

**Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday April 6, 2023
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
City Commission Conference Room, City Hall**

Attendance

Board Members: Chrissanne Long, Terry Coney, Commissioner McCleod, Christine Goding, Katy Martinez and Teresa O'Brien

Absent: Tyler Zimmerman and Harry Bryant

Staff: Valerie Ferrell, Shelley Guiseppi, Sandra Fairall and Carlos Turner

Guests: Director Brian Rewis, Assistant Director Jason Willey, Phillip Walker, Amy Wiggins, Officer Sanchez, Officer Hammersla, Lt. Parker, Albert Lee, James Randolph and Fabian Yepez

Updates

Financial Update & Project Tracker

Valerie Ferrell stated expenses are on track.

The project progression report provided a key update regarding Oak Street. This project is now in site plan review and no major roadblocks are foreseen. The Mirrorton screen wall is underway and making progress.

The program progression report provided an update about Stone Cabin. This project has been withdrawn so the encumbered funds for that project are now available for other projects. The Gore building has notified staff they are in the process of submitting for their reimbursement.

The Managers report thanked the team for their hard work. Shelley Guiseppi has been handling the project leads, the website is being regularly updated by Carlos Turner and property management has been assigned to Sandra Fairall.

Valerie Ferrell encouraged all Board members to attend the City Commission meeting on April 17th for the CRA Annual report presentation.

Action Items

Meeting Minutes Dated March 2, 2023

Katy Martinez requested to amend the minutes by removing the word "advises".

Christine Goding motioned to approve with amendment.

Katy Martinez seconded which passed unanimously.

Small Business Technical Assistance

Valerie Ferrell presented the Small Business Technical assistance request. This request initially came before the City Commission in 2022 for funding for the Tampa Bay Black Business Investment Corporation and Prospera. The BBIC and Prospera have proven track records with working with communities and providing

technical services. These services are important for the CRA due to residents in these areas don't have the same business assistance available as others. The Annual commitment is \$200,000 a year for three years totaling \$600,000 which will be split between BBIC and Prospera.

Albert Lee advised the Tampa Bay BBIC has been around for 35 years as a technical service provider and lender. They maintain a current portfolio of about \$2,000,000 in loans. These funds have been absorbed but they have a current agreement with a credit union for funding. The average amount of small loans awarded are around \$5,000.

After some discussion, Mr. Lee added that BBIC will be establishing its presence in Lakeland through outreach efforts and building networking opportunities. They have a relationship with The Well and intend to build up this network immediately following approval.

Fabian Yopez provided background information about Prospera. Prospera previously known as Hispanic Business Initiative Fund has been around for 31 years. They are an economic development non for-profit organization that helps Hispanics start or grow their business. They do not fund but can assist the business with locating funding. They offer business assistance grants through a third party. This aids with QuickBooks training, legal assessment, accounting assessment, branding kits, marketing plans and business plans. These services are at no cost for clients as well.

After some discussion, Mr. Yopez added the growth of the Hispanic community in Lakeland has increased approximately 80%, which includes a large Puerto Rican population increase as well. He also added that Prospera has a working relationship with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and intends to build up networking opportunities immediately following approval.

Amy Wiggins stated the vision for this will exceed the funding that the CRA can provide. The Lakeland Chamber of Commerce will advocate to find other resources to meet the needs of the community. They will be working alongside BBIC and Prospera, as well as community bank partners to assist with the fund pool, and additional marketing tools to make this endeavor a success.

There was discussion on reporting and tracking to meet obligations for CRA funding. It was noted that although each BBIC and Prospera have targeted audiences and services as well as CRA specific funding for its districts, the services would be available to all who seek such services by either provider. The full Agreement and reporting terms were being finalized by the City Attorney's office at the time of the Advisory Board meeting.

Staff recommends approval with annual allocation of \$200,000 with \$160,000 derived from Midtown budget and \$40,000 from Downtown budget for a total three-year commitment not to exceed \$600,000. Next steps would be finalizing the Agreement terms and submission to CRA Board/City Commission for final approval.

Katy Martinez motioned to approve.
Christine Goding seconded which passed unanimously.

E. Main District/Rose Street ROW Professional Services

Valerie Ferrell presented the E. Main District/Rose Street ROW Professional Services. The E. Main Strategic Action Plan update at the Advisory Board Annual Retreat in January provided from Jon Kirk with Straughn Trout provided ideas and standards to be utilized on Rose Street. The requested Right of Way (ROW) improvements would design the standards within the Rose Street corridor. These deliverables are

to include design and bid documents for improvements to the area. The next steps would be submittal of a Task Authorization to the CRA Board/City Commission.

Staff recommends approval of the STA professional services for ROW improvements at East Rose Street in the amount of \$163,600 to be derived from the FY23 Midtown Budget East Main District allocation.

Teresa O'Brien motioned to approve.

Katy Martinez seconded which passed unanimously.


Discussion Items

Valerie Ferrell advised the CRA Annual Report and Audit are completed.

Valerie Ferrell and Terry Coney will be present at the Talbot House Board of Directors meeting on April 11th to discuss a proposed mural project and fencing on Tennessee Ave.

Adjourned at 5:08 PM

Next Meeting, Thursday, May 4, 2023, at 3:00 PM.



Terry Coney, Chairman



Date