



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
CENTRAL CITY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2025 – 6:00 PM
101 NE 3 AVENUE, 11TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301

Board Members	Present/Absent	Cumulative Attendance September 2024-August 2025	
		Present	Absent
Kimber White, Chair	P	7	0
Antoinette Wright, Vice Chair*	P	5	2
Christopher Casey	P	1	0
Edward Catalano	P	7	0
Linda Fleischman	A	6	1
Justin Greenbaum	P	6	1
Thomas Mabey	P	7	0
Thomas Manos	P	2	0
Jason Ross	A	4	2
Nikola Stan	P	7	0
Bobby Tinoco	P	7	0

*Vice Chair Wright participated via Zoom

Staff:

Laura Reece, Acting Asst City Manager
Eric Abend, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Clarence Woods, CRA Manager
Vanessa Martin, CRA Business Manager
Cija Omengabar, CRA Planner/Liaison
Tania Bailey-Watson, CRA Senior Administrative Assistant
MacKendy Phillipi, Project Manager II, Transportation & Mobility
Joshua Carden, Cultural Affairs Officer

Others:

Olga Zamora
K. Cruitt, Recording Secretary, Prototype Inc.

Communication to the City Commission:

None.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

Board members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. Roll was called, and it was noted that a quorum was present.

Motion by Mr. Catalano, seconded by Mr. Tinoco, to allow Vice Chair Wright to participate virtually, via Zoom. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair White welcomed Mr. Christopher Casey as a new Member,

Motion by Mr. Catalano, seconded by Mr. Manos, to amend the agenda by moving up the discussion on the NE 13 Street Call to Artist to the first position. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes – February 5, 2025 Regular Meeting

Motion by Mr. Catalano, seconded by Mr. Tinoco, to approve the February 5, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. NE 13 Street Call to Artist Update

Joshua Carden, Cultural Affairs Officer/City of Fort Lauderdale, provided an update on the removal and replacement of the Unity Beacon sculpture on NE 13 Street, for which \$150,000 had been approved by the CRA.

The sculpture was offered to the two original artists in compliance with the Visual Artist Rights Act, however, they declined to accept it, so a demolition permit had been applied for. Additionally, the Public Arts and Placemaking Advisory Board (PAPB) approved the deaccessioning of the piece. Landscaping will be installed once the sculpture is removed.

The Call to Artist was recently approved by the PAPB. Mr. Carden reviewed the 13 Street Roundabout Survey, a copy of which can be found in the public record. This community survey will inform business owners and residents about the deaccession; solicit their input through a series of 10 questions that will include preferences on theming, aesthetics, color schemes and styling; and solicit feedback on the importance of representing local culture and history. The survey data will be incorporated into the Call to Artist which will then be posted for two to three weeks on major public art platforms as well as online. Mr. Carden outlined the distribution channels and project funding allocations. Printed copies of the survey as well as electronic links will be provided to Members for further distribution to their respective civic associations.

Discussion ensued on whether the border surrounding the existing sculpture should be removed, and regarding the functionality of the roundabout. Mr. Carden stated that they first need to determine whether there had been any water intrusion. Mr. Manos recommended that the apron be addressed by City engineering and planning teams; Chair White and Mr. Woods agreed.

Vice Chair Wright inquired whether the cost of reinstalling the base of the sculpture was included. Mr. Carden clarified that no assumptions were made, and the cost in the Call to Artists was inclusive of that type of work. He also clarified that the artist is typically paid 10-20% of the actual

budget; the remainder of the funds are typically used for fabrication, installation and permitting. Illumination was also discussed in the context of current lighting in the area.

Next steps in the approval process were discussed. It was agreed that the PAPB should select the top three artists, and present them to the CCRAB and CRA prior to seeking final approval from the City Commission.

V. Informative Discussion – Sunshine Law, Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics

Mr. Eric Abend, Senior Assistant City Attorney gave a PowerPoint presentation on these topics, a copy of which is in the public record. The background and scope of the Sunshine Law was explained; questions were fielded on the protocol around Board and City Commission meetings. The consequences for failing to comply with Sunshine Law was also discussed.

Mr. Abend reviewed the Code of Ethics which was established by the Florida Constitution. Highlighted sections included Quid Pro Quo; the support available through, the Commission on Ethics, and Voting Conflicts. Clarification as well as guidance was provided on voting conflicts. The review of the City Code of Conduct included expectations on decorum and ethics.

Chair White opened discussion on recent impropriety observed by a Member who handed out flyers to promote their opinion on an issue which was pending a vote. That Member was perceived to have been working against the Board. Ms. Reece referenced an opinion from Interim City Attorney D'Wayne Spence to provide context for Mr. Abend.

Mr. Abend asserted that Members have a duty to make the best decision on behalf of the City, as opposed to the best decision on behalf of themselves. He clarified it would not be appropriate to promote an opinion on social media outside of an approved account. The appearance of impropriety was discussed; it was noted that strongly campaigning on an issue could “cross the line.” Chair White shared that in the opinion of Mr. Spence, that individual had crossed the line. Ms. Reece referenced the Section highlighted by Mr. Spence in that specific case: C-24-42 - *Members should refrain from participating in any proceeding in which their impartiality may be questioned.* Mr. Abend advised that informing the public is “acceptable,” and reiterated that Members must use their best judgement for the community and City at large. They should serve in their capacity instead of advocating on a personal level. He clarified that would be a violation of the Code of Conduct.

Chair White requested clarification on whether Board Members could appeal to City officials to stop a decision made by the Board. Mr. Abend stated that Members can seek redress from government; they can express an opinion within limits to avoid agency disruption, and referenced the Pickering Test for additional insight.

VI. NE 4th Avenue Complete Street Project: Status Update and Funding Request \$82,000

MacKendy Phillipi, Project Manager II, Transportation & Mobility advised that while the Complete Street portion of the project was fully completed, the installation of lighting is still pending. He explained that while the CCRAB approved \$83,000 for lighting based on the initial estimate in July 2024, City Procurement required formal bidding because the cost exceeded their threshold of \$50,000. While going through the lengthy procurement process, the contractor they had been

working with pulled out. New bids came were received on January 21, 2025 with R&D Electric being the lowest at \$165,144. He reported an extension had been approved by both the City Commission and Broward County for the work to be completed by December 2025. He was present to request \$82,000 in additional funding so that the lighting portion of the project could be completed.

Chair White reminded Members that using FPL to complete the work was not an option because the equipment was not theirs. Mr. Phillipi affirmed that the cost for lighting had almost doubled within a year; the incremental expense includes mobilizing a new vendor for the project and inflation. He clarified that there were three bids; the other two were for \$211,000 and \$281,000 and for the same materials.

Discussion ensued on the time line, scope of the project and related processes that caused the additional six-month delay. Chair White clarified that the project was funded by a County grant for \$1M and stressed the importance of completing the lighting phase of the project within the approved extended time-frame. Ms. Omengabar further clarified that lighting was always part of the scope, and considered "Phase II." FPL quoted \$106,000 but never finalized their portion of the contract or submitted an invoice. She confirmed that FPL would not complete the project because the conduit and other components were not their materials. Ms. Omengabar reiterated that the delay was largely due to the lengthy bidding process, and that the bid package was posted in December 2024. She recapped the grant funding process which was for design and

construction (Phase I). It was clarified that \$864,000 had been spent for construction; the rest was for design.

Mr. Stan inquired what guarantees Mr. Phillipi could provide that he would not return with a request for additional funds. Ms. Reece highlighted that while unforeseen situations could arise, they would have a signed contract with the contractor.

Mr. Tinoco raised the issue of conformity within the community; Mr. Woods stated that design standards and guidelines would apply.

Discussion ensued on the best way to incorporate some flexibility to mitigate the chances of additional administrative delays. Ms. Reece explained how any unspent funds would be handled.

Mr. Phillipi estimated that the completion date would be in August or September 2025, subject to weather; this included two months of construction.

Mr. Manos suggested that an additional 10% contingency be built in for material escalation considering the current market conditions.

Motion by Vice Chair Wright, seconded by Mr. Catalano, to proceed with allowing for the additional requested funds, up to the value of the second lowest bid. In a roll vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Manos recommended a future discussion around the approval process to avoid similar project delays in the future; he felt there should have been provisions for a change order since the issues arose during construction instead of handling the change as a new project.

It was clarified that the next step was to seek approval from the CRA Board.

VII. Budget Amendment Update \$1,929,864

Assistant City Manager Laura Reece conducted a presentation to update Members on the Budget Amendment; a copy of which can be found starting on page 33 of the back-up for this meeting. She began with a review of the Central City Tax Increment Financing (TIF) contribution, and explained the calculation behind the FY 2025 contribution of \$1,239,394. Highlights included a bar graph showing strong and consistent growth over the past five years and a review of the 2025 amended budget allocations. Ms. Reece estimated that the CRA balance for re-appropriation is approximately \$2.2M, pending the completion of final comprehensive financial statements. Vanessa Martin, Business Manager reviewed the recommended allocations; this

included placing \$700,000 in incentives and using the CIP as a balancer; nothing additional was needed for the operational account.

It was determined that two actions would be needed to move the budget forward to the CRA Board and the Commission. One to move funds approved for lighting on NE 4 Avenue, and one for the recommended budget amendment.

Mr. Catalano inquired whether any funds had been set aside for the land use changes. Ms. Martin indicated that would be covered under the amended Operations budget with \$180,000 under Services & Materials in the current fiscal year.

Mr. Greenbaum inquired whether the CRA had received any other applications for developer incentives. Ms. Omengebar recalled receiving one for the Northwest corner close to the roundabout; she believed another project had applied to the County for the Southwest corner of NE 4 Avenue at NE 13 Street, possibly for a project with approximately 100 units.

Discussion ensued on the best way to manage the budget allocations; Ms. Reece recapped the recommendations by Staff.

Motion by Mr. Tinoco, seconded by Vice Chair Wright to accept the recommendations made by Staff to reallocate the remaining FY 2024 funds. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Wright left the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

VIII. Residential Program Discussion: Façade and Landscape

Ms. Omengebar acknowledged that the Board had expressed an interest in either increasing the funds available to applicants or adding more eligible items. She reported that to date, the CRA received 20 home owner applications, of which nine were "In Progress". The program was outlined, and it was highlighted that owners are required to secure three quotes in order for a check to be disbursed to them. It was noted that none of the applications were for rental properties, which comprise the majority, so program amounts could be increased to encourage more participation and achieve program objectives.

Discussion ensued on ways to address the challenges faced by owners when attempting to obtain three written proposals for the relatively small \$5,000 disbursements. It was noted that checks are disbursed only after the approved projects are completed. Mr. Manos and Mr. Greenbaum recommended streamlining the process by identifying a list of contractors to assist owners. Ms. Reece cautioned that could result in liability exposure, and would be best handled by seeking legal guidance.

Chair White inquired whether a mailing had been done to all homeowners in the CRA as had been previously discussed. Ms. Omengebar advised it had been done, and they could do another.

Ms. Omengebar opened discussion on increasing the list of eligible items. Recommendations included items visible in the front yards such as driveways, fencing, sod, and lighting. Members

also discussed increasing the thresholds with parameters (from \$5,000 for homesteaded properties and \$2,500 for rentals.)

Ms. Olga Zamora identified herself as a grant recipient, and described the process of getting three quotes as “extremely difficult.” She was in favor of increasing funding for homesteaded property owners.

It was agreed that owners previously approved at \$5,000 could re-apply for additional funding for other eligible improvements.

Motion by Mr. Manos, seconded by Mr. Catalano, to increase the amount to up to \$10,000 per applicant, subject to the parameters that staff will recommend for review at the next meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Manos expressed an interest in asking Staff to look into the number of bids that will be required. Ms. Reece stated that she would look into that.

Communication to City Commission

None. However, Chair White shared that he received clarification on the process that should have taken place when the Board voted on zoning at the last meeting. Instead of making a recommendation to the City Commission, they should technically have sent a communication to the CRA Board, who would in turn recommend it to Planning and Zoning. He understood that the City Commission should receive an internal memo through the City Manager’s office. Ms. Omengebar acknowledged this and added that her office is working simultaneously to get the ordinance drafted for review by Legal in preparation for it being sent to the Planning and Zoning Board.

IX. Old Business Update

Ms. Omengabar provided the following updates:

- Call of Africa - Rescheduled for the March 18, 2025 CRA Board of Commissioners Meeting. The CCRAB had recommended \$404,562.
- NE 5 Terrace Light Fixture - Installation is in queue with FPL.
- Light Pole Installations at Eight Permanently Closed End Streets - Pending FDOT permit review and approval.
- NE 4 Avenue Complete Street Project Light Poles – As discussed earlier; additionally, the CRA is working to finalize the extension to December 2025 at the County level.
- NE 4 Avenue Median - 18 trees were scheduled to be installed that Friday at \$13,680.
- NE 4th Avenue Western Sidewalk between NE 11 Street and NE 12 Street - It was inspected, and while she understood it was not damaged, she cautioned that it may not be possible to expand it through Public Works. A formal report is expected in the near future.
- The Land Use Plan Amendment Plan – The RFQ solicitation was withdrawn last week, and will be re-issued as an RFP in keeping with the expertise needed.
- Capital Improvement Master Plan – Extended by one week to March 10, 2025 as they had only received one submission; it will be further extended as needed.
- Street Paving on NE 12 Street between NE 5 Terrace and NE 6 Avenue - Paving has begun.
- Commercial Safety and Security Enhancement Program – Being discussed with the Police Department; additional details should be available next month, or by the following month.
- December 5, 2025 Communication to the City Commission – Will be going before the City Commission at the March 18, 2025 Conference meeting. It was determined that Chair White would represent the Board.
- Andrews Avenue Corridor Improvements, Sunrise Boulevard to Oakland Park Boulevard – She is awaiting a response from the project manager regarding a presentation to the CCRAB, and will follow up.

Mr. Stan inquired whether the Sidewalk Master Plan would address sidewalks on both sides of the streets. Ms. Reece clarified that there are two plans; the priority will be the repair and replacement of existing sidewalks; the gap analysis will be more of a long term process.

X. New Business Suggestions

- Ms. Omengabar advised that the CRA Annual Report is being drafted; she will share the final copy with the Board when available.
- Expanding the landscape and façade program.

Due to scheduling conflicts, Members agreed that the next meeting would be rescheduled for April 9, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Additionally, the June meeting was rescheduled for June 11, 2025. Both will be likely be held at the CRA office.

Chair White recommended that the Board begin to focus on community improvement projects moving forward, and requested that Members submit their ideas for consideration via email.

XI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. Cruitt, Prototype, Inc.]