

City of Clearwater

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



Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 16, 2024

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, Michael Delk – 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.

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 November 4, 2024 CRA meeting as submitted in written summation by the City Clerk.

Trustee Cotton moved to Approve the minutes of the November 4, 2024 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

Barbara Sorey Love requested the CRA and the Downtown Development Board purchase the historic Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in the Prospect Lake District. She said CRA staff does not believe the property is in line with the CRA plan and will not move forward with purchasing the property. She urged the CRA rewrite the plan to include the purchase of the Church and references to the erased Clearwater African American community, which includes the St. Matthew Negro Cemetery, 100 S Missouri Avenue, Williams Elementary, and Pinellas High School.

Marilyn Turman thanked CRA staff for their efforts and their hands-on approach to educating the community and going the extra mile.

Mr. Holuba expressed concerns that millions of dollars are spent and documentation for those expenses are not being read by some members of council.

4. New Business Items

- 4.1 Approve a North Greenwood Commercial Grant for Big Jim's and Family Barbeque, LLC located at 1303 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 November 18, 2024, CRA staff received a grant application from Big Jim's & Family Barbeque, LLC, located at 1303 N Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, Clearwater, FL 33755. The application included improvements for:

- Electrical/plumbing upgrades and utility connections;
- HVAC
- Interior walls (including drywall), ceilings, floors, doors, and molding;
- Interior paint;
- Certain permanent bathroom and kitchen counter tops, cabinets, sinks;
- The repair of exterior walls;
- Roof repairs or replacement
- Exterior repainting;
- Exterior windows and/or doors;
- Exterior signage;
- The installation, repair, or renovation of porches, patios, plazas;
- Parking area and driveway improvements.

CRA staff recommends the approval in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 North Greenwood Commercial Grant for the businesses located at 1303 N Martin Luther King Jr Ave. The owner has a zero (0%) percent match legacy credit.

Grant funds will be dispersed contingent upon obtaining construction permits, certificate of occupancy, digital photographs of the existing structure, an estimated itemized/detailed budget, and three quotes per intended project.

Upon approval, CRA staff will work with the owners of Big Jim's & Family Barbeque, LLC to enter into a grant agreement, that specifies the terms and conditions for accessing the grant funds in increments. All necessary construction estimates, budgets, invoices, and requested documentation must

be submitted and reviewed by staff before disbursement of the funds

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds are available in cost code 1817552-G2210, North Greenwood to fund this grant agreement.

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 Teixeira moved to approve a North Greenwood Commercial Grant for Big Jim's and Family Barbeque, LLC located at 1303 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.

- 4.2** Approve a North Greenwood CRA Commercial Grant for 1700 North, LLC located at 1700 N Fort Harrison 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 November 5, 2024, CRA staff received a grant application from 1700 North LLC, located at 1700 N Fort Harrison Ave Clearwater, FL 33755. The application included improvements for:

- Roof Retroactive;
- Decorative fencing;

- Adding Turfgrass and Patio fixtures;
- The installation of decorative lighting, and security lighting;
- Awnings or canopies over windows or walkways, including shutters, seating areas;
- Electrical/plumbing upgrades and utility connections;
- Bicycle racks, shade areas, benches, or other pedestrian amenities;
- The installation of landscaping and irrigation systems, not to exceed twenty percent
- (20%) of the total grant amount.
- Interior& Exterior paint.

The applicant estimates the total project cost to be \$78,963.46, but because the grant amount is only up to \$75,000 the applicant will be required to provide a 40% match for the \$75,000. In addition, up to 50% of the applicant's match may be waived at the rate of one hour of community service per \$300 of approved grant amount. Community Service must be performed within the North Greenwood CRA boundary. Staff recommends a grant in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 for the improvements that are to be made at 1700 N Fort Harrison Ave.

If approved, the applicant shall occupy the property at 1700 N Fort Harrison Ave, Clearwater, FL, 33755 for a minimum of five years from the date of final certificate of completion. If the applicant should vacate the property, (1) the grant agreement would be null and void; (2) the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) will not tender any further funding; (3) the applicant will reimburse the CRA all the reimbursed funds.

Grant funds will be dispersed contingent upon obtaining construction permits, certificate of occupancy, digital photographs of the existing structure, an estimated itemized/detailed budget, and three quotes per intended project. Upon approval, CRA staff will work with the owners of 1700 North LLC to enter into a grant agreement, that specifies the terms and conditions. All required/supporting documents, invoices and payments must be submitted and reviewed by staff prior to disbursement.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds are available in cost code 1817552-G2210, North Greenwood to fund this grant agreement.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

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

2.2 Cultivate a business climate that welcomes entrepreneurship, inspires local

investment, supports Eco-friendly enterprises, and encourages high-quality job growth.

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

Trustee Allbritton moved to approve a North Greenwood CRA Commercial Grant for 1700 North, LLC located at 1700 N Fort Harrison 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.

4.3 Update on Exploration of Arts and Cultural Redevelopment Options for the Clearwater Main Library.

This memorandum provides an update on the CRA Trustees directives from the November 4, 2024, meeting, and outlines next steps to explore redevelopment options for the Clearwater Main Library. The proposed initiative focuses on transforming underutilized library space into an arts and cultural hub, aligning with the City Charter, CRA redevelopment goals and the City's Strategic Plan.

Progress and Next Steps

- **Progress:** Key goals, legal and funding considerations, and a high-level scope of work for a Request for Proposal (RFP) have been developed, ensuring alignment with city charter, CRA guidelines, and City's Strategic Plan.
 - Staff will incorporate Trustees feedback at their December 16, 2024 meeting to modify project scope and times lines.
- **Next Steps if Approved by Trustees to Move Forward:**
 - Finalize and advertise the RFP or RFLOI by January 2025, allowing 60 days for proposal submissions.
 - Evaluate submissions and present recommendations to CRA Trustees by May 2025.

Conclusion

This project supports downtown revitalization, economic growth, and cultural engagement and is in alignment with Councilwoman Teixeira's December 4, 2024 presentation and council direction at the same meeting.

In response to questions, Mr. Niño said approximately 10,000 sq. ft. can be used for the endeavor. Although the item is being presented to the CRA, the Main Library is a city asset that requires to be surplusd for lease by the City Council.

Discussion ensued with support expressed to move forward with staff's recommendation and to post a broad RFP that allows the market to drive the response. There was consensus to move forward with staff's recommendation to post a solicitation that includes 12,000 sq. ft. or less footprint in the RFP solicitation and to provide 120 days for the solicitation.

4.4 Downtown Clearwater Revitalization Updates.

Updates on Sculpture 360 program.
Updates on vacant properties owned by CRA and City.

CRA Manager Eric Santiago said the Clearwater Arts Alliance applied for a proposal to reinvigorate the Clearwater Sculpture 360 series. The art sculptures are located on raised platforms in the medians of the 400, 500, and 600-blocks on Cleveland Street. He said the Arts Alliance proposes to take over the art sculpture series, which will create excitement, beautify the street, and continue the City's dedication to investing in public art. The placemaking grant will not exceed \$25,000 and will allow the Clearwater Arts Alliance to select three artists, whose work will be on display for 12 to 18 months. Clearwater Arts Alliance representative Beth Daniels said the city program was robust and has become one of the more popular places on the Art Walk.

In response to questions, Mr. Santiago said, as part of the grant agreement, a Selection Committee comprised of representatives from the CRA, Cultural Affairs, the Arts Alliance, Public Art and Design Board, and local business community will review the submissions and award the three artists. Ms. Daniels said the sculpture rotation will occur if there is additional funding. Mr. Santiago said the city program ended due to lack of staffing resources.

Mr. Niño said 1105 Carlton Avenue is a CRA-owned property that staff is seeking Letters of Interest. The solicitation period will close in a few weeks. He said staff will provide the Trustees with recommendations if any proposals are received.

Economic Development Coordinator Philipp Kirkpatrick said the City owns 427 properties, of which 82 parcels can be considered for surplus. The most

significant parcel is the PSTA transfer station because it is adjacent to four county parking lots, when grouped together represents 2.06 acres of potential development. He said a majority of the parcels are located in the North Greenwood CRA, Prospect Lake Subdistrict, and the downtown core. He said of the 82 parcels, only 11 parcels located outside of the area.

In response to questions, Mr. Kirkpatrick said 13 of the identified parcels are on the Affordable Housing List. The City Manager said the update is part of relooking at city assets via the tools available in Economic Development. Staff has been tasked to identify a plan for the properties. She said more information will be provided as staff continues to analyze the data.

4.5 Discuss the transfer of increment funds between districts.

The City Attorney said the North Greenwood CRA was created officially by Pinellas County in Spring 2023 and established two districts. The previous CRA Director and former Board Members were interested in the flexibility of having resources generated in Downtown be used in North Greenwood, or vice versa; the resources would still be used within the redevelopment area collectively for CRA permissible purposes. He said he was directed a year ago to seek an opinion form the Attorney General's office regarding the use of increment funds. Staff has finally heard from the Attorney General's Office; any increment funds raised within one district must be used within that district.

5. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Attest

Chair
Community Redevelopment Agency

City Clerk