

City of Clearwater

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



Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 18, 2021

8:00 AM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Community Redevelopment Agency

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Frank Hibbard, Trustee David Allbritton, Trustee Hoyt Hamilton, Trustee Kathleen Beckman, and Trustee Mark Bunker

Also Present – Micah Maxwell – Interim City Manager, Michael Delk – Assistant City Manager, Pamela K. Akin – City Attorney, Rosemarie Call – City Clerk, and Amanda Thompson – 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 Hibbard

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

- 2.1 Approve the September 13, 2021 CRA Meeting Minutes as submitted in written summation by the City Clerk.

Trustee Hamilton moved to approve the September 13, 2021 CRA Meeting Minutes 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 – None.

4. New Business Items

- 4.1 Authorize a purchase order to Sparxoo LLC of Tampa, FL for the maintenance of the Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) website in a not-to-exceed amount of \$71,200.00 for a two-year term (2022 and 2023) pursuant to City Code of Ordinances Section 2.563(1)(a) Single source and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same.

In 2016, RFP 54-16, Digital Marketing / Website Development Services for CRA was issued and Sparxoo LLC was the selected vendor to provide these services. Staff requests approval to renew the CRA's contract with Sparxoo, LLC for the maintenance of its website for an additional two years. The first focus area of the CRA's strategy is to create and share authentic, positive stories about downtown Clearwater. The website, www.downtownclearwater.com <<http://www.downtownclearwater.com>>, is an important online platform that is used to promote downtown, provide information

on grants, and attract investors. It provides a shared downtown event calendar as well.

The total cost of the contract is \$71,200.00 over two years. Staff recommends continuing with the Advanced plan which will maintain the enhanced website features, monthly reporting on site performance (speed and security) and search engine optimization. This plan allows for 200 work hours included from the Sparxoo team to build out new features for the site and conduct regular updates for ADA compliance. The website was used heavily in 2020 and 2021 for the restaurant voucher program and virtual art tours. The plan also provides a dedicated account manager from Sparxoo to work directly with the CRA.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds are available in CRA cost code 3887552-530100-R2002, Community Engagement, to fund this contract.

Trustee Allbritton moved to authorize a purchase order to Sparxoo LLC of Tampa, FL for the maintenance of the Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) website in a not-to-exceed amount of \$71,200.00 for a two-year term (2022 and 2023) pursuant to City Code of Ordinances Section 2.563(1)(a) Single source and authorize the appropriate officials to execute same. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

4.2 Discuss current and future housing redevelopment sites in the Community Redevelopment Area.

The purpose of this discussion is to update the CRA Trustees on housing redevelopment projects that are underway and solicit feedback on potential locations for new housing projects and the proposed marketing strategy for the Bluff properties.

CRA Executive Director Amanda Thompson provided a PowerPoint presentation.

In response to questions, Ms. Thompson said staff does not recommend adjusting the wording to the original RFP. Since urban friendly design can mean many things, a rendering will provide a visual backup to depict the Downtown zoning standards. Staff is hoping to host an in-person bluff properties event for real estate brokers and developers during the first quarter next year. The event will provide attendees an opportunity to see how redevelopment is progressing. Wannemacher Jensen prepared some massing studies that can be brought forward to provide a better understanding. Ms. Thompson said, in 2018, some of the perceptions related to Downtown included that city government had a difficult time focusing on

one issue, that city government had a hard time completing what they started, that Downtown was not welcoming, that the Church of Scientology owns or runs a majority of the Downtown properties, and that Downtown was concert-focused. She said staff is preparing a full report of vacant properties for the Trustees in November. The City Attorney said the Trustees may move forward with a referendum after receiving a proposal for development agreement, placing a 30-day advertisement, as required by the CRA statutes, and declaring the property surplus. A new RFP process is not needed. Assistant City Manager Michael Delk said vertical construction on Imagine Clearwater is expected by the first quarter of the new year.

It was suggested that construction materials be ordered now to avoid supply chain issues or construction delays.

In response to questions, Ms. Thompson said the existing RFP will be posted on the CRA website and outline that the City is still interested in projects that implement the Gold standard, at the minimum. Staff would not recommend using language that is not already in the RFP as it relates to Greenprint 2.0 initiatives. Ms. Thompson said the letters of interest are not formal solicitations for bids and will not be as detailed. The master packet provided with the letters of interest will include Greenprint 2.0, the updated comprehensive plan and other development related information. She said Blue Sky has submitted documentation showing the increased cost for construction materials and has reduced their developer fee. Pinellas County is looking for the City to move first on Blue Sky's proposal. She said Pinellas County requires that the City participates in the project; the more the CRA provides the higher the project will be rated. Economic Development and Housing Assistant Director Chuck Lane said there are HOME, SHIP, and ARPA funds available for the project; the Department can cover the housing funds request. He said HOME ARPA funds may be available if the City funds a small portion of units in the facility for homelessness.

Discussion ensued with comments made affordable housing is needed in the area. Concerns were expressed with the cost associated with the Blue Sky affordable housing project. It was requested that staff provide information of the projects located in the CRA and the allocated CRA contributions on a per unit basis. In response to comments, the City Attorney said the CRA has a contract with Blue Sky and cannot invite proposals until the contract expires in March 2022.

One individual spoke in support of the Blue Sky project and thanked Council for their continued confidence in the project. The project will bring

\$17.5 million in federal funding to the city and will cover most of the construction and development cost. Due to COVID, the project has experienced sharp increases in material costs. Blue Sky reduced the \$5 million gap by borrowing money in the open market and deferring additional developer fees. The project will add vibrancy to Downtown.

5. Director's Report

CRA Executive Director Amanda Thompson said the Clyde Butcher Exhibit will be fully open the first or second week in November. The Holiday Extravaganza has 50 businesses signed up for window decorating. This work program will employ local artists to decorate the windows for the holiday season. The Glow Dinner is an outdoor dinner that will feature circus performers and a nighttime market during the first Thursday of December. Staff has planned another voucher program for \$30,000 and will be open to any of the businesses in the CRA. The voucher program will be open to all Tampa Bay residents to spend \$15 and get reimbursed for \$10. She said the Downtown Coordination Summit at the Collaborative Labs was very positive; staff will share a copy of the minutes when available. The group is looking at how to better coordinate the memberships available to downtown businesses and size of special event programming.

Assistant City Manager Michael Delk said one of the board members at the Downtown Coordination Summit commented that the property owners were not present. Staff has approached Collaborative Labs to pull in the property owners into the equation with the four represented groups. The CRA is having some success with the traction and downtown businesses. He said peer pressure between the people who are investing in Downtown and operating the businesses relative to the property owners is starting to occur.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

Attest

Chair
Community Redevelopment Agency

City Clerk