

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING – 2009 Work Plan
CHARLOTTE HARBOR
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, January 6, 2009 – 2:00 p.m.
County Administration Building – Room B-106
18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

(These minutes are not official until they have been approved by the Charlotte Harbor CRA Advisory Committee.)

Members Present

James Herston, *Chairman*
Michael Haymans, *Vice Chairman*
Grace Amodeo, *Secretary*
Nathaniel Cooley
Evelyn Loeffler
David Schmidt
Charlotte Ventola

Staff Present

Commissioner Richard Loftus
Derek Rooney, Assistant County Attorney
Debrah Forester, Redevelopment Manager
Seann Smith, Planner II
Diane Quilty, Budget Analyst
Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

Members Absent

Guests

Candace Webbe

I. Call to Order

Chairman Herston called the January 6, 2009 special meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee to order at 2:03 p.m. in Room B-106 of the Charlotte County Administration Building.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Herston led the members and the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Roll call was taken; Secretary Grace Amodeo confirmed a quorum was present.

IV. Draft Work Plan 2009 – Review and Develop

Ms. Forester explained that the documents presented were for discussion purposes and to help the committee review a potential work plan for 2009. The intent is to develop a draft program to recommend to the BCC at the special meeting scheduled to be held in February.

Charlotte Ventola questioned a few of the amounts on work plan and asked why the Total Project Estimated Cost on Work Plan sheet is different from Tax Increment sheet – Debrah Forester explained the difference is interest and she will make a note of this prior to any future distribution of the work plan.

Each line item under the Proposed 2009 column was explained by Debrah Forester and followed by committee questions and comments. Debrah noted that \$700 has already been spent under administration to cover the Special District Fee that is required to be paid by each CRA. Debrah requested that the committee add \$700 under the column “Total TIF expended/committed” and reduce \$700 from the Programming line item under “TIF Budgeted and Available”.

Administration –Ms. Forester suggested that 10% of total TIF go towards expenses such as salaries, education/members attending the redevelopment conference and other administrative costs related to Charlotte Harbor. The BCC has already agreed to funding half of the Redevelopment Manager’s salary from TIF and with further budget cuts

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expected, the committee should consider covering additional costs. Discussion followed regarding justification to pay staff out of TIF funds.

Gateway Beautification Project Phase II – Dollars are already budgeted and approved for the design and permitting phase for Phase II. Kimley Horne was selected following the RFP process and their contract is currently being negotiated to complete this portion. Proposed for the 2009 work plan is the allocation of a substantial amount of funding to the construction element of this phase. Any monies not committed to the design component can be moved to the construction phase. Ms. Forester provided an update on the status of the Kimley Horne contract. Staff has been negotiating with Kimley Horn and hopes to bring the contract to the CRA Advisory Committee at the January 22 meeting. The contract will include a survey for entire area; concept through final construction plans for peninsula parking area and construction of a sidewalk from the base of the north-bound bridge to Melbourne and 30% design plans for the pedestrian promenade under the bridge. Discussion followed which included the following suggestions/comments:

- Survey information from CCU may be useful as base information.
- Sidewalk connection from US 41 to Chester Roberts will probably be included in the next phase.
- Providing a sidewalk along the condominiums on Melbourne (The Preserve) may be a challenge but the owner will benefit from the continuous sidewalk to Bayshore Park.
- Funds are allocated to Public Works for project management time (Dan Quick and Kelly Slaughter). The committee requested information on salary rates.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Charlotte Harbor Welcome Sign. Debrah Forester will see if the lights can be adjusted.

Business Incentives – Since tax increment revenues will primarily come from new development, it is important to look at ways to encourage economic development in Charlotte Harbor. Potential programs could include continuing the sign grant program; developing a façade grant program, paying development fees such as impact fees, permitting fees, or utility connection fees to encourage new businesses to come and existing businesses to expand. Another item to consider is funding marketing materials to promote Charlotte Harbor.

Neighborhood Improvements – potential programs covered under this funding category could include residential rehab and infrastructure incentives; sewer connection fees, sidewalk improvements, street lights, incorporating additional crime prevention strategies.

Programming

Mr. Haymans inquired as to funds available to take down the banners. Ms. Forester did note that there are TIF funds budgeted under Banners/Fixtures/Lighting to assist with replacement or removal of the banners. FDOT will be coming to the January 22 meeting. FDOT has stated that they will allow maintenance of the banners from the sidewalks instead of closing the travel lane, which would reduce the MOT costs, but approval is still needed from Charlotte County Risk Management.

Part-time Event Coordinator for Bayshore Park – this position has already been approved and funds will be coming out of 2009 budget.

Pier lighting (\$52,700), and Hands Across the Harbor event (\$2,000) are covered under last year's Programming dollars. Community policing strategies were included last year, but a program has not yet been developed due to the change in the Sheriff. Now that the new Sheriff is in office, we can move forward on developing a program. There is approximately \$31,000 that is budgeted to develop additional programs.

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Ms. Forester noted that the reference to Scenic Park will be changed to Chester Roberts Park on the next draft.

Debrah Forester suggested that the committee work on developing some of the options between now and February's joint meeting.

In 2008, there was a commitment to approximately \$124,000 to assist in utility connections. Letters have been sent out to all property owners regarding the mandatory connections. Owners who are income qualified had until January 5 to submit an application. The number of qualified applicants should be known in the next few weeks which will then allow the committee to assess the use of the budgeted funds. The final cost of sewer project will soon be available and that will give a better idea of the final impact to the MSBU. One option for the committee to consider is to recommend paying the final outstanding charges which would eliminate the MSBU or the committee could develop an expanded program to encourage property owners to connect to the system.

Mr. Schmidt requested clarification on who will be included in the MSBU. Ms. Forester noted that there was a map on the County's website which shows the area impacted by the new sewer lines. People previously on sewers are not impacted with the new MSBU assessments. MSBU covers the capital costs of installing the new lines and other charges not covered by the CDBG grant.

Commissioner Loftus mentioned that CDBG grant paid for sewer infrastructure several years ago. Capacity charge is paid by everyone. Ms. Loeffler mentioned that the grant information requested from CDBG is complex and intrusive. Ms. Forester reminded the committee that the County does not govern the CDBG program and the guidelines come from the federal government. CDBG does not pay connection fees and that is why TIF funds were budgeted to assist with that expense.

Following review of the draft work plan, Ms. Forester requested guidance from the committee to revise the work plan for the January 22 meeting. Discussion followed and included:

- Gateway Project should be priority
- Funds should be included for land acquisition and should be a noted activity under the Gateway project. The committee agreed to allocate \$46,857 from Business Incentives and \$38,857 from Residential Incentives to the Gateway project. If acquisition doesn't go forward then the funds can be used for construction.
- Maintain the \$31,000 in general Programming for seed money for additional projects similar to Hands Across the Harbor and community policing.
- Development of an expanded sewer connection program such as prioritizing properties within 150 feet of water should be included since the completion of the sewer project is most important.
- Keep the Residential Rehab program and consider including assistance to include installation of hurricane shutters, impact windows, or weatherization. Focus the funds in the Charlotte Harbor and Melbourne Neighborhoods, income levels should not be a criteria.
- Keep developing activities in park since it is important to the health of community.
- Business Incentives should be available to all business owners in Charlotte Harbor.

Debrah Forester will clean up draft and committee will look at next draft at January 22 meeting.

Committee Comments:

- Zoning issues were questioned and Debrah Forester noted that the history will be part of the 1/22 agenda packet.

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- Derek Rooney advised that in an effort to increase efficiency in the County Attorney's Office, he will attend meeting only if needed and requested to attend.
- Hands Across the Harbor - sponsors and participants are needed, pass the word around; event is on Saturday, January 24.
- CCU Ribbon Cutting on January 23 at Bayshore Live Oak Park near the fireplace.
- The selection of a new logo should be addressed this year.

V. Public Comments

Candace Wehbe suggested that the owners of Racetrack might be a good candidate for incentive monies sign replacement. Ms. Wehbe also suggested that artists could paint murals on houses/walls to create interesting venues for walkers and riders. Discussion followed regarding theme, list of artists, and the need for a rendering phase to determine content. Local birds and old Charlotte Harbor scenes were suggested as themes. Ms. Wehbe requested that the committee allow her to continue to work on the program idea through Ms. Forester.

VI. Next Regular Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee will be held on **Thursday, January 22, 2009 at 10 a.m. in Room 119 of the Charlotte County Administration Center.**

Please note: February 26, 2009, 10:00 a.m. – Joint meeting with BCC

VII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy M. Knee, Recorder

/kmk

Approved: _____