

Apalachicola CRA Meeting

Agenda
April 25, 2019

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Financial Report
- V. Board Member Communications
- VI. Director's Report
 - USDA Water Project funding status
 - USDA Rural Business Development Grants
 - Electric Car Charging Stations
 - Professional Development update
 - Visit by Department of Economic Opportunity
 - Grant Opportunity Planning
 - Legislative Update
 - Kayak Launch
 - Sign Project
- VII. Public Comment
- VIII. Unfinished business
 - CRA Plan Update Recommendations
- IX. New business
 - None at this time
- X. Adjournment

City of Apalachicola CRA

Minutes of the February 28, 2019 Meeting

Present: Mayor Van Johnson, Commissioner Jimmy Elliott, Commissioner Brenda Ash, Commissioner Anita Grove, Jim Bachrach, Augusta West.

Jim Bachrach called the meeting to order. Mayor Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda which was seconded by Commissioner Elliott and passed unanimously. There was a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting by Mayor Johnson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Elliott and passed unanimously.

Jim Bachrach presented the financial report, noting that the cash balance of the CRA fund is \$60,994.95. There was a motion to approve the financial report by Mayor Johnson. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Elliott and passed unanimously.

During Board Member Communications, Mayor Johnson noted that Augusta has been working on securing funding for the GAC filter mandated to correct the Total Trihalomethane issue in the drinking water. There was a discussion of the street sign replacement project and kayak ramp project. Mayor Johnson recognized Augusta's two years of efforts on the Stewardship Bill.

Next, Augusta West provided the Director's Report. She gave an update on grants, noting that the USDA grant/loan application package for the Granulated Active Carbon (GAC) water filter is in the final phases of completion. The USDA Rural Business Development Grant for 100% funding of parking, lighting, and sidewalks in the Bowery District is on track for timely submittal on March 1. The three electric car charging station project sites have been finalized and will all be located downtown. Augusta stated that she will attend the Florida Redevelopment Association Academy training in Orlando in March. Commissioner Grove stated that she was asked about the Main Street/DOT landscaping project by the tree committee. Augusta gave an update on the status of the project. Commissioner Grove suggested she attend a committee meeting to show the design plans.

During Public Comment in a response to a question from Robin Vroegop, Mayor Johnson stated that the purpose of the minutes is not to create a verbatim record of all comments during the meeting but rather to record actions. Robin Vroegop questioned the inclusion of the Rural Business Development Grant when it has not yet been awarded. She also expressed a desire for more specifics on the agenda. Commissioner Grove suggested that all projects be included each meeting even if there is no update. Augusta asked for further direction from the Board and it was agreed that a bullet point list of topics be included on the agenda going forward.

Augusta provided updates on the kayak launch and upcoming professional development activities including the Rural Economic Development Academy on January 16 and Florida Redevelopment Association Academy training in March. The meeting was adjourned.

Apalachicola CRA Director's Summary

Augusta R. West

April 19, 2019

USDA Loan/Grant application for the municipal water improvement project: This funding package will allow the City to install the technology required by DEP to address the Trihalomethane issue in the water supply. Once the City is back in compliance, the Consent Order and \$100 per day fines will come to an end. The current status is that the Obligation of Funds at the state level is in process after receipt of required documentation. The City qualified for the highest grant percentage by statute, which was 75%. On April 16, a special meeting of the City Commission was held to educate the public about the project and to allow for public comment. During the meeting, the City Commission approved Resolution 2019-06 to approve the Letter of Conditions from USDA for the Rural Development Grant in the amount of \$1,230,730 and a loan in the amount of \$474,000. The loan is payable over 40 years. I am following up on a few additional documents that were requested to complete the file at this stage of the process.

USDA Rural Business Development Grant: The application for this 100% grant to construct sidewalks, pervious parking, and lighting in the Bowery District was submitted to the USDA Marianna Service Center in March and is under review. After completion of the Preliminary Engineering Report, slight expanse of scope, and receipt of more precise cost estimates, Resolution 2018-03 authorizing submittal of the application required updating due to the project's increase in cost. Therefore, Resolution 2019-04 was passed by the City Commission on April 2. The higher cost will allow us to stay with environmentally sound pervious parking rather than other materials which may contribute to stormwater issues; allows for ADA accessible ramps to be added at a sidewalk connection intersection, and repairs an existing damaged sidewalk on Commerce Street. The proposal now requests \$306,000 rather than \$200,000.

Subsequent discussions with USDA staff have explored funding opportunities for future projects. If the current application is funded, we would still be able to apply for a second Rural Business Development Grant before the first one is closed out. Planning for future projects should begin soon to allow time for engineering. We also discussed technical assistance grants and other programs.

Electric Car Charging Station Project: Technicians have made site visits to the three charging station locations (on Avenue F in front of the old Ford lot, on Avenue D near the Hayes House, and on Commerce Street alongside the Visitors Center), and the project is moving forward. I expect completion to occur by summer.

Professional Development: I attended the Florida Redevelopment Association Academy's Budgeting, Funding & Reporting course on March 15 in Orlando and passed the course exam.

Visit by DEO and Other State Agencies: I am coordinating with Barbara Powell of the Department of Economic Opportunity for a site visit by their staff and staff from other state agencies to discuss the City's challenges and opportunities for state resources to address them. We are looking at Mid-May if schedules align for staff.

CRA Plan Update: I have produced a working draft in progress of an updated plan. The plan update timeline will coincide with the approval of the next fiscal year's budget to allow sufficient time for a variety of inputs to guide its direction. These may include recommendations from DEO's visit, the outcome of the legislative session, opportunities for public input, and possible technical assistance. The draft includes board member's suggestions to date and a new format that more specifically elucidates strategies, goals, and objectives.

Grant Matrix: The grant opportunity matrix is being updated to organize relevant potential funding opportunities and their timelines throughout the year.

Legislative Agenda: Our lobbyist Patrick Bell is working to bring home some state funding to assist the City in moving forward with infrastructure needs and/or SRF default relief through appropriations. The Apalachicola Environmental Stewardship Bill has suffered due to some controversy about its funding source. Efforts in general are more difficult in the absence of a House Representative. The last day of the regular session is May 3.

Kayak Launch: No update due to the need to prioritize the water project application.

Sign Project: No update due to the need to prioritize the water project application.