

CITY OF BROOKSVILLE
MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON III COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 HOWELL AVENUE
3:00 pm

ORDER OF BUSINESS

July 28, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bernardini read the following statement:

Good evening everyone. My name is Joe Bernardini. I am the Chairman of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) of the City of Brooksville and I welcome you to the virtual public meeting of the CRA meeting. I'd like to call this meeting to order on July 28, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

I would ask everyone's patience as we hold tonight's meeting, as it will be held entirely virtually for everyone's safety. This is being done to comply with social distancing guidelines so our citizens can participate in the meetings in their own safe environment.

The public is advised to check the City website for up-to-date information on any changes to the manner in which future meetings will be held and the location

Please be advised that this meeting is NOT live streamed. The Zoom link will be uploaded on the Hernando County Government Broadcasting website at www.hernandocounty.us the day after the meeting, or as soon thereafter as possible. Pursuant to Executive Order No. 20-69, issued by the Office of Governor Ron DeSantis on March 20, 2020, municipalities may now conduct meetings of their governing boards without having a quorum of its members physically present at a specific location by utilizing communications media technology such as telephones or video conferencing platforms.

The City of Brooksville uses a Zoom virtual platform to hold its virtual public meetings. Zoom is a cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, which allows for collaboration, chats, and the delivery of webinars across mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems. The Zoom platform selected by the City does NOT require the public to purchase any software or special equipment to participate in this meeting. The Zoom app can be downloaded to mobile devices or desktops for

convenience. More detailed instructions on how to download Zoom is available on the City's website, on the public meeting notice and on the published agenda.

As in our regular in-person meetings, the public will be allowed to participate and may speak at certain times during the meeting. When it is time for public comment and input, you will be asked to click the "Raise Hand" button on the bottom of the Zoom Meeting Screen and wait to be recognized by the Mayor. If you are participating by telephone (AUDIO) only, before Citizen's Input is over, the City Clerk will recognize your number as an attendee and ask you to unmute your line by pressing *6 if you wish to speak.

As with any Citizen's input, when you are recognized, please speak clearly and state your name and we ask you to state your address for the record before proceeding with your comments. As in our regular meeting, public comments are limited to 3 minutes.

In addition, if the City Clerk received public comments prior to the meeting by email or regular mail, your comments will be read into the record right before the Citizen's Input and the email must be no longer than 3 minutes.

This meeting is being recorded. By continuing to participate in the meeting by electronic means, all those who speak are consenting to the recording of this meeting and all comments. A link to an audio recording of the meeting will be provided the next day, or as soon as possible thereafter, on the Hernando County Broadcasting portal at www.hernandocounty.us. Anyone wishing to appeal any decision made by the Community Redevelopment Agency for any matter considered at this meeting may need a verbatim record of the item.

If we experience any technical issues, I will ask for a short recess of the virtual meeting or ask for a continuance of the meeting if it appears to be needed. If you experience technical issues, you can send a brief note by the chat button.

Please be aware that as of this meeting date, City facilities are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. However, social distancing guidelines will be adhered to and a sign-in sheet at City Hall is maintained

City Clerk Battista advised that the agenda was posted at City Hall, on the City's Website, and sent to the press. She called the roll, as follows:

Kemerer
Battista
Erhard
Brayton
Battista

The Mayor continued by stating:

I'd like to note also that present is Mr. Kutney, City Manager and Nancy Stuparich, City Attorney who are both participating virtually in this public meeting. Also present is City Clerk, Jennifer Battista, who is acting as co-host of the meeting.

CALL COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING TO ORDER

CITIZEN INPUT

[NOTE: Limited to 3 minutes per speaker. Input can be on any subject, whether or not on the agenda. However, input regarding ordinances, resolutions, or for quasi-judicial hearings will be accepted now and at the time those issues are presented at the meeting.]

City Clerk Battista read the following email into the record:

From: Lori Sowers

Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 9:58 AM

To: Joe Bernardini; William Kemerer; Betty Erhard ; Pat Brayton City of Brooksville Council Member; Robert Battista ; Mark Kutney

Cc: Jennifer Battista

Subject: 1st Citizens Comment for 7/28 CRA meeting Dear City Council and City Manager,

I am pleased you are addressing the CRA plan. Reading through the documents, there are good ideas in there that just need to be acted upon. Hopefully, by you bringing some of this to light, it will motivate some property owners to make needed improvements to their properties for the betterment of our city.

I would like to address the issue of the pole banners that are on the agenda. Colorful pole banners will be a great way to add some color to the boring black wayfinding signs. I agree with what is in the Community Redevelopment Plan created in 2013 (pages 19 and 20) about banners and signage. In the last paragraph of that section, it reads "The logos and theme should remain consistent with the agreed upon identity brand of Brooksville." In my opinion, by you voting to allow the banner presented on page 201 of the agenda packet, you are agreeing that this is the agreed upon identity brand of Brooksville. Have you agreed that the 1856 stamp is our identity? Have you agreed that the courthouse is our identity? Have you agreed that the Brooksville Main Street logo is our identity? Where is our agreed upon identity in that banner? Is there even an agreed upon identity? I believe that discussion needs to be made prior to allowing organizations or businesses hang banners on the poles. By not having that discussion, you are opening up the ability for anyone to request to hang banners with

no uniformity. On what grounds will you have to accept or deny every request brought forth? I think it would be great that banners can be rotated depending upon the season or special events. In fact, businesses or organizations may be willing to sponsor banners if given the opportunity. But again, as per your plan, there needs to be consistency and an identity, and I do not recall where a public discussion was had on that matter.

Thank you.

Lori A Sowers, CPA, PA

CRA Questions

Donna Morin, City resident, had questions regarding the CRA, including what is a public private partnership, what is an inactive community, how does the City declare itself as an inactive community, how much money is in façade grant, when does it expire, who has access to that grant, how does the CRA work for private owners of buildings, how do they have access to the money and how do they get the money. She advised that she emailed out the May 16, 2016 and January 11, 2016 City Council minutes regarding the Brooksville Vision Foundation and economic development and she encouraged Council to read those.

RESPONSE BY CITY MANAGER AND STAFF/CRA MEMBERS

Response by City Manager

City Manager Kutney suggested that he go forward with the CRA presentation and then it can be determined if Mrs. Morin's questions were answered.

Discussion of CRA program

City Manager Kutney went over the documents in the CRA packet, as follows:

- **2019 FS Chapter 163.387**

City Manager Kutney went over Florida Statutes Chapter 163 which defines, establishes and governs Community Redevelopment Agencies which are created to address slum and blighted in areas through a Resolution of Finding of Necessity. He went over definitions of slum and blighted and what constitutes the redevelopment of these areas. He addressed the participation by private enterprises mentioned in the FS. He went over many aspects of the CRA, such as the appointment, functions, and duties of the CRA board and the ethics training that is a requirement. He went over the Community Redevelopment Plan addressed in the FS and felt that the City's plan should be updated to allow

for more detail and specificity. He touched on the FS as it relates to property acquisition, building improvements, disposition of property, entering into contracts, and investing funds. He went over the FS as it relates to inactive CRAs and terminations of CRAs. Procurement policies through the municipality that created the agency cannot be relaxed.

Vice Mayor Brayton questioned the CRA's role as it relates to the purchase property for public use. City Manager Kutney went over the limitations.

CRA Board Member Battista stated that it is his understanding that there is a current contract with Coastal Engineering Associates, Inc., for CRA consulting. He wondered if the City Manager would be coordinating with them through a task order to add more specificity to the plan. City Manager Kutney stated that it has not be determined at this point.

- **2019 CRA Legislative Changes**

One of the main amendments is reporting requirements. He and City Attorney Stuparich advised that CRA legislation is under review on an annual basis by State legislators to create more oversight due to some abuse by some governmental entities. City Manager Kutney stated that there are Attorney General Opinions on whether events can be funded by CRAs and while it is allowed if it can be shown how it can benefit the objections of the CRA, it is generally not a function of a CRA. He went over some attempts to merge CRAs and Main Street Programs, which generally has not been shown to be successful.

- **CRA Ord 590 and Resolution No. 98-18**

The ordinance was the creation of the CRA and the resolution was the Finding of Necessity. There was no specific discussion.

- **CRA Redevelopment Plan updated 2013**

City Manager Kutney went over the plan that was created after the Finding of Necessity. He reiterated his previous comment that he would like to see the plan updated and he went over those amendment procedures. The CRA plan must work in concert with the City's Comprehensive Plan. The consultant would need to be involved where appropriate. He stressed the importance of the plan as it addresses things that can be done in the CRA area.

CRA Board Member Kemerer called attention to the creation of the CRA in 1998 or 1999. He noted that the Ordinance contains the signatures of Pat Brayton and Robert Battista, who then was City Attorney. He questioned if they could shed light on the reason for the creation of the CRA.

Vice Chairman Brayton recalled that the idea was to enhance the downtown with the idea of increasing the tax base. There as quite a lot of revitalization efforts at the time.

CRA Board Member Battista stated that the landlords in the downtown area were upset at having their properties considered blighted, but the definition was explained as needed for the CRA process to encourage redevelopment. The funds were to be used for redevelopment rather than just façade grants as they are currently being used.

CRA Board Member Kemerer stated that he understood the City Manager's desire to look at the CRA plan for possible updating.

CRA Board Member Erhard questioned how banners and signage are addressed in the CRA and City Manager Kutney called attention to the portion of the CRA plan, pages 19 and 20. Discussion ensued regarding Chairman Bernardini's statement that to his knowledge, the City or the CRA does not have a branding. Board Member Battista described the branding of a proposed tree logo which was brought forward to Council a few years ago. The City Manager stated that branding is not a sign, motto, slogan or motto but rather seeks to determine the value proposition as a City or as an entity that can be projected.

Board Member Kemerer called attention to the CRA plan language on 1) downtown banners and 2) seasonal special event banners. It was Board Member Kemerer's understanding that the wayfinding signs were designed to have the capacity of having two different types of signs such as a banner with a logo and also seasonal events banners.

City Attorney Stuparich stated that the CRA plan is also subject to the Land Development Code regulations.

City Manager Kutney addressed the public/private partnership as defined in FS 255. He further stated that the scope of the projects and roles of the public and private entities may vary in any individual CRA Plan.

Regarding how CRAs are funded, the City Manager stated that most CRAs are funded by tax revenues through increment increases in a trust fund.

City Manager Kutney confirmed Board Member Kemerer's statement that it is staff's intent to recommend to the CRA that the plan needs to be reevaluated.

Board Member Kemerer wondered if CRA funds could be used on reconstruction activities or physical improvements, to include inside improvements. City Manager Kutney felt that that could be considered when reevaluating the plan. Chairman Bernardini stated that perhaps that could be applicable for potential second floor improvements in buildings. Board Member Kemerer discussed second floor improvements, particularly as they relate to elevators to comply with ADA standards.

Board Member Erhard questioned if the discussion by Board Member Kemerer on second floor renovations was related to a meeting attended by individual Council Members with a potential buyer who was considering renovations to the Jennings building. Board Member Kemerer stated that it brought the CRA funding to the forefront in his thought process on how the money could be better utilized. He stated that elevators and ADA requirements are issues that need to be looked at. He stated that he was encouraged that there was a proposal for renovating the Jennings building.

City Manager Kutney addressed objective 4.13 in the Community Redevelopment Plan which encourages renovation of buildings and includes language on second floor usage to enhance economic development. He was not sure the language was adequate to allow CRA funding to allow for those renovations. The CRA Agency discussed the viability of second floor renovations and what the types of usage could be.

- **CRA Area Map**

There was no specific discussion.

- **CRA 18/19 Annual Report**

The City Manager pointed out that the Annual Report contains a spreadsheet on the details of the tax increment financing. There was no specific discussion.

- **Adopted CRA Commercial Improvement (façade) grant**

City Manager Kutney and the CRA Board Members discussed the façade grant program. Board Member Battista stated he did not have a problem continuing the program but felt that CRA monies that could also be used for additional projects. Board Member Kemerer offered agreement with keeping the facade program but supported moving forward with other projects as well. Vice Chair Brayton offered agreement with keeping the façade grant program but supported looking at other projects to increase the tax base. Mayor Bernardini expressed agreement. Board Member Erhard felt that the façade grants are about maintenance issues, which she felt the property owners should be doing. She agreed with looking at options but would not want to decide without considering the options.

Board Member Battista supported having Public Works look at the infrastructure and whether CRA funding could be used to help with those improvements. Board Member Erhard offered agreement. Board Member Kemerer advised that the language is currently in the plan regarding infrastructure.

- **CRA Budget**

City Manager Kutney and the CRA Board Members discussed the CRA projected budget. The City Manager advised that he has impounded the CRA budget, other than façade grants, to allow for further discussion of the program. He supported building up the reserves in the CRA funding to allow for consideration of potential projects.

Board Member Erhard advised that she is not in support of the CRA. Board Member Kemerer recommended getting an independent financial advisor that specializes in CRAs.

The City Manager would look at the City staff services that are included in the CRA budget. Finance Director Sullivan stated that the City invoices \$27,950 to the CRA that goes into the General Fund for administrative costs for maintaining the CRA fund. Board Member Kemerer suggested cutting this by 50%.

Motion:

Motion was made by Board Member Kemerer and seconded by Board Member Battista to suspend all CRA disbursements except for façade grants and work to establish the CRA website requirements.

Motion and second were amended to approve disbursement of 50% of the City staff services.

Motion and seconded were withdrawn.

Motion:

Motion was made by Board Member Kemerer and seconded by Board Member Battista that CRA would suspend all disbursement from CRA for the remainder of this year, expiring September 30, 2020, except for façade grants, work to establish CRA website to meet FS requirements and approve 50% of currently budgeted amount for City staff services. Motion carried 5-0, as follows:

Kemerer	Aye
Battista	Aye
Erhard	Aye
Brayton	Aye
Bernardini	Aye

Discussion of Banners on Wayfinding signage poles**“Welcome to Historic Downtown Brooksville” Banners**

Discussion of installation of (11) banners entitled, Welcome to Historic Downtown Brooksville, approximately 2 feet by 4 feet in size, on existing ‘way finding’ signs within the City, and authorize Public Works to approve the submitted Pole Banner Application submitted by Historic Shed, part of the design team of the Main Street Program. The CRA is asked to make a recommendation to City Council.

Director of Public Works Booth presented the request. He stated that there are 11 wayfinding signs throughout Brooksville and there has been a request by Brooksville Main Street to install banners on those 11 signs. He went over those locations. Director Booth went on to state that only 7 of those 11 signs will allow for the installation of the banners due to clearance requirements or hinderance for a line of sight.

Board Member Erhard called attention to the email read into the record earlier in the meeting from Lori Sowers and Member Erhard stated that Council has never agreed on an identity. She felt this needs to be addressed.

Board Member Battista stated he had a problem with a private contractor hanging hardware on the City's signage. He also stated he was very opposed to putting banners on light poles as he felt they were sign pollution. He wondered if the banners would come down for the Christmas decorations.

Board Member Erhard felt that the wayfinding signs were stand-alone signs and are sufficient.

Chairman Bernardini was discouraged that any of the wayfinding signs were installed without consideration of clearance issues. He also was concerned about content of any banners placed on the poles as that was never discussed by Council. He felt that the criteria in the CRA plan needs to be addressed before any specific requests were considered.

Board Member Kemerer discussed the CRA plan as it relates to downtown banners and seasonal banners. He agrees there needs to be content and application process details discussed for seasonal and special events and he felt that staff would need to give general direction.

Vice Chairman Brayton called attention to the CRA plan on the special events and seasonal banners. He agreed that the CRA has never agreed upon on any type of signage requirement and until that is done, he did not see how any banner request could be considered. Chairman Bernardini wondered if a workshop was in order.

Board Member Battista offered agreement that this portion of the CRA plan on rules and the process for banners needs to be brought back to the CRA with recommendations from the City Manager. He supported this not being delayed.

Board Member Erhard stated that the City Manager mentioned the desire to update the CRA plan and she wondered if this would be part of the modifications.

City Manager Kutney stated he would like to get with the City Attorney to review the CRA plan and CRA resolution and particularly how it relates to FS Chapter 163. If that review triggers a need for a modification to the CRA plan, that will be recommended.

Board Member Battista was concerned on how or whether the CRA should be controlling content. City Attorney Stuparich stated that the Land Development Code regulations would overlay whatever is in the CRA plan.

Motion:

Motion was made by Brayton and seconded by Erhard to have City Manager, staff and City Attorney to work up something to bring back on the how the signs and banners should be there, what information should be on them and what logo or brand should be on them.

Board Member Erhard stated that the City Manager has many priorities. City Manager Kutney stated that it would take a little while to get with staff and the City Attorney.

Motion carried 5-0, as follows:

Erhard	Aye
Battista	Aye
Kemerer	Aye
Brayton	Aye
Bernardini	Aye

CITIZEN INPUT [NOTE: Limited to 3 minutes per speaker.]

Banners

Jo-Anne Peck discussed the banner application. Chairman Bernardini stated that because they were requested for the wayfinding signs, it becomes a CRA issue, along with the Land Development Regulations.

Branding

Donna Morin, City Resident, was excited about pursuing branding for the City.

RESPONSE BY CITY MANAGER AND STAFF/CRA MEMBERS

None necessary.

ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY

No items

ITEMS BY CITY MANAGER

No items

STAFF UPDATES (IF ANY)

No items

ITEMS BY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEMBERS

BOARD MEMBER KEMERER

Banners

He stated he not against banners, but wanted a process. Chairman Bernardini and Vice Chairman Brayton agreed.

CHAIRMAN BERNARDINI

Motion:

Motion was made by Kemerer and seconded by Erhard to begin having quarterly CRA meetings. Motion carried 5-0, as follows:

Kemerer	Aye
Battista	Aye
Erhard	Aye
Brayton	Aye
Bernardini	Aye

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to consider, motion was made by Brayton and seconded by Kemerer to adjourn the meeting at 5:34 p.m. Motion carried 5-0 as follows:

Erhard	Aye
Battista	Aye
Kemerer	Aye
Brayton	Aye
Bernardini	Aye



 Jennifer J. Battista, CMC, City Clerk

Attest: 

 Joe Bernardini, CRA Chairman

Approved 9/16/20 (during CRA portion of budget agenda)

