Meeting Minutes

Community Redevelopment Agency

Tuesday, December 10, 2024 | **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. Michael Hudak
Mr. Bernie Parness
Mr. Ben Preston
Vice Chair Todd Drosky
Chair Bill Ganz

Also Present:
Interim City Manager Rodney Brimlow
City Attorney Anthony Soroka
Assistant City Clerk Samantha Charlemont

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting Minutes - October 8, 2024

MOTION was made by Mr. Parness, seconded by Mr. Hudak, to approve the October 8, 2024 minutes as submitted. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Hudak, Mr. Parness, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Drosky, and Chair Ganz
Nays: 0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

December 10, 2024

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

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Hudak, Mr. Parness, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Drosky, and Chair Ganz
Nays: 0

GENERAL ITEMS

1. CRA Resolution 2024/014 - A Resolution of the City of Deerfield Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), approving an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Deerfield Beach regarding administration of the FIND Grant for the Sawgrass to Seagrass Center at Sullivan Park Project; providing for conflicts, severability, and an effective date.

The Resolution was read by title only.

Kris Mory, CRA Director, provided a brief overview of the item. Further, staff is working on the first quarter report, which is due December 30th, and it is anticipated that $80,000 will be reimbursed to the City; however, the next reimbursement, which is in March, will be significantly larger because the building permit was received today. Additionally, staff recently became aware of another grant opportunity, which is due December 20th, through the Broward County Culture Division, whereby, the CRA is eligible for $500,000. Lastly, she requested authorization to have the City Manager ask the Commission for a letter of support at their next meeting.

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

Mr. Hudak agreed with the letter of support.

MOTION was made by Mr. Hudak, seconded by Mr. Preston, to approve Item 1, adopted Resolution 2024/014. Roll Call:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Hudak, Mr. Parness, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Drosky, and Chair Ganz
Nays: 0

2. Discussion Regarding BSO policing detail.

Kris Mory, CRA Director, provided a brief overview of the recent increase in the police detail. Thereafter, she highlighted a brief presentation. As directed by the Board, staff monitored the current program in November, and roughly $12,000 was spent; unfortunately, the current level of service cannot withstand the budgeted amount, so three options are being recommended. Option 1 allows for two deputies on Saturdays and Sundays, one from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the other from 10 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., for a monthly cost of $9,500, and an additional budget of $56,832. Option 2 allows for one deputy on Friday from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., and one deputy on Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., for a monthly cost of $6,500, and an additional budget of $30,000. Option 3 allows for one deputy on Saturdays and Sundays, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., for a monthly cost $4,700, and an additional budget of $11,840. Ms. Mory stated that the current level of service would deplete the budget in mid-March, Option 1 would deplete the current budget by the end of March, Option 2 by mid-May, and Option 3 by mid-July.

In response to Mr. Parness' question, Captain Hofstein replied that he is unsure how many citations have been given out, but he will research and advise accordingly. Thereafter, he outlined the various citations that are issued, i.e. dogs on the boardwalk, open containers, etc.

In response Mr. Hudak's question, Captain Hofstein replied that although having a deputy on Friday evening is beneficial, having them during the day on Saturday and Sunday is more vital.

Mr. Hudak recommended a deputy three days a week, with six-hour shifts, i.e. 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, and 6:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. on Friday.

Captain Hofstein stated that details can be flexible due to varying operational needs; nonetheless, historically, it is busier in the early morning hours and at dusk.

Vice Chair Drosky stated that BSO should be policing the beach area and District 1; nonetheless, based on the definition of community policing, having the service Saturdays and Sundays makes the most sense. Although, Options 1 and 3 accomplish the goals for community policing, he spoke in support of Option 3.

Captain Hofstein stated that police services will still be assigned to the area; nonetheless, the additional deputy/deputies offer that community policing component. Further, he said due to the geographical area of the CRA, having multiple deputies during the peak hours would be beneficial, i.e. Option 1.

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

Vice Chair Drosky agreed, as it would be difficult to have one person monitor the entire area during the peak hours; nevertheless, whoever is on the boardwalk/beach area must be more consistent.

Captain Hofstein agreed, whereby, moving forward, staffing should be more consistent due to the increase. Further, he said only Deerfield Beach deputies will be assigned to the area, so he will ensure staffing is consistent to both the eastside and westside areas.

Mr. Parness left the meeting temporarily at 7:25 p.m. and retuned at 7:29 p.m.

Chair Ganz opened the public hearing.

Peggy Ross, 103 NE 19th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, said 10:00 a.m. is too late to start, and suggested having additional policing early in the morning in lieu of the middle of the day.

Peggy Noland, 325 SE 3rd Terrace, Deerfield Beach, spoke in opposition to not having additional deputies at night, as the area is unsafe due to the lack of lighting. Thereafter, she suggested that two additional deputies be provided at night.

Roger Freitag, 418 SE 2nd Street, Deerfield Beach, expressed concerns with the fiscal responsibility of the City, as the Board should not be paying additional money for police services.

Dan Herz, 330 SE 19th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, spoke in support of Option 1.

Maureen Kenny, 625 SE 7th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, commented on the noise concerns.

Chair Ganz closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hudak reiterated that there is police presence down at the beach, whereby, this program offers additional officers; nonetheless, he recommended two, six hour shifts on Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Option 4).

In response to Vice Chair Drosky's question, Captain Hofstein replied that he would be able to cover six-hour shifts. Further, he stated that the increase is the agency's standardized detail rate.

In response to Mr. Preston's questions, Captain Hofstein reiterated that Option 4 would be sufficient. Although the option is more fiscally responsible, the model reduces the overlap hours of the two deputies, whereby, the more time deputies are present, the more effective the program will be.

Mr. Preston agreed with the fiscal responsibility, but ensuring coverage is being provided to maximize the program must be taken into consideration; nonetheless, if the program can be effective with Option 4, then it is viable.

In response to Chair Ganz's question, Captain Hofstein recommended eliminating the Friday night shift, and moving those hours to expand the Saturday and Sunday hours.

Chair Ganz provided a brief overview of the community policing program. Further, he agreed that police services are provided regardless of the community policing program; nonetheless, this program allows for additional details. Although he understands the concerns surrounding the cost, the hourly rate was provided by the Broward Sheriff's Office, after the approval of the budget. Chair Ganz stated that CRA money must be used in the CRA area; therefore, he spoke in support of investing in community policing and moving forward with whatever option maximizes the coverage.

Captain Hofstein stated that he will ensure the Board is provided the best level of service.

Mr. Preston spoke in opposition to the cost as well, but unfortunately, the cost is provided by the Broward Sheriff's Office, and you cannot put a cost on protecting the residents.

Chair Ganz stated that private security cannot enforce civil citations, i.e. smoking, walking dogs, etc.

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

Mr. Parness stated that the beach is the jewel of the City, and people must feel safe; therefore, he spoke in support of maximizing the program.

Mr. Hudak spoke in opposition to Options 2 & 3. Option 1 provides for 32 hours, but can be amended and reduced to six-hour shifts, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., which is a $2,000/week savings.

Mr. Hudak made a motion to move forward with the six-hour shifts which would deplete in April.

In response to Chair Ganz's question, Mr. Hudak replied that dual coverage is needed, and unfortunately there isn't a fiscally responsible option for dual coverage in the evening.

Vice Chair Drosky commended Mr. Hudak for bringing forth another option. Although he previously spoke in support of Option 3, after hearing from Captain Hofstein and the public, he spoke in support of Option 1, as we cannot put money over public safety. Further, all evening coverage should be provided by the regular BSO police detail.

Mr. Preston spoke in support of Option 1, but suggested that coverage be provided in the evening as well.

In response to Chair Ganz's questions, Ms. Mory replied that there is no money in the commercial façade program. Further, if changes were made to the program, money could be pulled elsewhere to support the program.

Chair Ganz suggested a hybrid option using the current hours and Option 1.

In response to Chair Ganz's question, Captain Hofstein replied that an 8:00 a.m. starting time and 6:00 p.m. ending time is optimal, but 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. would still be effective.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to direct staff to provide more options at the next meeting.

3. Discussion regarding Freebee Rideshare service.

Kris Mory, CRA Director, provided a brief overview of the presentation that was given at the last meeting. She stated that the contract expires on March 15, 2025, but there are two, one year renewal options. Thereafter, she outlined the various program options. Option 1, which is fully funded this fiscal year, provides 28 hours and is offered Thursday - Saturday from 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. and Sunday from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Option 2 provides 56 hours and is offered Sunday - Saturday from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., but would require and additional $115,398. Option 3 provides 70 hours and is offered Sunday - Saturday from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., but would require an additional $151,002. Further, she said if the Board desires to move forward with Option 2 or 3, staff would have to bring forward a budget amendment to allocate additional funding for the program.

Mr. Parness left the meeting temporarily at 8:41 p.m. and retuned at 8:43 p.m.

In response to Chair Ganz's comments, Claudia Miro, Freebee, stated that the ridership is going in the right direction, whereas, it has increased month after month; nonetheless, offering the program at the same time, every day, would be extremely beneficial. Further, she said Option 2 allows the Board to increase the hours by 100%, with only a 47% cost increase; nonetheless, there are grant opportunities to offset costs, the Public Transit Service Development Grant is a 50% match by FDOT, and the Department of Energy Grant is also a 50% match. Thereafter, she outlined the statistics over the last six months. Ms. Miro stated that should the Board desire to increase the service level to seven days a week, Freebee would assist with marketing the program. Thereafter, she briefly outlined the advertising that is currently provided by Freebee.

Chair Ganz briefly commented on conversations he's had with the drivers, whereby, they have advised that Publix is their main drop off/pickup location. Further, he spoke in opposition to the current hours, as it does not maximize the program. Thereafter, he expressed frustration with the current level of marketing, as he does not believe staff is making an effort to promote the service. Chair Ganz spoke in support of renewing the program in March, but suggested consolidating the dollars into a shorter timeframe, if cost is the issue.

Mr. Parness said he has not seen any advertisement for this program at the businesses within District 1, nor within Century Village, which is concerning.

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

Mr. Hudak expressed concerns with advertising as well, especially since it's been discussed since inception. Although Publix is receiving business, other areas are not, i.e. businesses on the beach, which is concerning, as the program is supposed to bring people from the west to the businesses on the east. Thereafter, he expressed concerns with the drivers not knowing the City, as they are supposed to be ambassadors, as well as Freebee not making an effort to promote the service. Further, he stated that consistency is also a major factor, which is lagging in the current hours of operation. Lastly, Mr. Hudak said the program has increased month after month, but more is needed, especially with the upcoming election.

Chair Ganz suggested keeping the service with where it's at, but change the hours to make it more conducive for riders. He expressed frustration with staff's lack of support with the program and asked that the promotion aspect be increased. Thereafter, he opened the public hearing.

Tom Plaut, 3920 NW 4th Court, Deerfield Beach, spoke in support of expanding the program, but stated that it must be promoted properly, as many are not aware of it.

Chauncey Chapman, 191 NW 47th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, said the cost for Freebee would cover additional policing on the beach.

Dan Herz, 330 SE 19th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, spoke in opposition to increasing Freebee's hours.

Roger Freitag, 418 SE 2nd Street, Deerfield Beach, said there is no signage or advertising at Century Village, nor Deer Creek Golf and Country Club. Thereafter, he expressed frustration with the lack of marketing of the program from city staff and Freebee.

Peggy Noland, 325 SE 3rd Terrace, Deerfield Beach, commented on her experience with Freebee. Thereafter, she expressed concerns with the lack of advertisement and drivers being unaware of the City and businesses.

Karen Shelly, 190 Durham D, Deerfield Beach, spoke in support of Freebee, and agreed with expanding the hours and promoting the program. Further, she spoke in support of the grant opportunities.

Chair Ganz closed the public hearing.

Ms. Miro stated that she is more than willing to host a townhall meeting, but none has been offered to her, nor has she been invited. Furthermore, advertisement has been done on social media and to HOA's, but unfortunately, she cannot advertise to places that she is unaware of, i.e. Century Village newsletter. She asked that if there are issues with businesses being unaware of the program, to please call her. Thereafter, she stated that the City has been given almost $100,000 in advertising revenue and discounts. She said the switchboard operator is operating 50 different cities, so riders must provide a destination address. Lastly, they try to find Deerfield Beach drivers, but unfortunately, that isn't always possible.

Chair Ganz stated that the marketing approach must change, as advertising it as CRA Freebee is limiting the program. Further, he said all car services request that an address be provided upon pickup. Thereafter, he said the program is thriving, but expressed concerns with the lack of effort being put forth by staff to market the program. Lastly, Chair Ganz stated that everyone involved must do more to ensure that the program is being properly advertised throughout the entire City.

Mr. Preston provided a brief overview of the program, which he has supported from inception; nonetheless, a collaborative plan should have been established from the beginning to ensure everyone was on the same page.

Mr. Hudak said he has also supported the program from inception, and wants it to succeed. Furthermore, he said there is a parking problem in the Cove and a lack of foot traffic on the beach from Sunday - Thursday, whereby, this program would remedy both of those situations. Thereafter, he suggested that viable options be provided to expand the program to five days. Lastly, he said this program must be advertised at city events, and recommended partnering with the Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, etc.

Vice Chair Drosky recommended continuing with the current level of service for the next three months, so the data is not skewed; nonetheless, he agreed that the program must be marketed better.

GENERAL ITEMS - CONTINUED

Mr. Hudak said despite all of the challenges, ridership has increased month after month, so the program has proven itself; therefore, marketing the program properly and providing some type of consistency will improve it even more.

4. Update regarding marketing and pedestrian activation activities in the beach business district. *(Funds from Account #190-1500-579-35-74 - Special Events)*

Kris Mory, CRA Director, highlighted a brief presentation. She stated that a meeting occurred on October 22nd with the beach businesses in an effort to look for ways to activate and increase the foot traffic, whereby, staff updated the messaging regarding the closure of the pier, provided property/business owners with a flyer regarding the micro-façade program, encouraged businesses to work with USA Parking, and provided contact information for Evan Snow from Zero Empty Spaces. Additionally, Unite Us, offers marketing strategies, social strategies, and event curation, whereby, staff created various commercial district activations have been created, i.e. Deerfield Beats Musician Pop-Up Series, grand openings, and food and music. Thereafter, she outlined additional strategies that staff is looking into, additional activations, non-resident parking sticker, Royal Blues Exotic Car Show, moving the Fourth of July event to Quiet Waters, etc. Lastly, she said additional takeaways from the meeting included celebrating each other, business to business networking, regional marketing, keep meeting as a group, etc.

Mr. Hudak thanked Ms. Mory for her efforts. Although, the City no longer has a Chamber of Commerce, he stated that there are other ways to assist the businesses, and agreed with meeting as a group on a regular basis, as the businesses must help each other survive.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

Water Taxi - Kris Mory, CRA Director, said she met with Pompano Beach staff, and learned that Pompano Beach used $876,000 of ARPA funding and received $1.2 million in grant monies from FDOT to fund the program for the first three years. Furthermore, CRA staff is working with the Water Taxi to see if the program can be expanded into Deerfield Beach.

Boat Parade - Ms. Mory reminded everyone of the event. Thereafter, she briefly outlined the details of the event.

Ocean Way Holiday - Ms. Mory briefly commented on the event, which was well attended. She explained that staff plans to reach out to the businesses to see how the event impacted them.

BOARD COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dan Herz, 330 SE 19th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, briefly commented on the Freebee program. Thereafter, he thanked all involved in the Ocean Way Holiday event.

Chauncey Chapman, 191 NW 47th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, said marketing is also understanding who the customer is.

Maureen Kenny, 615 SE 7th Avenue, Deerfield Beach, said she provided her card to Ms. Miro.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION was made by Mr. Preston, seconded by Mr. Hudak, to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 p.m. Voice Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Mr. Hudak, Mr. Parness, Mr. Preston, Vice Chair Drosky, and Chair Ganz
Nays: 0

BILL GANZ, CHAIR

Heather Montemayor, City Clerk