

Apalachicola CRA Plan Update Workshop

Agenda

January 17, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.

1. CRA Plan Update Discussion

City of Apalachicola CRA

Minutes of the November 20, 2018 Meeting

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

Jim Bachrach called the meeting to order. There was a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting by Commissioner Ash. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bartley and passed unanimously.

Augusta gave an update on grants, including the USDA grant/loan application package for the Granulated Active Carbon (GAC) water filter, the Port of Apalachicola Triumph project, and the USDA Rural Business Development Grant.

There was a discussion of the process by which to update the CRA Plan. It was decided that a working group composed of Mayor Johnson, Tom Morgan, Jim Bachrach, Anita Grove, and Augusta West convene at a date to be determined to review and discuss updates for recommendation to the CRA Board.

Augusta gave an update on the CRA Web Page. It is now live, and required content is being added.

Next there was a discussion of the Tax Increment Financing contribution from the City. Jim explained that the City has not been contributing its share to the CRA fund and currently owes the fund \$33,788. He recommended that an agreement be made between the CRA and City that the funds would be paid when the City is financially able to do so. Commissioner Bartley made a motion, seconded by Mayor Johnson, to accept a formal agreement to that effect. The motion carried unanimously.

There was a discussion of small projects to be funded this fiscal year. Commissioner Ash raised a concern that there should be a balance of projects on the Hill as well as other areas of the CRA. Tom Morgan made a motion, seconded by the Mayor, that the CRA move forward with the car charging stations, kayak launch at \$2,000, and \$3,500 for signage and that remaining funds not be spent until more suggestions have been put forward for Hill projects. The motion carried with Commissioners Ash and Grove opposed. A forum on the Hill was discussed for the new year.

The Mayor made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Tom Morgan. The meeting was adjourned.

Apalachicola CRA Director's Summary

Augusta R. West

January 15, 2019

The **USDA loan/grant application for the water filter** is at a standstill due to the shutdown of the federal government. If the USDA is fully funded this year, the City would be eligible for a 75% grant/25% loan package.

The application for the **USDA Rural Business Development Grant** to construct sidewalks, pervious parking, and lighting in the Bowery District is due in February. Dewberry Consulting is working on the Preliminary Engineering Report. The rest of the application package requires only minor updating.

Community Redevelopment Agencies in Florida are required by state law to prepare **five annual reports**. The current status of our reports is as follows:

- 1) Annual Audit (can be independent of the creating entity or included in the creating entity's audit) – Included in the City's audit, pending the final report
- 2) Annual Fees and Updates to the Office of Special District Accountability at the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity – annual fees paid; information up to date.
- 3) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report – pending completion of the City's report
- 4) Annual Report to the public –draft report for FY 16-17 included in packet for review
- 5) Annual Budget (proposed and adopted) and Board contact information – budget submitted for upload to the website. Board contact info has been posted on the website.

The **electric car charging station project** is moving forward. Engineers from NovaCharge, Duke Energy's installation contractor, will be in town on February 1 to perform a full assessment of potential sites.

The DEP permit waiver application is in process for the **kayak launch project**. I received the required site drawings from Dewberry Consulting and information required to complete the application package. Funding is in place to initiate the project, which has an expected completion date in February 2019. The concept and location for this project have been vetted by Doug Alderson, Assistant Chief of DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails; Themo Patriotis, founder of the Paddle Jam event; and Seven Grogan, who is working to create a local chapter of Heroes on the Water.

Professional Development: I am attending the **Rural Economic Development Academy** on January 16, 2019 in Tallahassee. This course is designed to provide an in-depth understanding of key issues associated with successful local and regional economic development. It is sponsored by the Florida Institute of Government, Opportunity Florida, and the North Florida Economic Development Partnership. Additional training through the **Florida Redevelopment Association Academy** is planned for 2019 including the Budgeting, Funding & Reporting course on March 15 in Orlando. I will register for other training opportunities as time and budget allow.

After unanimous approval by both the CRA board and City Commission of the **Legislative Priorities** I developed for the 2018-2019 legislative session, I have continued to make progress in this area. On December 13, City Manager Ron Nalley had a **meeting at the Capitol with Rep. Holly Raschein** of the Keys, her Legislative Aide Kate DeLoach, and the City's lobbyist Patrick Bell. The goal was to determine a path forward modelled after Rep. Raschein's highly successful Keys Environmental Stewardship Act which resulted in \$10 million of funding for their Area of Critical State Concern. This was a very positive and productive meeting resulting in several action items which are underway.

Rep. Raschein concurred that we should write our own bill similar to the Florida Keys Environmental Stewardship Act entitled the "City of Apalachicola Stewardship Act." She made several recommendations on pursuing this strategy to secure funding for the City's needs. This will build on the amendment I drafted that was passed last session (it added affordable housing to our list of ACSC issues which matches the Keys' statute, more explicitly codified the state's intent to provide funding, and strengthened our position against de-designation).

Patrick also introduced us to Legislative Policy Chief Eric Miller, to answer a technical question about the type of legislation needed to amend statutes so that any future potential **Tourist Impact Tax** revenues would be governed by the City Commission rather than the County Commission.

On December 20, Ron Nalley, Patrick Bell, and I had a **meeting with Department of Economic Opportunity staff** Gabe Peters (Legislative Liaison) and Barbara Powell (Area of Critical State Concern Coordinator) for further guidance on the City's legislative action items for the upcoming session.

Key 2019 Legislative Session dates are:

- January 25, 2019: deadline for submitting requests for drafts of general bills
- January 30, 2019: Franklin County Delegation Meeting
- March 1, 2019: deadline for approving final drafts of general bills
- March 5, 2019: Regular Session convenes
- May 3, 2019: Last day of Regular Session