



Meeting Minutes

Community Redevelopment Agency

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order on the above date by Chair Bill Ganz at 7:00 p.m., in the City Commission Chambers, 150 NE 2nd Avenue, Deerfield Beach, Florida.

Present:

Mr. Todd Drosky
Mr. Michael Hudak
Mr. Ben Preston
Vice Chair Bernie Parness
Chair Bill Ganz

Also Present:

City Manager David Santucci
City Attorney Anthony Soroka
City Clerk Heather Montemayor

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

There was a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting Minutes - August 29, 2023

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Vice Chair Parness, to approve the October 17, 2023 minutes as submitted. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Parness, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

December 13, 2023

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Vice Chair Parness, to approve the agenda as submitted. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Parness, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

GENERAL ITEMS

1. Seeking approval to pursue Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) Waterways Assistance Grant Funding.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, said the CRA was awarded \$2 million in grant monies from the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) to fund portions of Sullivan Park that were publicly accessible through the intracoastal waterways. Further, she said there was previous discussions regarding looking into other ways to fund the Sullivan Park expansion; therefore, CRA staff met with Frank Gernert, Broward County's FIND Representative, who enthusiastically advised staff to pursue a FIND Waterways Assistance Grant. CRA staff then met with Janet Zimmerman, FIND Executive Director, who advised that she would support the application. Ms. Mory explained that the Waterways Assistance Program (WAP) matches eligible projects on a 50/50 basis. Upon the Board's direction, staff will complete and submit a grant application, whereby, if eligible, the project can be awarded upward of \$2 million. Lastly, if awarded a large enough grant, the short-term loan strategy from the City could be avoided.

Mr. Hudak spoke in support of the proposal; thereafter, he commended staff for thinking outside of the box.

Chair Ganz opened the public hearing; however, there were none to speak and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Mr. Preston, to move forward with submitting a grant application to the Florida Inland Navigation District. Roll Call:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Parness, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

2. CRA Resolution 2023/009 - A Resolution of the Deerfield Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), approving an agreement with BeeFree, LLC d/b/a Freebee for on-demand transportation services for a one-year term, with two (2) one year renewal options, utilizing the terms of the City of Aventura Agreement/RFP No. 20-07-23-3 in an amount not to exceed \$300,000.00; providing for execution and an effective date. (Funds from Account #190-1500-549-39-16 - Rideshare)

The Resolution was read by title only.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, provided a brief background of the project. Further, she said the short-term solution has been working with public safety to re-start the enforcement of the two-hour parking at the Cove Shopping Center. The short to mid-term solution is the proposed rideshare program, which is a pilot project geared toward bringing people from Deerfield Beach into the CRA District to patronize the businesses of the CRA; long-term solutions are forthcoming. During the budget process, staff began vetting rideshare programs in surrounding cities and it was discovered that the two main vendors were Circuit and Freebee; whereby, all cities went through a competitive procurement to bring the service to their communities. Although both vendors were similar, Freebee stood out more because they have a larger customer base; DFB ambassador drivers; sophisticated service app; back of house analytics, etc. Thereafter, various photographs of the app were displayed.

Continuing, Ms. Mory stated that all rides must go to the CRA area. Further, the proposed pilot project consists of four Tesla's and one ADA compliant van; the service will be available Thursday - Sunday from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.; rides may originate at any Deerfield Beach residence or hotel; rides must terminate at a Deerfield Beach CRA business; rides will not be available from the Cove to the beach; rides must be booked through the app or website; and rides will be free of charge, but riders may tip drivers. The total cost of the program is \$490,000, whereby, the CRA budgeted \$300,000; however, Freebee agreed to underwrite \$158,000 of the cost through advertising revenue. She explained that the proposal includes a one-year agreement, for the pilot project, with two, one-year renewals; the progress of the program will be tracked and provided to the CRA Board via monthly reports; the Board will have the ability to refine the service contract to meet the community's needs; and to offset the costs a FDOT Public Transit Service Development Project Grant will be sought.

In response to Mr. Hudak's questions, Ms. Mory replied that the renewals will be the same cost. Further, she hopes that this project will become revenue neutral to the CRA and be completely funded through FDOT and the businesses, or just the businesses themselves.

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

In response to Mr. Hudak's questions, Claudia Miro, Freebee, 371 NE 62nd Street, Fort Lauderdale, stated that Freebee provides an economic development component, whereby, a team of economic development officers go door to door to every business in Deerfield Beach and offer them free advertising through the mobile platform. She said a live dash board will be provided to the CRA, which can be accessed in real time, to show businesses how many people were delivered to their establishment. Further, she stated that there is no way of saying when vehicles are at capacity; nevertheless, within the first couple of weeks the ridership will be established, so the CRA will be able to set the level of service. Lastly, she said if the ridership is up, another vehicle can be added at the set rate.

In response to Vice Chair Parness' comment, Ms. Mory provided a brief example of how Freebee can be utilized. Further, she stated that staff will be reviewing the data and ridership patterns to address any issues and concerns.

In response to Mr. Preston's question, Ms. Mory replied that individuals do not have to live in a specific area, whereas, the program serves the entire city, as long as individuals are intending to go to the CRA District. Once individuals are done in the CRA District, Freebee will take them home, free of charge.

Mr. Drosky spoke in support of the inability to access the Cove; however, he asked if an individual would be allowed to take Freebee from Ocean's 234 to the Cove.

Ms. Mory replied no, as the ride must originate from a residence or hotel. Further, she provided an example of a resident living on the island who can have Freebee take them to the Cove.

David Santucci, City Manager, clarified that an individual cannot originate from the Cove to the island.

In response to Mr. Drosky's question, Ms. Mory replied that if he were to call Freebee to take him to the CRA District, he would then be able to call Freebee to take him home, which is outside of the CRA.

Mr. Drosky stated that he wants this to be a self-sustaining program, as he is unsure if the General Fund can support the project; therefore, he urged staff to seek alternate funding options, i.e. FDOT, etc.

In response to Mr. Hudak's comment, Ms. Mory said if an individual lives in Deer Creek, Freebee could pick them up, and take them to the Publix in the CRA District, and then take them home.

In response to Chair Ganz's comments, Ms. Mory stated that you cannot go to the Cove Shopping Center to the beach or anywhere else within the CRA District, but you can go from the Cove to your residence or hotel. Further, she reiterated that the ride must originate from a residence or hotel.

Chair Ganz opened the public hearing.

Ryan Morgan, Beach Ride USA, said Freebee is a wonderful company but it will unfortunately put a constraint on his business, which is a free ride service that connects area residents and visitors to local businesses. Thereafter, he provided a brief history of his 10-year business. Further, he loves providing the free ride service, whereby, no money has been made; nevertheless, over the last 10 years many businesses have sponsored Beach Ride USA, i.e. JB's on the Beach, Flanigan's, etc. Mr. Morgan said when he first started, he thought things were going to be easier; however, he realized that there were many logistics involved, which he outlined. He said he has never asked the City for anything, and has a lot to offer and wants to help. Lastly, he reiterated that he wants to help and be apart of the services.

In response to Mr. Preston's questions, Mr. Morgan replied that the majority of their rides originate from the beach to the Cove or from Hillsboro Landings to the restaurants on the beach. Further, he said they do not have the capability to service the western portion of the community.

In response to Chair Ganz's questions, Mr. Morgan replied that they can take individuals from business to business. Further, he said they operate seven days a week from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., whereby, his company was noticing that many people just wanted rides to the beach, which does not provide economic development. Although they can fill in the gaps of where Freebee falls short; however, he is concerned that the funding being provided to Freebee will put him out of business. He stated that Freebee will be a great asset to the community, but asked that his business not be forgotten. Lastly, he said he has never come before the Board requesting money.

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

In response to Mr. Hudak's question, Mr. Morgan replied that the most important thing he has learned is you have to perform mass transits and group parties together due to the demand; therefore, he believes his service can be in harmony with Freebee to enhance the entire service.

Mr. Preston said he understands Mr. Morgan's concerns, but spoke in support of Freebee being able to provide the service to the western portion of the community; nonetheless, he does not want Mr. Morgan's service to be eliminated as it can be used by the community.

Peggy Noland, 325 SE 3rd Terrace, Deerfield Beach, said she use to be a driver/ambassador for Beach Ride USA, but stopped due to COVID. She said it was an amazing experience, as she met many people and was able to tell them where to shop and eat. Ms. Noland said she does not want to see Beach Ride USA diminish as it was successful and helped many people, especially the elderly. Further, she said if there is any way money could be allocated to support Mr. Morgan's program, she would love to see it. Lastly, she spoke in support of Freebee but reiterated that she does not want to see anything happen to Beach Ride USA.

Peggy Ross, 103 NE 19th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, said Freebee and Beach Ride USA provide two different services, and believes it would be a shame for Mr. Morgan to lose his business; therefore, she stated that it would be nice to work something out for them both.

Larry Wilson, 1240 SE 14th Drive, Deerfield Beach, spoke in support of Beach Ride USA. Further, he spoke in support of Freebee as they have the capability to service the entire community. Thereafter, he asked for clarification on the seating capacity of Freebee's vehicles. Lastly, he asked that the Board support Mr. Morgan.

Jay Whelchel, Cove Brewery, spoke in support of the Freebee program, and commended staff for looking into ways to resolve the Cove parking issues. Furthermore, he said Beach Ride USA is also phenomenal as he's used the service many times; therefore, he spoke in support of a collaboration or mutual opportunity. Thereafter, he continued to commend staff for finding ways to assist with the parking issues at the Cove.

Chair Ganz closed the public hearing. Further, he believes that both companies can coexist, as parking is a major issue and will continue to get worse; nevertheless, he needs a business plan, statistics, etc. from Beach Ride USA. Thereafter, he provided a brief overview of his experience with Freebee, whereby, getting more cars off the road is a major factor. Chair Ganz said Freebee has an extraordinary service, but reiterated that both services can coexist, whereby, Mr. Morgan must produce some type of business plan.

In response to Chair Ganz' question, Ms. Miro replied that the Tesla Model X and Y, whereby, X can hold five plus the driver, and the ADA vehicle can hold nine plus the wheelchair.

Chair Ganz said this type program is the future of transportation, as cities are not going to be able to keep up with the people. Further, he does not have an issue with this program eventually moving over to the General Fund, if funding is available, because having a free ride share program is a great City asset. Thereafter, he outlined the grant funding other cities have received from having this type program and stated that he is in full support of the program.

Mr. Hudak said Beach Ride USA has been providing this service for 10 years, but unfortunately it has not alleviated the parking situation, so he supports Freebee; however, he is also in support of Beach Ride USA and should a business plan be brought forward in the future, he believes both organizations can coexist, which he supports.

MOTION was made by Vice Chair Parness, seconded by Mr. Preston, to approve Item 2 adopted CRA Resolution 2023/009. Roll Call:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Parness, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

3. **CRA Resolution 2023/010 - A Resolution of the City of Deerfield Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), approving the Commercial Façade Improvement Program Funding Agreement for LMRCOVE, LLC (d/b/a The Cove Restaurant) in an amount not to exceed \$32,279.50; waiving certain program guidelines; authorizing execution of the Agreement; authorizing a budget transfer within the CRA fund in the amount of \$32,280.00 from the infrastructure and capital improvement account to the commercial façade loan account; and providing for an effective date. (Funds from Account #190-1500-552-39-59 - Commercial Façade Loan/Grant)**

The Resolution was read by title only.

Kris Mory, Director of Economic Development, said LMRCove, LLC is looking to make improvements to the marina, whereby, paint and mural approval will be needed by the Community Appearance Board. Further, she stated that they are seeking \$32,279 in funding; whereby, the applicant must make the improvements and then submit proof of payment to the contractors for reimbursement.

In response to Chair Ganz's questions, Ms. Mory replied that it is more than just a mural, whereby, improvements include painting the building, redoing the awning, etc. Further, she said money is being transferred out of infrastructure and capital improvements.

Chair Ganz opened the public hearing; however, there were none to speak and the public hearing was closed.

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Vice Chair Parness, to approve Item 3 adopted CRA Resolution 2023/010. Roll Call:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Parness, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS**4. 2023 Ocean Way Holiday Economic Impact Report.**

There were no comments made by administration.

BOARD COMMENTS

Issues within CRA District - Mayor Ganz stated that he has requested monthly reports of changes within the CRA District, i.e. code cases, new businesses, etc. Thereafter, he outlined code cases against various businesses, i.e. Fat Tuesdays, BurgerFi, etc.

There were no other board comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION was made by Vice Chair Parness, seconded by Mr. Preston, to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Drosky, Mr. Hudak, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Parness, and Chair Ganz

Nays: 0

BILL GANZ, CHAIR

Heather Montemayor, City Clerk