

**Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)  
Meeting Minutes July 11, 2023  
(APPROVED)**

7/11/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

**CRA Members Present:** Chair Robin Gibson, Keith Thompson, Mayor Hilligoss, Danny Krueger

**CRA member Absent:** 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 - June 13, 2023

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of June 13, 2023. Commissioner Krueger seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion passed 4-0.

4. Community Project Funding (CPF) Program Grant Agreement With Hale Innovation.

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** Staff is requesting CRA Board approval of Community Project Funding (CPF) Program Grant Agreement with Hale Innovation.

**RECOMMENDATION** It is recommended that the CRA Board take the following actions:

1. Approve the Community Project Funding (CPF) Program Grant agreement with Hale Innovation.
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary documents on behalf of the City. 3. Authorize expenditure of \$30,130.00.

**BACKGROUND** Earlier this year, Congress made funding available for grants for the Economic Development Initiative (EDI) for the purposes specified for Community Project Funding (CPF)/Congressionally Directed Spending. These CPF awards are administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In March, the City was awarded \$750,000 through the HUD Economic Development Initiative - Community Project Funding (CPF) Grant. The funds will be used for the 1st Streetscape Project.

Hale Innovation, LLC provides grant writing and grant administration services for municipal capital projects. The City is currently working with Hale Innovation on various projects as a sub-consultant under a

Continuing Services Contract with Chastain Skillman. This proposed grant agreement will allow Hale Innovation to administer this CPF Grant on behalf of the city.

**OTHER OPTIONS** Do not approve Grant Agreement with Hale Innovation.

**FISCAL IMPACT** The total fiscal impact for this agreement is \$30,130.00.

[End Agenda Memo]

Deena Drumgo, Assistant City Manager, reviewed this item.

Chair Gibson asked what constitutes grant administration? Ms. Drumgo said they will ensure that we are in compliance with required reports.

Commissioner Krueger made a motion to approve this agreement. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

5. Restaurant / Food-Related Incentive Program (Smokin' DJ's, 122 1st St N, Unit #4, Lake Wales, FL 33853)

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The purpose of this request is to consider an extension between the CRA and Smokin DJ's Burgers & Que regarding their development agreement for the Restaurant / Food-Related Incentive Program. They would also like to request an additional \$30,000 for added improvements.

**RECOMMENDATION** It is recommended that the CRA Board consider the following actions(s)

1. Authorize the Executive Director of the CRA to sign a development agreement that includes a one-time, 12-month extension that ends on August 31, 2024.
2. Staff does not recommended that the Board approve the additional amount of \$30,000 for the Food Incentive Matching Grant. Staff recommends that Smokin DJ's Burgers & Que first exhaust the initial \$50,000 and then return to the CRA Board to seek approval for an additional \$30,000.

**BACKGROUND** The Food-Related Incentive Program offered up to \$50,000 in dollar-for-dollar matching funds to assist in establishing food-related businesses in the Northwest Redevelopment Area and Downtown Main Street District. Matching funds are a grant that could be used to offset the cost of eligible lease-hold improvements necessary to establish and operate a food service or restaurant business.

On August 9, 2022, the CRA Board approved Mr. and Mrs. Leeks, owners of Smokin' DJ's Burgers & Que request for \$50,000 from the Restaurant / Food Related Incentive Program. The site of their proposed restaurant is located in the CRA 1 district and they have been gradually working on making necessary developments towards the establishment of the restaurant. No funds have been withdrawn from the initial \$50,000 from which they were approved.

Mr. and Mrs. Leeks are seeking an additional \$30,000 from the Matching Grant to renovate the space on 1st Street and make the extensive improvements required to open a new restaurant and redevelop the property according to the incentive guidelines and requirements. They have expanded from one (1) unit to two (2) units and advised the additional funds would extend to the second unit.

**OTHER OPTIONS** Not to approve the twelve-month extension of the developer agreement for the Restaurant / Food-Related Incentive Program Grant. Not to approve the additional \$30,000 requested from the Restaurant / Food-Incentive Program Grant.

**FISCAL IMPACT** The Food-Related Incentive Program offers up to \$50,000 in dollar-for-dollar matching funds. If the additional \$30,000 is approved the fiscal impact would be a total of \$80,000 from the CRA.

[End Agenda Memo]

Cheryl Baksh, CRA Coordinator, reviewed this item.

Chair Gibson asked to confirm that the recipients are reimbursed for the amounts from the CRA. The money goes into fixtures so the building keeps the value of these fixtures. Ms. Baksh confirmed this.

Chair Gibson asked if the \$50,000 has been expended yet. Ms. Baksh said no nothing has been spent.

Jennifer Leeks, business owner and applicant, gave an update on the project. She explained that they got an additional section of the building that requires work. There are certain steps they must follow before withdrawing any funds.

Mayor Hilligoss confirmed that they have spent \$35,000 so far. He asked if they must wait a year to ask for the additional \$30,000. James Slaton, Executive Director, said they can request the additional funds when they want to but recommended waiting until the \$50,000 was spent.

Mayor Hilligoss made a motion to approve the 1 year extension. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

ALL "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

Chair recommended waiting on the request for additional funds until the first \$50,000 is spent. Ms. Leeks asked to confirm that they can come back. Chair Gibson confirmed this. The Board consented to this.

## 6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

James Slaton, Executive Director, said that the grand opening of the BizLinc business incubator Grand Opening is Tuesday August 1 at noon.

Mr. Slaton reminded the board of the Lake Wales Envisioned update tonight at the Austin Center.

Mr. Slaton reported that the Housing Authority has applied for state funding. Commissioner Thompson asked for details on this project. Mr. Slaton reviewed the plan to redevelop the Grove Manor housing development and the promised match from the CRA of \$1,000,000. This was discussed.

## 7. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

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Chair/Vice-Chair

ATTEST:

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City Clerk/Deputy City Clerk