Minutes of Community Redevelopment Agency Workshop
held Monday, December 13, 2021 at 3:00 PM
in the Council Chambers

JACKSONVILLE BEACH

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Graham called the meeting to order at 03:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Chairman:	Art Graham	
Board Members:	Frances Povloski	David McGraw
	Jeffrey Jones	Gary Paetau

Also present were: Planning Director, Heather Ireland; CFO, Ashlie Gossett; The Southern Group consultants, Jim Gilmore and Taylor Mejia; Sergeant Sharp DT CAPE

OLD BUSINESS

No items

NEW BUSINESS

No items

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Auditor Selection

CFO Ashlie Gossett addressed the board regarding this agenda item. She stated that this year there were some changes to the audit process from the auditor generals office. The City has formed a committee that will select the auditor to represent the City, and in this process they have also requested the selected auditor have CRA auditing experience. As of this year,it is required that the CRA board be notified and give consensus to the selected auditor of the City/CRA.

Mr. Paetau asked if this was considered a conflict of interest having one auditor represent both the City and the CRA? Ms. Gossett stated it was not, as the entity chosen is independent of both organizations. Mr. Paetau referenced the FRA conference attended in October and stated many CRA's have their own auditor, CFO, accountants etc. and stated hefelt our CRA should consider moving in that direction, to be more similar to other CRA's across the state.

Ms. Gossett stated that would require a lot of responsibility on the CRA, as they would have to have their own RFQ process, etc. Ms. Gossett also stated that since the CRA has to follow the City procurement process, it does not make sense.
Ms. Povloski stated maybe having the information of who was chosen as the auditor

committee, why they were chosen, and the process would help the board to approve the overall decision.

Ms. Gossett stated the audit agreement in place previously expired in 2020. The newcommittee had 2 council members on, and the committee would make a recommendation to council to select the auditor, but the final selection was up to the council. In July 2021, councilapproved the establishment of the CRA committee for this audit. Council members Jansen and Stokes are on the committee, as well as a member of the public. The committee is following what the state statute and auditor general office state are required for audits.

Ms. Povloski asked if the CRA had its own auditor, would the CRA represent the committee or would it still be council members? Ms. Gossett replied to follow procurement, it would still be council members. To which Ms. Povloski stated she felt having their own auditor would be a waste of resources and time.

Mr. Graham asked what happens if the CRA ultimately does not agree with the final selection? Ms. Gossett said they would have to go through the entire process again with the CRA.

It was noted the future contract with the auditor selected would be 5 years.

Mr. Paetau asked if it was too late for a CRA member to serve on the committee, to which Ms. Gossett replied that the only way that could be done would be for council to approve redoing the committee.

Final requests of the board to CFO Gossett, were to seek CRA representation on the next committee, shortening the contract period for renewals for the CRA. The board ultimately gave consensus to agree to move forward with the City auditor selection.

B. Downtown District Project Discussion - Continued from 11/15/21

Mr. Jeffrey Jones stated he recalled a time where it was stated CRA could pay overprice for properties if there was a public benefit for purchasing the property. Discussion ensued and it was determined the board could consider a payment for property based on the property's future value.

Ms. Povloski showed the board some ideas she had for the downtown district that she has worked on over the last few years serving on the board. Mr. Paetau asked where this came from in relation to the 2007 plan? Ms. Povloski stated the images came from that plan. Ms. Povloski stated that she felt that Latham Plaza and the surrounding area should be a main focal point of the downtown, for more than just special events. She stated we should try to seek out partnerships with developers that would assist in this effort, and offer green space, family friendly, and entertainment spaces. Ms. Povloski noted that everything she mentioned in discussion is all allowed under the current plan, and no update or amendment would be required. She reiterated that all of the things she is discussing are just ideas, and not anything the board has to do.

Mr. McGraw stated that after a lot of thought, he feels that the endzones labeled in the plan should potentially be utilized as a large patio space for the businesses and restaurants.

The board discussed different ideas on the downtown, and how to move forward, ultimately all agreeing that there is a need to find ways to attract more people, specifically pedestrians, to the downtown. There is a need to consider street closures, endzone upgrades, more green spaces, etc.

Staff agreed and moving forward in 2022, staff will work to bring back Latham Plaza, P3 discussions, and having staff work on development in the downtown district.

C. Current Downtown CRA District Projects

Planning Director, Heather Ireland stated the board received the staff report regarding downtown projects in their memo, and asked the board if they had any questions regarding anything.

Mr. David McGraw asked if there was anything that "wowed" staff in the incentive survey results. Ms. Ireland replied that she had not reviewed the results yet, and would be presenting the findings at the January meeting.

Mr. Gary Paetau asked if there was any update on the private development north of bandshell located at the east end of Latham Plaza. Staff stated there was no update, and there were no building permits submitted at this time. Staff will do more research and get back to the board. Mr. Paetau also stated that regarding the pier entry, the board needs to be thinking about how we will complete this project efficiently. He stated DixHite is working on plans, and are we taking into consideration the parts of 1st street that will need reworking after construction is completed? (Many of the pavers and sidewalks are severely damaged). Ms. Irelandinformed him staff has reviewed the draft plans along with the fire Marshall and sent back comments. DixHite will be coming to present to the CRA in March of 2022 (tentatively) regarding the pier entry.

Mr. Jeffrey Jones asked if there was an update on the Habibis location, as it is completed gutted. Staff stated they have received nothing formal from the owners. Mr. Paetau asked if it were possible for staff to help with incentives, or offer ideas of what to do with the space, etc. Ms. Ireland and Mr. Gilmore stated that staff had initial meetings with the owners, and would be meeting with them again in the future, but again nothing official has been submitted at this time.

Mr. Jones also stated that in the second to last paragraph for site furnishings, it shows we have been "moving onto the next steps" for about 5 years. He stated we need to move these things up, as they have been on the agenda for years now. Ms. Ireland said staff is having DixHite come meet with them first of the year, with a better update in January meeting. Mr. Graham asked for clarification, are DH going to put together the bid documents and bring those back to the board? Ms. Ireland said yes, but the documents may not be ready to go outfor bid until February/March. Mr. Jones stated it sounded like it would be at least 6 months before we start on this, and asked why things cannot move quicker?

Mr. Paetau stated the board going back to DixHite for fees and scope on Latham Plaza before we start on this, and asked why things cannot move quicker.

Mr. Paetau stated the board is going back to DixHite for fees and scope on Latham Plaza project, and asked for the board to possibly consider another group because he does not feel we are getting the service we should. Mr. Graham asked what the process/timeline would be for new consultant? Ms. Ireland said it would an RFQ process, and estimated at least three months, but she would need to confirm with CFO Ashlie Gossett. Ms. Povloski stated if we went through with this, we would also have to create an entire new concept which would take a lot of time, and referenced DixHite has already created a concept that was driven by many public meetings and input.

Mr. McGraw stated he is the newest members of the board, and asked what DH has completed. Ms. Ireland stated all of the large books were done by DH: art plan, wayfinding, lighting, master plan, and now after coming back to the CRA for additional input, selection of the bike racks, walking downtown, they are moving forward.

Mr. McGraw asked about the CRA social media presence and stated that the CRA board should have a presence, and specifically create their own profile that the City would then share. Ms. Ireland stated staff would meet with the communications director to see what the CRA can/cannot do.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:57 PM.

Submitted by: Taylor Mobbs, CRA Coordinator

Approval:

Art Graham, Chairman

Date: 2/28/22