

**Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)**  
**Meeting Minutes April 11, 2023**  
**(DRAFT)**

4/11/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

**CRA Members Present:** Chair Robin Gibson, Terrye Howell, Mayor Hilligoss, Danny Krueger, Daniel Williams

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

Chair Robin Gibson called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

2. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

3. Minutes - February 14, 2023

Commissioner Krueger made a motion to approve the minutes of February 14, 2023. Mayor Hilligoss seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion approved 5-0.

4. Proposal For Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Plan Update From Inspire Placemaking Collective

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The process to expand the CRA Boundary has been moving forward since August 2022. The Findings of Necessity was adopted in January. This adoption also authorized for the CRA to amend the Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION** A recommendation to accept Inspire Placemaking Collective CRA Plan Update Proposal dated March 21, 2023.

**BACKGROUND** At the August 9, 2022 meeting, the CRA Board authorized S&ME to determine the feasibility of expanding the community redevelopment area, called a Finding of Necessity (FON) study. The study was completed; submitted to the CRA Board on January 10, 2023; presented to the City Commission on January 17, 2023 with a resolution to adopt the FON study and authorize an amendment to the CRA Redevelopment Plan.

**FISCAL IMPACT** \$41,700

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item. He will soon meet with the County Manager to see if they will approve this expansion. He encouraged the Commission to advocate on this with County Commissioners.

Chair Robin Gibson confirmed that he should advocate this to the County Commission. Mr. Slaton said yes.

Commissioner Williams asked if other cities in Polk County have done this. Mr. Slaton said yes but he has heard that the current Commission is reluctant to approve these.

Chair Gibson said the funds will benefit the county. Lake Wales is in the county. This should be a partnership with the County.

Mr. Slaton said we should find out the County's priorities for the area and work with them on this. When the CRA expires we will return more value to the general fund.

Commissioner Howell asked about the blue area on the map. Sara Irvine, Special Projects Manager, reviewed the map and said the blue area is the expansion.

Commissioner Krueger made a motion to approve the proposal. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Commissioner Krueger "YES"

Commissioner Howell "YES"

Commissioner Williams "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Chair Robin Gibson "YES"

Motion approved 5-0.

5. CRA Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2021-2022)

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of this memorandum is to give an overview of the CRA's projects from fiscal year 2021-2022

**RECOMMENDATION** For information purposes only.

**BACKGROUND** The Annual Report is a requirement each year. Besides providing financial information, it allows us the opportunity to showcase the impact of redevelopment within our 3 district areas.

**FISCAL IMPACT** None

**OTHER OPTIONS** Not Applicable

[End Agenda Memo]

James Slaton, Executive Director, reviewed this item.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton, Executive Director, reported that the engineering services related to the Northwest

pedestrian and tree improvements project was approved by the state. We are getting closer to doing this work, probably by the end of the year.

Mr. Slaton said the bond closing should happen by the end of the month. He will keep everyone informed of the date.

Darrell Starling, CRA Consultant, reported on the groundbreaking for the Community Garden on Friday. He said we have several partners, notably the Florida Department of Health, and that the garden will be at the Austin Community Center. The need for a Community Garden and access to healthy food was identified as a need in that neighborhood along with bus transportation. Several media outlets are doing a story on this.

Chair Gibson asked if the site is adjacent to the Howell family park. Mr. Slaton said no it's on the other side.

Commissioner Krueger asked who will be responsible for care of the garden. Mr. Starling said several groups are working together. Commissioner Krueger said there needs to be a lead on this or else the garden will fail. Mr. Starling said there is a person in charge but our partners are committed to this.

Commissioner Howell said she heard about the garden and had incorrect ideas about it. She expressed concern about ongoing maintenance. Mr. Starling said that they have a master gardener to work with volunteers on the garden. It will be coordinated through the PACE group. Mr. Ray Crews from Roosevelt and Lester Gulledge, City Horticulturist, will help oversee the effort.

Commissioner Howell asked who is paying the water bill? the City? Mr. Slaton confirmed that it will probably be the City.

Mayor Hilligoss asked about addressing the transportation need Mr. Starling mentioned. Mr. Starling said an improved bus stop may be too costly. Mr. Slaton said he will look into this. Mayor Hilligoss suggested we address the need while doing all of these improvements. Chair Gibson asked about a local circuit for transit. Mr. Slaton said he has started to look into this. The cost will be high but the forthcoming mobility fee can go towards the cost.

## 7. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

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Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

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City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk