditionally had a strong commitment to historic preservation. In support of this

effort, the Lake Wales Connected: Downtown Revitalization Plan includes numerous references to historic renovation and design. To implement the provisions of this Plan, the attached agreement has been prepared.

The scope of services for this agreement will consist of three main items:

1. Create draft design standards
 2. Analyze existing Land Development Regulations to determine other changes needed to implement design standards
 3. Examine the feasibility of re-writing design standards/historic district regulations for becoming a Certified Local Government (for Historic Preservation)
- The Cost of the agreement will not exceed \$30,000, plus reimbursable expenses not to exceed \$4,000.

Approval of this agreement will also implement Action Item #14 (Adopt Urban Form and Design Guidelines) and Action Item #15 (Draft and Adopt Changes to Zoning to implement Plan recommendations) of Lake Wales Connected.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for this project is contained in the CRA Budget on Page 159 of the FY 2020-2021 Budget, on the line item Professional Services – Engineers.

OTHER OPTIONS

Not approve the agreement.

[End Agenda Memo]

Mark Bennett, Director of Development Services, reviewed this item.

Victor Dover, Dover-Kohl, reviewed the agreement. He said this is the next step. We need the rules right as buildings are redeveloped. Its important to get the details right.

Chair Robin Gibson said we want to work with folks but not sacrifice quality as it pays dividends.

Commissioner Curtis Gibson made a motion to approve the agreement. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

By Voice Vote:

ALL "AYE"

Motion passed 5-0.

7. Agreement With Dover, Kohl, & Partners – Additional Services

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS

The purpose of this agenda item is to consider an agreement with Dover, Kohl, and Partners for Additional Services.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the approval of the agreement.

BACKGROUND

Due to its scope and significance, the implementation of the Lake Wales Connected Plan will

take several years. To assist with the implementation of this Plan, funds have been allocated in both the FY 2020-21 Budget and the 5-Year CRA Plan for the Plan's authors (Dover, Kohl, and Partners) to participate in this effort. The attached Additional Services Agreement outlines how they will assist with implementation of the Plan.

Key components of the agreement include the following:

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for this project is contained on Page 171 of the FY 2020-2021 Budget, under the line item Dover, Kohl & Partners Design Services.

OTHER OPTIONS

Not approve the agreement.

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Robin Gibson said this sounds like supervision. Mr. Slaton said it is and that Mr. Dover is a great facilitator. We will have a lot coming up soon.

Mayor Fultz made a motion to approve the agreement. Commissioner Curtis Gibson seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "AYE"

Motion passed 5-0.

8. Budget Amendment For Horticulturalist Position Within The CRA

[Begin Agenda Memo]

SYNOPSIS:

The Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency will consider approving a budget amendment to fund an additional staff position within the CRA.

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$60,000.

BACKGROUND

The Interim Executive Director desires to add one additional staff position under the Community Redevelopment Agency and is requesting a budget amendment to cover the cost of the position's salary and benefits for the remainder of the fiscal year. The specific cost associated with the position is unknown at this time, as factors such as recruitment period will affect the final cost. The \$60,000 requested is an approximation based on typical salary ranges and is based on an assumption that the position is filled for the duration of the fiscal year. The requested staff position is:

1. 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, such as plant selection in the Park Avenue Streetscape project. The Horticulturist position will play a key role in ensuring the CRA's goal of becoming a "City in a Garden" is realized and successful.

OTHER OPTIONS

The CRA Board may deny the request for a budget amendment.

FISCAL IMPACT

Up to \$60,000 may be expended out of the CRA trust fund in FY21. Annual costs for future years may reach \$72,000 for salary and benefits; however, this figure is only an approximation at this time.

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

Chair Robin Gibson asked if we can get a quality person for this amount. Mr. Slaton said he is working with other professionals and consulting with other cities. If this amount is insufficient he will come back to the board. He got this amount from Human Resources. Commissioner Curtis Gibson asked if a firm would be better. Mr. Slaton said that we currently have a landscape architecture firm, SM&E, that will work with this horticulturist position to finalize the landscape design. Chair Robin Gibson said we have an asset in Bok Tower nearby that can help.

Commissioner Howell recommended that there be a limit on salary. Will this person need more staff to help with maintenance? Mr. Slaton said we will have to do analysis as we get to that point. Commissioner Howell asked is this person only for downtown. Mr. Slaton said this person can work within the entire CRA. Commissioner Curtis Gibson asked for a cost comparison regarding maintenance from staff or a firm. Mr. Slaton said yes but further down the road.

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

by voice vote:

ALL "AYE"

Motion passed 5-0.

9. Lake Wales Connected Dashboard

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed the dashboard and said this will be on the agenda and website in the future.

10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton, Executive Director, shared an interest in a possible redevelopment interest in downtown. They wanted to gauge the opinion of the board before moving further on it.

Mark Bennett, Development Services Director, showed a diagram of downtown. He said he is an advocate for the City. In the downtown there is a potential for higher density development. The parcel is 4.3 acres currently owned by the CRA as a parking lot. Most impact fees can be waived for this location. This is a

serious interest. This would be a mixed use development of office and residential. Parking would need to be worked out.

Chair Robin Gibson said this is a nice question to hear but we don't need to always jump at the first one. This would need to be looked at. We need this to benefit Lake Wales. This would be infill. Mayor Fultz said this is the first time he has heard of interest in this area. This is a good start. Mr. Slaton said this eliminates some public parking and that would need to be considered. Chair Robin Gibson said our newly hired expertise, Victor Dover, can advise on this. Victor Dover said if we can do something special with that property we can look into it. This is a good opportunity to apply good design standards. Other options can be considered. The CRA is partner in this. Chair Robin Gibson said we want this to be successful to inspire other development. Commissioner Curtis Gibson said more residential downtown is a good thing. Commissioner Goldstein said we need this. Mark Bennett said we can put out an RFP for this property which can include our demands regarding guidelines. Commissioner Curtis Gibson asked if this can include deadlines. Mr. Slaton said yes and reviewed different options. Commissioner Goldstein said this could inspire other property owners. Chair Robin Gibson told Mr. Bennett he has a consensus.

Mayor Fultz asked if we can do anything to move the Hotel along. Chair Robin Gibson said there is something being done.

Commissioner Goldstein said he would like something done about the entrances to the City. He also expressed concern about the Mall.

Mr. Slaton said that there will be open houses or public workshops soon on the pedestrian, landscape and tree canopy design for northwest area and on the design work for the market square. Chair Robin Gibson asked about the trail design work. Mr. Slaton said the design work is at 60% and staff continues to engage with resident. An amendment request to change the layout of the trail to Park Avenue was approved. They are looking into another grant.

Commissioner Curtis Gibson asked if these meetings can be scheduled earlier. Chair Robin Gibson said he was fine with that.

Commissioner Goldstein commended Mark Bennett for his good work.

11. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk