

**MINUTES  
CITY OF LAKE WORTH  
JOINT CITY COMMISSION  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
FEBRAURY 10, 2009 – 5:30 PM**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Clemens on the above date at 5:30 PM in the Lake Worth Lagoon Restaurant, located at One 7 Avenue North, Lake Worth, Florida.

**I. ROLL CALL:**

City Commission:

Present were Mayor Jeff Clemens; Vice Mayor Jo-Ann Golden; and Commissioners Retha Lowe, Cara Jennings (arrived at 5:58 PM), and Suzanne Mulvehill. Also present were City Manager Robert Baldwin, City Attorney Larry Karns, and City Clerk Pamela Lopez.

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA):

Present were Vice Chairperson Brendan Lynch, Wes Blackman, Edward Grimm, Donna Ross, Shanon Materio, and Wayne Marcinkoski. Chairperson Mark Rickards was absent. Also present were Executive Director Joan Oliva and Attorney David Tolce.

**II. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Discuss priorities and joint efforts**

Joan Oliva, provided a detailed explanation of last year's top 10 priorities and their status.

Mayor Clemens said that last year, the Commission ranked a list of CRA priorities, which provided the members with direction.

Vice Mayor Golden asked about other priorities that the members worked on.

Ms. Oliva answered that she provided the Commission with a detailed explanation of last year's other priorities that were being worked on.

Commissioner Mulvehill asked about improvements along the Florida East Coast Railway.

Mr. Marcinkoski answered that the railway was under an emergency order that did not allow a quiet zone.

Commissioner Lowe asked if the beach property was in the CRA's district.

Mr. Marcinkoski answered, "no."

Mr. Blackman announced that, since the last joint workshop meeting with the Commission, the members held a Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) charette. He said the members looked at the economic track in Lake Worth, but needed feedback from the Commission because of the amount of development they wanted. He explained that there was an imbalance regarding who wanted services versus provisions for those services. He advised that there needed to be a level of assurance and comfort for developers coming to the City and how to set the volume of development.

Ms. Materio commented that the "Hands On Project" and the TCRPC's project needed to blend together. It was essential to have a united front with the CRA and Commissioners in order to be successful and to make sure residents did not think they were being driven out of their homes. She said the TCRPC development was not gentrification. She suggested more joint workshop meetings with the Commission.

Mayor Clemens suggested a joint workshop meeting with the Planning and Zoning Board, CRA, and the Commission to discuss projects and to make sure all of the members were "on board." He asked to also discuss the TCRPC's Transportation project at the joint meeting.

Vice Mayor Golden asked to discuss the near future and big issues. She said it would be great for all to be unified and there needed to be a united front. She said she was sorry tonight's meeting was not available on live audio so that the public could listen to the meeting.

Mr. Marcinkoski asked about property cost, which was a major portion of the TCRPC's Transportation plan, because property was for sale. He said another key piece to the Transportation plan was having a good anchor grocery store in the downtown area. He commented that there was a perception that there were problems in the Building Department.

Ms. Oliva answered that she did not know the cost to acquire property.

Vice Chairperson Lynch said the CRA staff were doing a great job and worked hard to make things happen. He commented that consultants were brought in to work with the TCRPC. He said he wanted the Commission and CRA members to be "on the same page," and suggested adding new priorities to last year's list.

Mr. Grimm advised that communities were gearing up to get access to the federal government's stimulus package money. Projects would rely on the City acquiring stimulus money through the County, which may offer other

opportunities. He said he wanted the Commission to work with the CRA members and for City staff to work with CRA staff to get as much stimulus money as possible.

Mayor Clemens said cities that had money to prepare plans would receive the stimulus money. The City may have many projects, but did not have plans. He said it would cost money to come up with plans, which could be a problem in receiving federal money.

Mr. Grimm suggested acquiring foreclosed properties in 30 days to get federal money.

Mayor Clemens suggested members let the Commission or City Manager know about plans that were ready to go.

City Manager Baldwin said he met with Representative Klein about the stimulus package, but the City did not have the money to prepare plans.

Mr. Grimm advised that \$27 million would be available through the County for acquisition of foreclosed properties in the City. He said he wanted to push for as much money as possible.

Vice Mayor Golden said there were also employment opportunities available through training. If people did not have jobs, then more properties would be foreclosed on. She said the City Attorney's Office had many foreclosure documents.

Commissioner Jennings arrived at 5:58 PM.

Mr. Blackman suggested spending time talking about the City's image or its perceived image from an investment or business person view. He said there was a bottleneck in the Building Department process. He suggested hiring an ombudsman who had knowledge of building codes, business retention and attraction to identify problems, and to serve as a troubleshooter. If the ombudsman was funded from the CRA, then the person would report to the CRA members and be limited to serving the CRA area. The key issue to an ombudsman was fairness.

Vice Mayor Golden suggested more Building Department training on the community. She said there were not enough people working in the Department because of budget cuts.

Ms. Materio said the Building Department issues were not unique to Lake Worth. Other cities also had similar issues because a building department was revenue driven. The Building Department staff needed training, customers needed to feel like they were given special service, and staff needed to focus on getting paperwork through the process as quickly as possible. Improving

the Building Department would improve the City's image.

Commissioner Mulvehill said the S-program would help people with their perception of the Building Department. She asked if the CRA looked for grant money.

Ms. Oliva answered that staff looked for grant money.

Commissioner Mulvehill said the City's image perception could be dealt with through marketing. People were still talking about band playing, other patron attractions, and community activities.

Mayor Clemens said the CRA was the main promoter for image and events, but the Commission gave the CRA direction not to do it. He said no one dealt with the image perception to attract community activities.

Vice Mayor Golden commented that the Greater Lake Worth Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) was the City's de facto for bringing in events and attracting businesses. She asked if the Commission wanted to continue using the Chamber or have the CRA bring in events and attract businesses. She said she liked the idea of an ombudsman; however, applications for building permits outside the CRA area would not get the services of the ombudsman.

Commissioner Mulvehill said she wanted consistency so that there was no lack of communication. She had discussed hiring someone with public relations and/or media expertise.

Ms. Materio said there was a need to look into embracing events as a group. A person trained as an event coordinator should be hired to bring people into the City. If the CRA had someone helping the Building Department process, it would take the pressure off staff so that they could help those customers outside the CRA district.

Vice Mayor Golden commented that Dixie Highway in West Palm Beach had a lot of new stores opening.

Mayor Clemens said four or five businesses in the City's downtown area opened in the last few months. He said the TCRPC's Transportation Plan, Hands On Project, Grocery Store, Foreclosure Assistance, Building Department Issues, and Imaging/Marketing were some of the priorities to consider.

Vice Chairperson Lynch suggested the consultant for the Hands On Project could work on the Neighborhood Capital Improvement and Affordable Housing priorities. He asked which past priorities could be eliminated from last year's list.

Vice Mayor Golden asked for a Pedestrian Crosswalk sign in the downtown area. She said downtown restaurants needed to move their tables and chairs off the sidewalk.

Mayor Clemens said there was a need to "take the reins" regarding the downtown restaurants' tables and chairs on the sidewalks. He advised that the Sheriff's Deputies had informed the restaurants that they had to move their tables and chairs.

Mr. Marcinkoski asked to add Job Creation to the priority list.

Mayor Clemens said Job Creation could be made a part of the Retail Attraction priority.

Mr. Oliva advised that the City would make an application for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program with the CRA being a partner.

Ms. Ross announced that the House of Frames owners were interested in the CRA's plan to bring in artist. The project could be piggybacked with the business owner.

Mayor Clemens said that State Trust Fund dollars were cut for the Hammon Park project. There may be money from the Housing Trust Fund.

Ms. Ross suggested a community garden that could be tied with the tree/mulch giveaway event in order to pay for itself.

Mayor Clemens said the property behind the Burger King on Dixie Highway was for sale and could be used as a park instead of a community garden.

Commissioner Mulvehill said County grant money was available for a community garden.

Vice Mayor Golden said Neighborhood Parks were an important priority. The City needed to focus on recreation for children.

Mr. Marcinkoski answered that there had been no CRA money available in the last 3.5 years for parks.

Commissioner Mulvehill suggested using grant money for parks.

Mr. Grimm explained that the CRA enhanced Community Policing and budgeted \$90,000. He said many residents had approached him about the Community Policing program. Some of the residents told him they thought spending the money was appropriate while others did not think it was a good use of money. He suggested the City recruit someone already working in the Lake Worth Sheriff's Office instead of hiring someone who did not know the

community. He said there had been discussion about a Code Compliance Inspector and Community Policing person working together.

Mayor Clemens asked if there was discussion with the Sheriff's Office regarding who the CRA wanted as its Community Police.

Ms. Oliva answered that she spoke with the Sheriff's Office, and they were targeting a deputy who worked in the area; however, the Deputy's schedule could not be worked out. Staff was still working with the Sheriff's Office to hire someone who knew the area.

Commissioner Jennings said she had a lot of problems with the Community Action Team (CAT) using deputies. A deputy coming to someone's house created a lot of bad impressions. If the City had a less despised Code Compliance Division, then having a deputy may not be bad. She said she was concerned about the CRA paying for a Community Police. She suggested someone to network with the neighbors. She said she supported an ombudsman or community staff to turn a neighborhood around. She supported less dependence on law enforcement. When the City signed the Sheriff Office contract, the City was promised more police. She said she thought the CRA Community Police was a part of the Sheriff's contract. She said she was not sure if the Sheriff's Office contract could be reversed, but hoped the contract would not be renewed in eight months. She advised that said she wanted a different style of work instead of law enforcement to reach a community of people.

Ms. Materio said use of a deputy for Community Police was fear-based. There was a lot of conversation on the Community Police's behavior. It was not the CRA's intent to put pressure on neighborhoods. The Community Police would become well known in the neighborhood as the "friendly guy" and someone the neighbors could depend on. The Commission's number one priority last year was law enforcement. The CRA was trying to create a friendly atmosphere and did not see any fear from residents. The CRA was not looking for someone with a "badge and stick" because that would be fearful. It was important for the CRA and Commission to come together so that people in neighborhoods felt safe and would not lose their homes. She said the CRA would know in 30 days if they hired a strong-arm officer or someone who was friendly.

Commissioner Jennings said the job of Community Policing was placed on law enforcement, yet other cities were creating positions to take care of it. There was a segment of the community that did not trust law enforcement.

Mr. Marcinkoski advised that the CRA had budgeted \$300,000 for Community Policing. That amount was reduced to \$90,000 for eight-months of service. He said the money was more than what the CRA should have spent. In South America, police were corrupt, and the fear of police in certain neighborhoods

was valid.

Ms. Materio advised that the \$90,000 budget for the Community Police also included a vehicle.

Mr. Marcinkoski asked about looking at an outside company instead of hiring law enforcement to provide Community Policing services.

Vice Mayor Golden explained that she worked in Latin America, and people from Latin America were afraid of someone in a uniform. She said people only saw the uniform and not humanity. She supported trying the Community Police, which may change the whole environment and supported hiring someone who knew the neighborhood.

Mayor Clemens said last year's enhanced Community Policing was the top priority for three Commissioners. He expected to see the Community Policing policy go down the list of priorities this year.

Commissioner Jennings left the meeting at 6:37 PM.

Mr. Blackman said that the City saw a changeable saving when it contracted with the Sheriff's Office, which would reduce crime. He said Community Policing was an experimental policy and supported trying it.

Commissioner Mulvehill asked if the Community Police could dress less formal so that people did not see the uniform.

Commissioner Jennings returned to the meeting at 6:49 PM.

Ms. Materio asked to include Neighborhood Lighting to the priority list.

Commissioner Jennings said she met with the Purchasing Manager about the bid process to use workers from the Resource Center or to do an apprentice program to create jobs. She suggested the CRA fund a program to train people on the use of solar panels. She asked how to use existing City contracts to spur businesses to hire local residents.

Commissioner Mulvehill answered that the City needed entrepreneur development to create new businesses.

Vice Chairperson Lynch explained that most of the priorities were broad to allow the CRA members to stay within the scope and be creative.

Ms. Materio asked if the workers at the Resource Center were insurable.

Commissioner Jennings answered that she was not sure if the Resource Center workers were covered by Workers Compensation insurance.

Mayor Clemens asked about offering local preference.

Mr. Marcinkoski said the CRA members approved contracts, but was not sure if the City's bid process was used.

Vice Chairperson Lynch answered that the CRA used the City's purchasing process.

Mr. Grimm advised that at the TCRPC's charette, it was recommended that attainable incremental projects be identified. He cited bus shelters and bike paths as incremental projects because they were small and could be combined to receive federal dollars. He suggested finding small incremental projects that could be done to keep the TCRPC's Transportation Plan momentum going.

Vice Mayor Lynch suggested listing the priorities, then scheduling another joint workshop meeting to rank them.

Mayor Clemens summarized the changes to last year's priority list: eliminate Quiet Trains and Dixie Highway Greenway priorities, rename Evening On The Avenues/Tree Festival to Patrons Attractions, eliminate Gateway Attracting Development and combine it with Dixie Landscape Improvements, rename Downtown/6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Maintenance to Downtown Gateway, rename Code Enforcement to Code Compliance, rename Dixie Business Attraction to Dixie/Gateway Business Attraction, and eliminate Gateway Roadway Improvements.

Commissioner Jennings said she did not want any more road projects listed under Transportation.

Ms. Materio answered that paving projects were under Transportation.

Commissioner Jennings said she did not know if a paving project had a higher priority over another project. She commented that Neighborhood Capital Improvement was broad.

Mayor Clemens answered that Neighborhood Capital Improvement included signage and lighting.

Ms. Materio advised that traffic calming devices and a turn lane on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and "A" Street were under Transportation.

Mr. Marcinkoski said installing speed bumps was the only project listed under Transportation. The 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and "A" Street project was part of the Gateway project.

Mayor Clemens said there were no major road construction projects under

Transportation. He summarized the following changes to the priority list: categorizing "Hands On Consultant" as part of Residential Redevelopment and rename Downtown Retail Attraction to Downtown Retail Attraction/Grocery Store. The following priorities were added: Foreclosure Assistance, Building Department Issues, Communication/Image, and Job Creation/Entrepreneur.

He suggested listing all the priorities then either scheduling a joint workshop meeting with the CRA to have further discussion or the CRA members could make their own selections and submit them to the Commission.

Vice Mayor Golden supported scheduling another joint workshop meeting because there were other issues. The meeting would be an opportunity to work together with the CRA members. She said there may be other issues to add that were not mentioned. She commented that she wanted everyone to be clear on the items listed.

Mayor Clemens suggested scheduling a joint workshop meeting with the Planning and Zoning, Community Redevelopment Agency, and Commission sometime in late March. The first half of the meeting would be to discuss the CRA priorities. The second half of the meeting would be to discuss the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council's Transportation Plan charette with the Planning and Zoning Board members.

Mr. Marcinkoski asked about adding discussion to the joint workshop meeting regarding expanding the CRA District Area, Parks, and Broadcasting Meetings in order to provide information to the public.

Ms. Materio asked to discuss having someone professional video public meetings.

Mayor Clemens said video taping public meetings was being looked into on the Commission meeting level, which would be available to all boards. He said he opposed expanding the CRA's District Area.

Attorney Tolce said he needed to research if the City could have multiple non-contiguous CRA districts served by the same board members.

Mayor Clemens asked Attorney Tolce for information on expanding the CRA district to include City properties.

Mr. Marcinkoski asked to add expanding the CRA District Area to include City properties to the priority list.

Mayor Clemens announced it was time for public comment.

Mark Parrilla said he was offended by a CRA member's comment regarding undocumented workers, neighbors on "A" Street feared a police vehicle and

having Community Policing, and suggested having a volunteer or staff with Creole and Spanish language skills to communicate what the Code Compliance Inspector was doing.

Jessica Rockstein said she worked on a community garden and used to take care of other community gardens. She said she wanted to know about working on a public green garden and would attend CRA meetings to hear more about the green garden issue. She said she was excited to hear about parks, gardens, and sustainability or water conservation. She offered to demonstrate the use of low water or native gardens, which could be located in parks.

Laurence McNamara said the CRA had \$4.8 million in undesignated funds while the City was cash strapped. The City should act quickly because many restaurants' revenues were off. He said he wanted the CRA to announce that they would fund \$500 towards paying rent or utilities per month to the downtown businesses. He recommended funding a staff member and purchasing a van to replace the defunct trolley.

Dee McNamara said the City's policy was to require three bids; however, a contractor was hired to make 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue South a pedestrian friendly area, but it was not. The City paid \$8.6 million per half mile on the Gateway projects; the CRA had always been moving in the wrong direction; the CRA was a drain on the City; asked that fiscal responsibility be observed by the CRA members; the CRA could be incorporated into the Commission, and the Tax Increment Financing could generate \$2-3 million more into the City's General Fund; and the CRA created a \$40 million debt without considering creating new jobs.

Javier DelSol said the City should not have "white" deputies walking in the Guatemalan neighborhoods, residents were working in the community for years and suggested creating a Comfort Resolution Board to help neighborhoods resolve problems, the City needed to empower people to help with the community, suggested district town meetings to reach those people who would not attend Commission meetings, asked to prohibit smoking in the downtown area and at parks, and the City needed a nature food court that would attract Guatemalans.

Lynda Mahoney said she did not hear about the Quiet Train issue, said the City was talking about residences near the railroad crossings, trains used their horns from one end of the City to another, said it was important to develop the Trans Orient Development, and said it would be beneficial for the City to consider a quiet train crossing.

Ms. Oliva said the CRA did not have \$4.8 million in undesignated funds.

Commissioner Lowe asked if the Museum was in the CRA district.

Mr. Marcinkoski answered, "yes."

Commissioner Lowe asked the CRA to help maintain the Museum.

Mayor Clemens clarified that it was not in the CRA's mission to help maintain the Museum.

Commissioner Lowe asked to add the Museum to the priority list.

Mr. Marcinkoski said he wanted the CRA to fund the Library so that their operating hours could return to the way they were. He asked the members and Commission to be prepared to lose Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funds because property values were decreasing and to try and stabilize property values so that TIF money could do more.


Mr. Blackman said he was looking forward to the March tri-joint workshop meeting with the CRA, Planning and Zoning, and Commission. He said he understood that a community had to be attractive so that money could trickle down.

Commissioner Mulvehill thanked the residents for their comments and said they brought up valuable points regarding parks. The idea of creating a Comfort Resolution Board was excellent and suggested a Community/Comfort/Conflict Board.

Commissioner Jennings said the CRA funding came from residents, and the City needed to make it attractive to businesses and livable for its residents. She said she appreciated discussion regarding the Museum and Library, and there needed to be discussion about reallocating funds to them during the next budget process.

**III. ADJOURNMENT:**

Consensus: To adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MARK RICKARDS, CRA CHAIR

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EMILIA THEODOSSAKOS, RECORDING SECRETARY

Minutes Approved: March 17, 2009

A digital audio recording of this meeting will be available in the Office of the City Clerk.