

**MINUTES  
CITY OF LAKE WORTH  
JOINT CITY COMMISSION  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
APRIL 24, 2006 – 5:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Mayor Lowe on the above date at 5:30 PM in the Commission Room located at City Hall, 7 North Dixie Highway, Lake Worth, Florida.

**I. ROLL CALL:**

City Commission – Present were Mayor Marc Drautz (arrived 5:46 PM), Vice Mayor Retha Lowe; and Commissioners Cara Jennings, Nadine Burns, and Dave Vespo.

Community Redevelopment Agency – Present were Chairperson Jeff Clemens; Messrs. Matthew Constantine, Wayne Marcinkoski (arrived 5:45 PM), Doug McIntee, and Matt Tompkins; and Ms. Shanon Materio. Mark Rickards was absent.

Also present were City Manager Paul C. Boyer, Jr., City Attorney Larry A. Karns, and City Clerk Pamela Lopez.

**II. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Discussion on a community center in Sosa Plaza**

The purpose of this joint workshop meeting with the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) members and various nonprofit agencies was to find avenues and purposes for the City's day labor issues.

The CRA members made the following comments:

- The CRA had not met as a board to discuss this issue
- Grateful to the City for allowing the CRA to be involved in the discussion
- The solutions would not come from the CRA or Commission
- Asked to hear from the nonprofit agencies
- Did not attend the April 4<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting when the Mayor scheduled this joint meeting
- Wanted to hear from the Mayor.

The Commission made the following comments:

- A recommendation was made to use \$100,000 from the beach fund for a work center at Sosa Plaza
- Staff's memo indicated a zoning change would be required to allow for a pick-up/drop-off area
- A community center-type use would be permitted in the industrial area west of I-95
- Asked to partner with the CRA to find funding
- Chicago was in the process of working to develop a work center
- Asked for input from those affected to come up with a plan to address the issue, then present their views to the Commission
- The Commission would be the facilitators for the issue
- The City could shepherd the issue to make it happen
- Needed to find funding avenues
- Moving the workers to the Shuffleboard Courts was not successful
- Asked to hear from the community about their actions
- The Shuffleboard Courts was a temporary plan, but the City needed a permanent solution
- The owner of Sosa Plaza was already involved with immigration issues
- Sosa Plaza had eight units with an alley for day labor vans.

CRA Member Wayne Marcinkoski arrived at 5:45 PM

The Commission made the following comments:

- Sosa Plaza could be a one-stop shop for services
- Mr. Sosa was trying to get an immigration lawyer and the Mexican Consulate into Lake Worth
- Asked the nonprofit organizations to administer the labor devices because the City did not have the staffing to be involved
- The City had ordinances prohibiting labor for hire
- The nonprofit organizations would provide labor for hire duties and take care of worker compensation issues.

Mayor Drautz arrived at 5:46 PM.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Sosa Plaza was one idea
- The City's way of handling the issue was not working
- A truck or van could not go through the alley behind Sosa Plaza
- 325 South Dixie Highway was not a great location for this type of business
- The workers would migrate onto Dixie Highway

- A business across from 309 South Dixie Highway blocked the alley on “H” Street
- Spoke to the national Home Depot office about them funding the office and they were sent an itemized bill for the cost of Sosa Plaza
- If there was a problem with Sosa Plaza, the City could submit another itemized bill to Home Depot for another location
- Home Depot on Lake Worth Road had problems with laborers in their parking lot
- A community center would benefit both Home Depot and the City
- Did not see a problem with using the alley behind Sosa Plaza, but there were overgrown bushes and fences leaning into the alley
- Home Depot started arresting those who were standing around their store
- The arrests had stirred up problems, which made Lake Worth’s problems worse
- More individuals would be standing on Lake Worth streets looking for work
- Asked to hear from someone who had a solution
- Spoke to Jupiter and creating a community center was a solution
- The Police Department had problems with those individuals who did not want to work
- If the work was taken away, it might cause violent crimes because the workers needed to feed their families
- The laborers followed the trucks, not the trucks following the laborers
- Needed to designate a pick-up/drop-off area
- The federal government would decide on whether to pick up the workers
- Jupiter had the funds and facility, but they had not done anything because the workers would not go to a facility next to the Police Department
- Asked the public about a non-soliciting ordinance
- Did the City want to deal with day laborers or was the goal to offer other services
- Asked if Home Depot would offer corporate support
- Asked what the volume of workers was
- Recommended John Prince Park as a regional location
- County Commissioners would not agree to use John Prince Park
- The County would not commit funds
- The center could be used to educate the workers on what was not acceptable behavior in Lake Worth
- The nonprofit agencies would help the workers with immigration issues
- Mr. Sosa was willing to hire a full-time person to make the center work
- There was a traffic and zoning problem at Sosa Plaza
- Wanted to take care of Lake Worth residents, but would get individuals bussed in from other communities
- The federal government could not process 12 million immigration

applications in five years

- Whatever the federal government decided, it would not help Lake Worth for five years
- The City needed to look for a long term solution
- Offended by the word “illegal” when discussing the workers
- Workers were not a plague on the City and festivals brought in people from other areas.

The CRA members made the following comments:

- Asked what the City and public wanted from the center
- How many people were involved
- Asked about the size of the center
- Additional services needed to be offered
- Who would pay for the center
- Were the workers willing to take the trolley or walk to the center
- Location was the number one issue, but there were other issues
- There were family services that needed to be addressed
- May need two locations--family services and work services
- The type of services would dictate the location
- More research was needed to find the best location.

The following comments were made by the public:

- There were 107 functioning community centers in the country, which were based on the community's needs
- Organizations needed to provide responsible contributions and a plan before they went to the government
- Two years ago Jupiter turned down volunteer help from lawyers
- Voluntary efforts with organizations and religious groups were made
- Three hundred individuals attended the Friends of El Sol meeting
- El Sol was a research center and not a worker center
- Wanted more organizations to help the workers
- A special trolley would pick up workers in Jupiter
- Needed equal protection for all individuals
- The Constitution provided for the protection of citizens from intrusion
- Lake Worth was inundated with individuals from other towns
- Lake Worth should mimic what Home Depot was doing
- Recommended putting signs at John Prince Park to make it a County problem
- Recommended imposing loitering laws for those who picked up the workers
- Had distributed flyers to the truckers to pick-up/drop-off workers at the

Shuffleboard Courts

- If all the workers did not move to the Shuffleboard Courts, then the truckers would pick up the first workers they saw
- The Shuffleboard Courts area did not work because the truckers were not required to go there
- Other Lake Worth businesses could help.

Representatives from the nonprofit agencies made the following comments:

- Asked to meet with the Commission
- The agencies worked with the individuals and knew what type of services were lacking
- The individuals trusted the agencies
- The agencies could get the worker flow moving towards a community center
- Pleased with the meeting and starting dialogue
- Supported the concept
- Talking about a location was premature without knowing how many people were involved
- Recommended starting something now that could be expanded later
- Needed more comprehensive services
- Asked for dialogue with those people who would benefit from the services
- The Catholic Diocese's office was supportive of the dialogue, but more talks were needed
- Needed more churches involved, and they needed to work as a network for information
- A resource center or community-based facility was needed
- This was a community issue
- A work center would be for anyone in the community
- ACORN provided services to get the workers to the center
- Asked the City for matching funds provided by the different organizations.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Asked if a meeting location would be an issue for the workers to attend
- Recommended a church in the community to hold a meeting
- Asked Sister Rachel to provide a list of churches to be involved.

The following comments were made by the public:

- Lake Worth was a beautiful ethnic community
- The center should not be a job center, but should fill the needs of the community

- Congress needed to enact legislation on the immigrant issues
- Home Depot would benefit from the Latino customers if they partnered with the City
- The government was responsible for the immigration issues because they left the door open
- Workers were paying taxes because some were using false social security numbers
- The Hispanic community was willing to pay for the center
- IRS forms needed to be filed and needed to educate the people
- There were two issues: the larger federal question on immigrant status and the City's issue with day laborers on the street
- The City needed to keep the workers safe and deal with the issue effectively
- Concerned with a turf war between nonprofit organizations
- Asked for nonprofit organizations to come up with a proposal and work together
- The City needed to choose someone and "go" with them
- Liability would be a big issue
- Recommended a translator be provided at the next meeting on this issue
- Home Depot wanted the workers out of sight
- Needed to think about people's purpose and why they wanted the center so badly
- Asked how many people got hurt on Lake and Lucerne Avenues
- The workers needed a reason to go to a new location
- Recommended a plaza west of the railroad tracks on Lucerne Avenue because they had empty offices and a food place nearby
- Recommended a large church on "A" Street and a nearby residence could be used as a community center
- Asked who was prepared for any litigation
- Asked if there were any attorneys at this meeting who would help the City
- The Honduras community center asked for a task force to deal with the issues
- Asked for coordination with faith-based organizations, the Police Department, and lawyers
- Migrant workers were from Indian descent and were indigenous to this country
- Needed a presentation from other communities on what they had done
- Asked for the truckers who hired these workers to be involved
- Opposed using beach funds for the center
- Needed to know what other communities around the country were doing
- Asked how cities accessed county and state funds
- Did not need all the solutions at once

- There was nothing wrong with starting with one piece of the issue first.

The Commission made the following comments:

- The workers were on Lucerne Avenue and standing at CVS
- Disagreed with people who were more concerned with the beach fund than fixing the quality of life issues
- The workers were not getting paid
- The workers were in the CRA's district and the CRA members should have a say on what went into their district
- Blight was causing a lot of problems in the CRA's district
- Opposed locating a center in the residential districts
- The Sosa Plaza location had a lot of problems
- The center should not be located next to the Police Department
- Creating a task force sounded good, but the City could not wait another 30-40 years
- The City needed a solution quickly
- The City already had several workshop meetings on this issue
- Needed to come together with several sites and what part would the nonprofit organizations play
- The City did not have all the funds
- Services discussed were already provided by various organizations
- Services did not have to be debated
- The main focus was to find a temporary or small location
- The City was not in a position to take beach money without knowing where it was going
- The City already committed the beach fund money and to go into negotiations with a developer
- At a workshop meeting, each organization needed to tell the City what they could do
- The City would not take full responsibility tonight.

Staff made the following comments:

- If the Commission were willing, staff could get the names of all nonprofit groups in attendance
- The nonprofit organizations knew what was needed and what was already provided
- Needed a scope of service study
- Needed to look into funding
- Once a group was organized and a mission established, the City could help find money
- Other surrounding cities were the core group that were interested in the

City's corridors

- Recommended a task force, but political action was required with Palm Beach County involved.

The Commission made the following comments:

- The Commission was balancing many issues including moving forward with a beach developer
- Having a task force and working together with people were important
- Needed the people to rally together
- Happy that Lake Worth residents had work and resources
- If there was another meeting on this issue, asked that a translator be provided
- The City was willing to work, but the nonprofits needed to show up at the task force meeting.

The following comments were made by the public:

- Asked why relocating the workers to the Shuffleboard Courts did not work
- Our Savior Lutheran Church offered their facility to the task force members
- Proud of everyone attending the meeting and the Commission for being ahead of the national curve
- Opportunities for funding came after this meeting was scheduled
- Recommended an outside event to sign up members to the task force
- Announced an immigration mass turnout on April 30<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM – 2 PM in West Palm Beach.

Staff made the following comments:

- Someone other than City staff needed to run the center
- The main issue was having an entity run the center
- The City needed to adopt an ordinance making it legal to pick up/drop off workers from another location.

The Commission made the following comments:

- The workers followed the truckers and were slaves to the truckers
- Needed the truckers to comply with rules
- Asked if the CRA's policy would allow them to provide funding
- Asked if funds from the CRA's façade program or community aid grant could be used for this issue.

Representatives from the nonprofit agencies made the following comments:

- Asked the City to apply for grants then give the money to the nonprofit agencies to pay for staff
- Recommended the nonprofit organizations meet informally to brainstorm
- Day centers were successful because the workers were involved
- Recommended the Commission, workers, and nonprofit organizations serve on the task force
- The task force meeting needed a Spanish translator.

The CRA members made the following comments:

- The CRA was regulated by State Statutes regarding spending money in the CRA area
- This issue was not in the CRA's current plan
- Did not know the CRA's revenue stream, but funds would be funneled to their gateway projects
- The CRA could use façade program funds to improve the exterior of the community center
- The community aid grant fund was limited, but a nonprofit agency could leverage the funds to help
- There was discussion about funding a neighborhood liaison activity and there may be some synergy
- Would discuss the issue at their April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Recommended one CRA member, one Commissioner, and one Planning & Zoning member serve on the task force
- Asked if the Shuffleboard Courts was a problem because it was a government facility.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Needed a commitment from the CRA or a commitment to use the Shuffleboard Courts to move this issue forward
- The entire burden should not be placed on the nonprofit organizations to attend another City meeting without the City first designating funds
- Recommended creating a task force and using City funds for leverage
- Recommended a three-month sunset task force
- Needed a task force to get together and discuss the options already discussed
- Asked to look into the Shuffleboard Courts again as a pick up/drop off location
- Recommended not using Sosa Plaza
- There was no problem with the Shuffleboard Courts because it was a

- government facility
- The Shuffleboard Courts was a recreation facility and there was a problem with parking
- Inappropriate behavior from the workers was going on at the Shuffleboard Courts
- There was a communication problem with telling the workers what was not acceptable behavior
- Needed a center, needed to offer education, and needed staffing
- Needed an ordinance for trucks to pick up/drop off workers
- Needed to create a seven-member task force
- Needed workers to be involved in the task force.

Staff made the following comments:

- Zoning issues would depend on the location
- A zoning text change would be required to permit a center
- Recommended more than seven entities be involved in the task force.

Commissioner Vespo left the dais at 7:47 PM and returned at 7:51 PM.

Staff made the following comments:

- Every organization present would want to be represented at the task force
- Recommended one CRA member, one Commissioner, churches, organizations, and the workers would be on the task force and make recommendations.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Needed a sunset task force, an ordinance, and an organizational plan
- Recommended calling everyone together to meet at Our Savior Lutheran Church and let them do the research.

Representatives from the nonprofit agencies made the following comments:

- There was a meeting with the Children's Council and they had \$200,000
- Needed to come together as a whole
- The City needed to commit money to open the center
- Asked the City to contribute \$50,000
- Offered to write a grant application
- A task force already existed and a funding source could be tapped into.

Staff made the following comments:

- Staff was not ready to make a financial recommendation to the Commission
- The Electric Utility Review Task Force recommended cutting \$2 million of utility contributions to the general fund
- There were other recommendations to reduce contributions to the general fund
- The City's operating costs would increase
- Asked for a conservative approach until staff knew the Commission's recommendation
- The City had considerable expenses from the hurricanes and FEMA had not yet reimbursed the City
- If the City committed funds, it was national accounting rules that the money had to be available now and set aside
- Staff was not opposed to the issue, but the City needed to be fiscally conservative.

The Commission made the following comments:

- Offered to attend the task force meeting and see where the funds could be tapped into
- Recommended a Commissioner attend the task force meeting and discuss further at the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Commission meeting
- The CRA members would be updated
- Offered to attend a focus group meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup> and report back to the Commission
- Wanted to know:
  - How many individuals would be helped
  - Who would provide the help
  - What was needed
  - What help was necessary
  - What was the scope
  - How could the City help
  - Where would the center be located
- Asked the Commission's representative to get as much information as possible at the focus group meeting
- Asked who used the Shuffleboard Courts and when it was used
- Song + Associates consultants stated the Shuffleboard Courts were slated for demolition
- Asked the City Manager for Recreation Department records on who used the Shuffleboard Courts facility and how many people used the facility weekly
- Asked the CRA to appoint someone to attend the April 27<sup>th</sup> focus group meeting

- Recommended seed money to start the program
- The Mayor was negotiating with Home Depot for funds and congratulated him for tapping into the private sector
- The Commission could make a commitment after the Commission's representative and City Manager reported back on their findings.

The CRA members made the following comments:

- Did not know how the issues could be accomplished in three months
- Concerned about the workers not wanting to contribute in the discussion with the Commission, CRA, and Planning and Zoning members present
- Needed to know where the truckers would pick up/drop off the workers
- There were privately funded day labor centers
- Asked if the center should be publicly funded or research private funding
- 50% of the workers were hired by homeowners and renters
- Asked how to effectively get the workers' opinions on the table.

**III. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

**MINUTES APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Jeff Clemens, Chair  
CRA Board

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Cynthia Hammond  
Recording Secretary