

City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers
100 N. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 31, 2025

1:00 PM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Community Redevelopment Agency

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Bruce Rector, Trustee Ryan Cotton, Trustee Michael Mannino, Trustee David Allbritton, and Trustee Lina Teixeira

Also Present: Jennifer Poirrier – City Manager, Daniel Slaughter – Assistant City Manager, David Margolis – City Attorney, Rosemarie Call – City Clerk, Nicole Sprague – Deputy City Clerk, and Jesus Niño – CRA Executive Director

To provide continuity for research, items are listed in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

Unapproved

1. Call to Order – Chair Rector

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

- 2.1** Approve the minutes of the February 3, 2025 CRA meeting as submitted in written summation by the City Clerk.

Trustee Cotton moved to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2025 CRA meeting as submitted in written summation by the City Clerk. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

Jill Gibbs and Kelly Myer opposed the sale of city property to the Church of Scientology and expressed concerns with the Church's plans for the site.

4. New Business Items

- 4.1** Present March Business Spotlight to Vital Life Fitness dba RIFT Fitness.

Vital Life Fitness as the third recipient of the Business Spotlight Program.

For the past 5 ½ years, RIFT (Re-Invented Fitness Training) has been a cornerstone of Clearwater's fitness scene. What started in a garage has expanded into two gym locations in downtown Clearwater, serving over 600 residents.

RIFT combines high-end fitness training with luxury wellness amenities,

including saunas, cold plunges, and red-light therapy, creating a unique and holistic fitness experience. With a dedicated team of 15 local employees, RIFT continues to grow and strives to be the fitness hub of Clearwater.

Beyond fitness, RIFT is deeply committed to the community, sponsoring local athletes and school teams, speaking at schools, and hosting free community events like run clubs, plunge socials, and fitness classes. Through these efforts, RIFT is proud to play a vital role in enhancing the health and well-being of Clearwater's residents while fostering a stronger, more connected community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop, and retain diversified business sector.

3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.

CRA Specialist Tasha Hadley provided a video presentation.

- 4.2** Approve payment to Duke Energy of Florida to replace overhead power lines with new underground distribution lines and facilities on Myrtle Avenue from Cleveland St. to Court St. in the amount of \$671,431.56 and authorize appropriate officials to execute same.

This undergrounding project is in alignment with the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area Plan, reinforcing the CRA and City's commitment to improving the public realm, enhancing street aesthetics, and creating a more pedestrian-friendly urban environment. By removing the visual clutter of overhead power lines and relocating them underground, this project will contribute to a cleaner, more attractive streetscape, encourage private investment, and strengthen downtown as the urban core and economic hub of Clearwater.

Supporting the City's new City Hall (22-0019-EN), MSB Renovation (23-0035-EN), and PSTA's Multimodal Transit Center, this undergrounding effort along Myrtle Avenue from Cleveland Street to Court Street will provide long-term benefits, including:

- Aesthetic enhancements that contribute to a more visually cohesive downtown.
- Improved pedestrian accessibility and safety by reducing obstructions along sidewalks.
- Increased property values and economic vitality by creating a more inviting and walkable environment.
- Greater resiliency and reliability of the electrical grid compared to overhead power lines.

The proposed undergrounding spans approximately four blocks, with a total cost of \$671,431.56, based on Duke Energy's February 15, 2025, binding estimate. Public Works will present a companion item to City Council, including the Duke Underground Conversion Agreement (UCA) and Utility Reimbursement Agreement (URA), to facilitate the undergrounding process. The City and PSTA will oversee restoration of the adjacent right-of-way (ROW) and coordinate with joint users to remove private telecom lines from Duke's power poles once the power lines are removed.

The CRA has allocated \$1 million in funds to cover the undergrounding costs, including joint users and restoration efforts. The City and PSTA will grant Duke easements for necessary switchgear and transformers, with underground power lines directionally drilled in the ROW. Duke anticipates a seven-month construction duration following permit approvals.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds for this are in CRA capital project 3887552-R2005, Infrastructure-City.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Investment in undergrounding of overhead power lines in the downtown core supports all five of the strategic priorities below.

In response to questions, City Engineer Tara Kivett said the Duke Energy invoice is a binding estimate. PSTA will pay for 25% and the City will pay 75% of the project. She said Duke wanted to deal with only one entity.

Trustee Teixeira moved to approve payment to Duke Energy of Florida to replace overhead power lines with new underground distribution lines and facilities on Myrtle Avenue from Cleveland St. to Court St. in the amount of \$671,431.56 and authorize appropriate officials to execute same. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4.3 Approve the Property Disposition Strategy for City of Clearwater and Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency owned properties.

At the February 5, 2025, Strategic Planning and Implementation Meeting, the City Manager directed a CRA-led interdepartmental team to develop a strategy to dispose of surplus properties owned by the City and CRA. This initiative builds on previous CRA Trustee directives to assess City and CRA property inventories and identify opportunities for productive reuse.

The Property Disposition Strategy provides a comprehensive, structured approach for managing and disposing of surplus properties owned by the City of Clearwater (City) and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). This strategy is designed to be legally compliant, transparent, and aligned with the City's long-term vision for economic development, housing affordability, and community revitalization.

By adhering to established legal frameworks and best practices, the strategy ensures that surplus properties are disposed of in a manner that maximizes community benefit, promotes economic growth, supports affordable housing, and fosters responsible land stewardship. Additionally, it aligns with Clearwater's broader redevelopment goals, contributing to public infrastructure enhancements and an improved quality of life for residents.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

- 1.2 Maintain public infrastructure, mobility systems, natural lands, environmental resources, and historic features through systematic management efforts.
- 2.1 Support equitable housing programs that promote household stability and reduce the incidence of homelessness within Clearwater.
- 3.2 Preserve community livability through responsible development standards, proactive code compliance, and targeted revitalization.
- 3.3 Promote marketing and outreach strategies that encourage stakeholder engagement, enhance community education, and build public trust.

In response to questions, CRA Executive Director Jesus Niño said the first two batches of properties to be surplus will be the undevelopable and residential sites. Staff does not believe it needs to outsource marketing efforts at this time.

It was suggested that staff consider assigning one or two points for projects that include a public art component.

Trustee Allbritton moved to approve the Property Disposition Strategy for City of Clearwater and Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency owned properties. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

- 4.4** Approve a North Greenwood Commercial Grant for Tori and Timothy Charles located at 1215 N Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755 in an amount not to exceed \$74,516.91 and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same.

On July 15, 2024, the CRA Trustees approved the North Greenwood Commercial Grant program. The Commercial Grant Program is designed to incentivize commercial property and business owners within the North Greenwood CRA to invest in building, structural, and site improvements. By offering grants of up to \$75,000, this program aims to enhance the visual appeal and functionality of the area, stimulate economic growth, and create a business-friendly environment.

On January 7, 2025, CRA staff received a grant application from Timothy and Tori Charles located at 1215 N Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755. The application included improvements for:

- Repair Exterior Doors
- Exterior Painting
- Repave/Repair Parking Lot
- City of Clearwater H2O Meter - (Separate Water Meters)
- 3 Phase Electric (Separate Electric Meters)
- Fencing (Materials Only)

The total estimated project cost is \$78,266.91. Based on program guidelines, the applicant is eligible for funding up to \$75,000 and must provide a 10% match of \$7,500. Up to 50% of this match may be offset through community service at a rate of one hour per \$300 of the approved grant amount.

If approved the applicant will adhere to the following performance measures:

- **Improvements must be maintained for at least three years:**
 - Section 9 of program states that improvements funded by the grant must be maintained in accordance with City policies, codes, and other applicable requirements for no less than three years.
- **Proof of project completion within 365 days:**
 - Section 8 requires a "Finding of Project Completion" within one year of grant approval, unless an extension is granted.
- **Compliance with City code and permits:**
 - The applicant must obtain all required permits, pass inspections, and address any existing violations through the proposed work.
- **Use of licensed contractors:**
 - Unless doing work that doesn't require a license, eligible improvements must be done by licensed contractors with itemized quotes and documentation.
- **Annual Community Service for Match Reduction**
 - If the applicant is using the Community Service Credit, they are required to complete a specific number of hours prior to disbursement of grant funds.

Staff recommends approval of a grant not to exceed \$74,516.91, contingent upon the completion of all required community service hours. Upon approval, CRA staff will finalize a grant agreement outlining the terms and conditions. Funds will be disbursed upon submission and review of all necessary documentation, invoices, and proof of expenditures.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds are available in cost code 3897552-R2402, Business Improvement Program to fund this grant.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

- 2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop and retain diversified business sectors.
- 3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.
- 3.2 Preserve community livability through responsible development standards, proactive code compliance, and targeted revitalization.

One individual spoke in support.

Trustee Mannino moved to approve a North Greenwood Commercial Grant for Tori and Timothy Charles located at 1215 N Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755 in an amount not to exceed \$74,516.91 and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

- 4.5** Approve a North Greenwood Commercial Grant for Killarney 6 Investment Group, Inc located at 1115 N Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. and 1107 N. Martin Luther King Jr, Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755 in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same.

On July 15, 2024, the CRA Trustees approved the North Greenwood Commercial Grant program. The Commercial Grant Program is designed to incentivize commercial property and business owners within the North Greenwood CRA to invest in building, structural, and site improvements. By offering grants of up to \$75,000, this program aims to enhance the visual appeal and functionality of the area, stimulate economic growth, and create a business-friendly environment.

On October 2, 2024, CRA staff received a grant application from Killarney 6 Investments Group Inc. for properties located at 1107 North Martin Luther King

Junior Avenue, and 1115 North Martin Luther King Junior Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33755. The applications included improvements for:

- Roofing repairs
- Electric and plumbing
- Mechanical repairs
- ADA bathrooms
- Interior partition wall buildout
- Paint
- Repair Exterior
- Architectural, Engineering Permitting

Staff recommends approval of a grant not to exceed \$75,000 in financial assistance under the Program to provide exterior and interior improvements to the properties located at 1107 North Martin Luther King Junior Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33755 for amount not to exceed \$32,400 and 1115 North Martin Luther King Junior Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33755 for amount not to exceed \$42,600.

If approved the applicant will adhere to the following performance measures:

- **Improvements must be maintained for at least three years:**
Section 9 of program states that improvements funded by the grant must be maintained in accordance with City policies, codes, and other applicable requirements for no less than three years.
- **Proof of project completion within 365 days:**
 - Section 8 requires a "Finding of Project Completion" within one year of grant approval, unless an extension is granted.
- **Compliance with City code and permits:**
 - The applicant must obtain all required permits, pass inspections, and address any existing violations through the proposed work.
- **Use of licensed contractors:**
 - Unless doing work that doesn't require a license, eligible improvements must be done by licensed contractors with itemized quotes and documentation.

Upon approval, CRA staff will finalize a grant agreement outlining the terms and conditions. Funds will be disbursed upon submission and review of all necessary documentation, invoices, proof of expenditures and contingent upon paying unpaid property taxes and utility lien.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds are available in cost code 3897552-R2402, Business Improvement Program, to fund this grant.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop and retain diversified business sectors.

3.1 Support neighborhood identity through services and programs that empower community pride and belonging.

3.2 Preserve community livability through responsible development standards,

proactive code compliance, and targeted revitalization.

Trustee Cotton moved to approve a North Greenwood Commercial Grant for Killarney 6 Investment Group, Inc located at 1115 N Martin Luther King Jr. Ave. and 1107 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755 in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4.6 Downtown Revitalization

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

2.1 Strengthen public-private initiatives that attract, develop, and retain diversified business sectors.

2.3 Promote Clearwater as a premier destination for entertainment, cultural experiences, tourism, and national sporting events.

Mr. Niño said the Call for Developments Concepts for the Main Library has received a lot of interest. Staff is working closely with Legal and Procurement.

5. Director's Report – None.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Attest

Chair
Community Redevelopment Agency

City Clerk