

**COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021 – 8.00 A.M.**

Present: Jesse Nelson, Mayor
Brandon Aldridge, Commissioner
Pat Perno, Commissioner
Jamie Warrick, Commissioner
Judy Tinder, Commissioner
Vickie Gainer, City Manager
Kevin Obos, City legal counsel

Item #1. Call to Order:

Mayor Nelson called the meeting to order at 8.00 A.M.

Item #2. Public Commentary:

Mr. Walker said that in previous meetings all items were brought up and then public hearing was held. Recently it has changed with public commentary to be at the beginning of the meeting. Can the public address each agenda item?

Attorney advised that nothing would change, and for any voting item the public will be asked if they had comments.

Item #3. CRA Director's report (wayfinding signs update; grants update; CRA Advisory Board meeting:

CRA Director gave an update about the Wayfinding signs project, which was a signature CRA project this year, stating that it is now complete.

Some grant applications for disaster recovering and hometown revitalization have been applied for, and they will have a significant positive impact on our CRA. HPMG grant will enable us to upgrade our downtown area creating another positive impact.

Mr. Janke mentioned that the CRA Advisory Board meeting was held, and minutes have been attached to this packet. He said all could reach out to Mr. Brown (Chairman) if they have any questions.

Mayor Nelson asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Tinder – the grant you speak of, is that a matching grant, the big one for \$6m.

Mr. Janke confirmed not that it is a full grant.

Commissioner Tinder said is it the first one the gentleman came and spoke to and said they get 10%, does that come from the grant amount or from the City.

Mr. Janke advised they do get a %, but not 10%. He will let her know the exact number, but it is closer to 1%. The money comes from the grant, and we only pay them when we get refunded.

Consent Agenda:

Item #4. Approval of revised meeting minutes from January 26, 2021.

Item #5. Approval of meeting minutes from March 23, 2021.

Item #6. Approval of the Residential Incentive Program Application for 1316 Minnesota Ave.

Item #7. Ratification of the CRA FY 20/21 mid-year budget amendment.

Motion by Commissioner Aldridge: To approve as presented.

Second to the Motion: Commissioner Perno

On Vote: Aldridge aye
Perno aye
Warrick aye
Tinder aye
Mayor Nelson aye

Motion passed: 5-0

New Business:

Item #8. Discussion and possible approval of the Niquet trade service establishment on Florida Ave. near 4th St. according to ULDC Section 4.02.03.

Mr. Janke referenced the CRA Annual Report in the agenda package. Owner planning to construct a 4500sq ft warehouse. Owns a pipe fitting business and will occupy one third, renting out the rest of the warehouse. Recommends approving, contingent upon the Planning Development approval.

Commissioner Tinder asked if that is in the middle of a residential area.

Mr. Janke advised the area is mixed-use, but it is surrounded by residential currently.

Commissioner Perno said it is directly behind the parking lot, with an empty lot, and one house next to it.

Commissioner Perno asked if it will be a metal building, with retail rental, and asked to please clarify.

Mr. Janke confirmed it is commercial use and they will need to follow the guidelines for commercial use, so it will have the required aesthetics.

Motion by Commissioner Aldridge: to approve the Niquet trade service establishment on Florida Ave. near 4th St. according to ULDC Section 4.02.03, contingent upon the Planning Development approval.

Second to the motion: Commissioner Warrick

Commissioner Tinder wanted clarity that nothing is going to happen until the Planning order is granted.

Mr. Janke confirmed it will still have to go before all the technical review committees etc. so this is only step one.

On Vote: Aldridge aye
Perno aye
Warrick aye
Tinder aye
Mayor Nelson aye

Motion passed: 5-0

Item #9. Discussion and possible action regarding the proposed demolition of three dilapidated houses in the CRA (05 East 5th St. ;1017 Michigan Ave.; 1502 Virginia Ave.).

Mr. Janke referenced the CRA Annual Report in the agenda package. Requesting funding of the demolition of these houses to reduce the impact of taxable values of the surrounding houses, thus allowing the City to avoid postponing the demolition, placing the expense of the demolition onto the tax roll so the City can recoup the funds over the next few months.

Commissioner Perno asked if this is not how the code enforcement usually fund it.

Attorney Obos said this is the first time we are using the tax roll for recouping.

Commissioner Perno asked why code enforcement is not funding it, and why the CRA is involved.

Attorney Obos – These are in the CRA and the CRA is allowed to spend money on demolitions and the City needs the money to do the demolitions and the to recoup it via the tax roll later. So it is really just that the CRA is a funding source so it did not have to come out of the general fund.

Commissioner Tinder queried the cost.

Mr. Janke confirmed it is \$31,750

Commissioner Tinder queried to do it on tax roll, if homeowner chooses not to pay off the tax roll does that property become property of the City?

Attorney Obos confirmed not, a few notices went out to the residents, explaining the process about the lien. If they do not pay it, anybody in the community has the ability to buy that tax certificate, and they have to hold it for 3 years before they can apply the tax lien. That way the City gets the money back.

Commissioner Tinder said the City is essentially also giving the homeowner a head start, if they demolish it then they can potentially rebuild from scratch.

Mr. Janke said he believes he went through all possible avenues he could, including approaching Florida Rebuild, and now we need to take action for public safety and public health.

Commissioner Perno confirmed that Mr. Janke's original statement was code enforcement has a program for these already, but because these are in the CRA and funded through the CRA they will be dealt with in priority, asking if this is correct?

Mr. Janke confirmed correct.

Commissioner Perno asked if it is okay for the CRA properties to be prioritized over the code enforcement ones.

Attorney Obos said there is no legal priority in the demolition process.

Commissioner Perno said he just wants to avoid other people being upset that they are being overlooked.

Commissioner Tinder asked if anyone was still living in the homes.

Mr. Janke confirmed not.

Commissioner Aldridge queried if they looked into PPDR programs or Rehouse Bay?

Mr. Janke confirmed that comprehensive studies show they are not able to be salvaged.

Mayor Nelson clarified with Mr. Janke that he mentioned that the homes are becoming rat infested and posing a real health concern to the public?

Mr. Perno stated that they are also bat infested.

Mr. Janke confirmed correct, and that Roofs are also caved in, and it's been raining into these homes for the past 2 years, causing rot and mold etc.

Commissioner Warrick asked are there any other homes that will be going down this route going forward?

Mr. Janke advised the City has a list in the CRA. We have also just had an individual who bought one of the homes on the list who has decided to renovate it.

Commissioner Warrick said but if there are more, about how many more are there?

Mr. Janke confirmed as of today, this is it for today, but he knows that code enforcement has much more.

City Manager invited PD Chief Ramie to speak to this.

Chief Ramie said these three are the only three on our list that are part of the CRA. But we have an extensive list of homes requiring demolition by code enforcement. Some are up for sale, so we are working with realtors to get these properties sold so they are dealt with independently and we do not have to spend the money on demolition.

Commissioner Perno said you mentioned the Ice Cream Scoops shop saying he actually spoke to the realtor who described the process they went through. asking that the City work with the realtors to try to save the properties so that investors can try to salvage and redevelop before demolition.

City Manager stated the City does work with owners and if there is any way we can help we do. If at any time a buyer comes in and wants to fix it up the City is not going to say no. it is a long process.

Motion by Commissioner Perno: to approve action regarding the proposed demolition of three dilapidated houses in the CRA (05 East 5th St., 1017 Michigan Ave., 1502 Virginia Ave.). (with discussion with the public)

Second to the motion: Commissioner Aldridge

Betty Ford said she owns the house on Michigan Ave. to be demolished and the 5th street was her mother's house. She said she has been working with Rebuild and they told her Saturday they would get back to her on the Michigan house, plus she has a man who wants to buy and build a new house on it. She thought if she sells it then she could fix up the one on 5th street. But she is working on the issue, and these letters that are dated May 14th, she did not get them till the 27th and it says 30 days from when the letters were written.

Attorney Obos confirmed the 30 days began from the date of receipt not the date of the letter. All you will be doing today is authorizing those demolitions, and until the 30 days are done the owners still have time to make alternate plans.

Mr. Walker said he lives there and is in the area being involved in this for 20 years. Does the owner pay her taxes on both properties, there are no liens on them and if she does pay her taxes then she has full right to keep them? He stated they had all sat with her and discussed it. CRA pays for the demolition and will likely provide a grant to the developer who will inevitably buy the property. The developer wins and the resident loses. The City should sit with the owner and help her.

Commissioner tinder asked Mr. Walker if he knows for a fact that someone is still living in one of those properties?

Mr. Walker said not in the property, but ON the property.

George from 1012 Michigan Avenue said it has been 3 years now and there has been no improvement. He would like to see the City move on with the situation and do something about the eyesore. He has even offered to buy the property because I live right there.

Ryan Scray asked Commissioner Perno if he said one of the houses is infested with bats? He said he understood the risks that bats present, but there are also benefits that bats present as well. If you demolish, please do something to prevent damage to the bats as they eat the bugs. Keep the ecosystem intact.

Mr. Simmons from 408 E Fifth Street across from 405 and have nothing against Ms. Ford personally, but that house is a total wreck. Coons, rats, it has been too long. Bats flying around. All kinds of things come out of that place. Not helping his property value at all. As a resident he asks that the Commission do something for him. Mr. Janke has tried very hard to come to a solution and this seems to be the only solution.

Ms. Ford asked if she can I say something.

Mayor Nelson told her she had already spoken on the matter.

Ms. Ford asked if she could say something else.

Mayor Nelson declined politely.

Mayor Nelson sought clarity that it is 30 days from signing receipt of the letter.

Attorney Obos confirmed yes and authorizing the demolition does not necessarily mean it will happen now or within the 30 days.

Mayor Nelson asked if she shows good faith in attempting to sell or fix the issue herself, can there be some possible extension even beyond our vote today?

Attorney Obos confirmed that under this order they are being instructed to abate the nuisance themselves within 30 days of receipt of the abatement notice, either repair suitably, sell to be restored/demolished, or demolish it themselves, then the City would not need to do anything. If they do nothing and just want more time it is something they would have to come back to the Commission to request.

Mayor Nelson asked if we vote yes today and move forward with it and she finds someone wants to buy the property then can she come back to the City to appeal the demolition?

Attorney Obos confirm yes, she should go to Mr. Janke who will liaise with City Manager and if it is established there is a real attempt to fix then they can hold off even at the last minute.

Commissioner Tinder shared that she was at a code enforcement meeting where Ms. Ford was present before the magistrate almost two years ago and her verbiage today is almost exactly as it was two years ago, so this is not a new issue.

Commissioner Perno said to the Mayor with all due respect, she had asked to speak, and the Mayor said no. However, seeing as she is on the agenda twice would he consider letting her have a second opportunity to speak.

Mayor Nelson invited Ms. Ford to speak again.

Ms. Ford - in response to Mr. Simmons, the rats are from the neighbors feeding all the pigeons.

Commissioner Perno asked if she had heard from Rebuild Bay.

Ms. Ford said she called on Saturday and they think they should be able to help.

Commissioner Aldridge said she has 25 days to resolve this, and she should call Rehousing Bay every day if she has to, and then come back to the City if she is able to.

Commissioner Warrick sought confirmation that the demolition cost for all three houses is \$30k.

Mr. Janke confirmed yes \$31,750.

Commissioner Warrick said so if the homeowner had to demolish it themselves it is a cost that they would have to bear instead of us.

Mr. Janke confirmed yes.

On Vote:	Aldridge	aye
	Perno	aye
	Warrick	aye
	Tinder	aye
	Mayor Nelson	aye

Motion passed: 5-0

Item #10. Discussion and possible approval of contractor award for the East 15th St. sidewalk project.

Mr. Janke referenced the CRA Annual Report in the agenda package.

Motion by Commissioner Perno: to approve (with discussion) the second lowest bidding contractor award for the East 15th St. sidewalk project.

Commissioner Perno stated the quotes were very close.

Commissioner Tinder said she has seen the work of the lowest bidder and will not like to see the City pay any more money to them.

Attorney Obos said that there is a clause about irresponsible bidders in our purchasing policy that if they have demonstrated through past performance that they are unable to satisfactorily meet the responsibilities of low bidders or poor past performance, there is discretion to disregard that bid and go with the next lowest one.

Mr. Sykes – spoke about his business longevity in the County and the City.

Ryan Scray said the City Attorney had pointed out that policy is in place that they are either irresponsible vendor etc. so the City has a policy, follow the policy, and make sure you have the documents in place. Seems its open and shut.

Second to the motion: Commissioner Tinder

On Vote:	Perno	aye
	Tinder	aye
	Aldridge	aye
	Tinder	aye
	Mayor Nelson	aye

Motion passed: 5-0

Item #11. Discussion and possible approval of the LHPD funding request for the annual fee for four tag reader systems.

Mr. Janke referenced the CRA Annual Report in the agenda package.

Chief Ramie described the need for permanent mounted tag readers required at strategic places in the City to replace the temporary one they have. The city has been able to apprehend a few criminals with the temporary one already. The permanent ones are a way to protect the City from the evil that is out there.

Commissioner Tinder said she agrees with the readers, and asked why would the CRA pick up the tab? She also asked if it was a unanimous agreement with the CRA committee at your CRA Advisor board meeting?

Mr. Janke said the Board decided not to take a view on the item. CRA is involved because it is in accordance with the CRA plan on page 53.

Commissioner Tinder queried if it was \$10k for purchase or rental

Mr. Janke confirmed it is \$10k for a one year fee that the PD pays to get them installed, and it will need to be renewed for the ongoing years.

Motion by Commissioner Aldridge: to approve of the LHPD funding request for the annual fee for four tag reader systems.

Second to the motion: Commissioner Perno

On Vote:	Aldridge	aye
	Perno	aye
	Warrick	aye
	Tinder	aye
	Mayor Nelson	aye

Motion passed: 5-0

Item #12. Adjourn. There was no more business meeting adjourned at 9.03 A.M.

APPROVED THIS 15th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2021.



 Jesse Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:


 Vickie Gainer, City Manager

Prepared by Cicelia J. Holliday