

KARL N. FLAGG
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

MARY LAWSON BROWN
VICE MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

ALLEGRA KITCHENS
COMMISSIONER

VERNON MYERS
COMMISSIONER

JAMES NORWOOD, JR.
COMMISSIONER



Regular meeting 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month at 6:00 p.m.

ELWIN C. "WOODY" BOYNTON, JR.
CITY MANAGER

BETSY JORDAN DRIGGERS
CITY CLERK

RUBY M. WILLIAMS
FINANCE DIRECTOR

GARY S. GETCHELL
CHIEF OF POLICE

MICHAEL LAMBERT
CHIEF FIRE DEPT.

DONALD E. HOLMES
CITY ATTORNEY

MINUTES PALATKA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY June 10, 2010; 4:00 p.m.

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City of Palatka Community Redevelopment Agency held on the 10th day of June, 2010.

PRESENT: Karl N. Flagg Mayor
Mary Lawson Brown Commissioner
Allegra Kitchens Commissioner
Vernon Myers, Jr. Commissioner
James Norwood, Jr. Commissioner
Sam Deputy President, Downtown Palatka, Inc.

ABSENT: Chip Laibl Commissioner, Putnam County BOCC

Also Present: City Manager Woody Boynton, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Finance Director Matt Reynolds, Fire Chief Mike Lambert; Planning & Zoning Administrator Debbie Banks; SHNA President Roberta Correa, PHNNA President Elizabeth Van Rensburg;

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Flagg called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

INVOCATION – Commissioner Allegra Kitchens

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Sam Deputy

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 2/11/10 & 4/8/10 – Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

PROGRAM UPDATES

North Historic District – Elizabeth Van Rensburg, President, PHNNA, said they have made some positive changes over the past few months, and are now incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, expanded the Board, elected officers and purchased liability insurance for the organization and directors/officers. They have also adopted by-laws.

She distributed a package outlining their TIF fund program. They are beginning with code violations. They have met with building officials at the listed properties to discuss violations and have met with the homeowner. Pages 1 & 2 is checklist for their projects. The 2nd page is an application for property owners. Page 3 is a color chart for paint, roof and trim. Page 4 is a contractor authorization. There is a list of qualified contractors and a telephone log for contractor contact. There is a protocol for pre-bid meetings, opening bids and selection.

There is a fact sheet for the homeowner, an application and letter of acceptance. The last page is a project completion page. They are ready to go with this program. They will be returning with questions as they come up. She thanked Robbie Correa and Michael with SHNA for their help. Commissioner Kitchens said she is impressed with this information. She'd like a copy of any signed documents for city records.

Commissioner Myers said he understands for a time there was waning interest in the Northside program, but sees interest is returning. Ms. Rensburg said they have approximately 63-65 parcels in the Northside; some owners own as many as four properties. Their membership has gone from zero to 19 households in a few months. That is 1/3 of the owners. Mayor Flagg thanked her for her optimistic attitude.

South Historic District – Robbie Correa, President, SHNA - Robbie Correa, President, 703 Emmett Street, said they are in the process of completing their 30th house and have two others out to bid. They use the same forms as the North District. They've completed their mural. They are working with the Police Department to accomplish certain goals. They are doing well. Mayor Flagg thanked her for their leadership and willingness to partner with the North Historic District's neighborhood association. Commissioner Norwood asked as to the attendance at their meetings. Ms. Correa said they have 25–30 people attend their meetings; membership is around 50 members. Commissioner Kitchens asked that any contracts that are signed a copy is provided to Mr. Boynton.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT:

BIG Program – Sam Carr, Main Street Economic Restructuring Committee, said he provided a written update on the BIG program. They have six projects funded in the first cycle. 216 St. Johns Avenue is finished. 216-A is under construction and looks very nice. The City Café sign has been repainted and the neon lights are under construction. Angela's new roof is going on shortly. Mr. Cavanaugh's new elevator is under permitting. 110 S. 2nd Street is commencing. They are pleased with the progress. The 2nd cycle drew 20 applications and closed on June 21st. The value of those is \$768,000.00. They want to be sure they receive increased funding. The evaluation committee will be looking at appropriate funding levels.

Mr. Carr said the Economic Restructuring Committee is working on changes to the program and application for 2011. They are also looking at a residential application similar to the North and South districts' Code upgrade programs, and area seeking ideas on how to solicit new businesses for downtown Palatka. The first cycle awarded \$199,000.00 in funds to these projects. Commissioner Kitchens requested copies of all their contracts and documents on file at City Hall.

Façade Program – Robert Taylor, Main Street Design Committee – Mr. Taylor said they've had four applications turned in. The grant requested amount is between \$47,000 - 48,000.00. The City's investment will be about \$33,700.00. The first project will be the Angel's Diner historic neon sign restoration. The next is Kiddie Kampus repainting and neon sign restoration. Laibl's Tire has applied for a grant, and they are optimistic that the grant will be awarded. Pizza Boyz and Monahan Chiropractic have collaborated on a common sign, a lighted brick structure, which should be very attractive. This is their first façade grant cycle in 2 years. They are happy to have it back in place. This may be dove-tailed into the BIG Program in the future. Commissioner Kitchens asked that he provide copies of his paperwork to the City Manager.

Commissioner Myers asked if there is a formula for awarding funds. Mr. Taylor said the first \$5,000 is a grant. The 2nd \$5,000 is a matching participation at 80/20 match.

Billboard Advertising Campaign – Angela Murtagh, VP, Downtown Palatka, Inc., said she distributed a rendering of the proposed billboard that will be going up. They can make three changes on this per year. This is a rendering of their proposed downtown. There may be changes later to this rendering. There are three billboards; one on Hwy 20, one on I-95 at the 207 exit, and one at the east foot of the bridge. They are promoting things that are happening downtown such as festivals and greenways. They are using the Parks & Recreation website and phone contacts. The billboard will serve to reeducate Putnam County residents to shop downtown. If residents will spend money in the community it will strengthen the local economy and infrastructure. This is a good advertising tool and will help attract new entrepreneurs to the area. Commissioner Kitchens asked her to provide Mr. Boynton with copies of all paperwork on contracts.

CONSENT AGENDA:

a. Approve the following CBD TIF Fund Requests:

1. Up to \$350.00 for Octoberfest Advertisement Expense - Keep Putnam Beautiful
2. \$200,000.00 - Additional Appropriation for FY 2010 BIG Program
3. Michael Redd & Associates - Revised Scope of Service #1 in the amount of \$45,320.00 to complete work on Riverfront Park Improvements Planning & Permitting for a total contract amount of \$301,330.00

b. Approve SHD TIF Fund Request – up to \$3,000 to stripe River Street Bike Lanes

c. Cancel August 12, 2010 CRA Meeting per request of CRA Director

d. Authorize City Manager to negotiate engineering contract not to exceed \$25,000.00 for stormwater permitting and engineering design of 100 Block and surrounding area

Commissioner Kitchens asked to pull Items 3 (a)(3) and 3 (b) for discussion. Commissioner Myers moved to pass all Consent Items as presented except for items 3 (a)(3) and 3 (b). Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

Commissioner Kitchens said she spoke with Mr. Boynton on this. It notes one of the floating docks will be parallel to the riverfront restaurant. There has been no determination that the restaurant will be located on the Riverfront and she wanted to clarify that point. Commissioner Brown moved to approve Consent Items 3 (a)(3) as presented. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

Commissioner Kitchens said she wanted to see on the ground how far out the bike lanes would be. She drove down River Street and noted she drives to the right. Unless one hugs the center line, one would be driving in the bike lane to some degree. She is unsure that there will be four feet in addition to the width of the car to the right of the center lane. She just wanted this pulled for a separate vote. Mr. Boynton said the minimum lane width from strip to strip will be 10 feet. Most roads in residential areas are 20 feet. It gives bikers a protected zone to ride in. This is a 14 to 15 foot lane now and will put people closer to the center line, but is comparable to normal lane widths now. Eleven-foot lanes have become the minimum design width due to larger sized vehicles manufactured in the past. Mr. Boynton noted drivers won't receive a ticket for riding a little over into the bike lane unless they hit a biker. Most vehicles aren't wider than 7 feet.

Commissioner Brown said she is glad to see this happening; this ties the waterfront and downtown to the Ravines through Greenways and Trails, and will aid tourism in the area. Bikers do look for bike trails. Mr. Boynton said they keep referring to themselves as the Hub of Rails to Trails, and are in position later this fall to receive almost a half-million dollars from DOT to begin the Trail through Palatka. The project was hung up on R/W issues outside the City. If they receive that, they can get over and under the bridge, through the park and to

the Ravines. They are discussing how to get from the Ravines back to the loop, possibly down Palm Avenue via a sidewalk expansion. They need to start the "hub" process. They are looking for money for a soft landing for kayaks and canoes. This is why they have adopted a plan. He thanked the volunteers that have put work into these plans over the past few years such as Bob Taylor, Sam Carr, Angela Murtagh, Elizabeth Van Rensburg and Robbie Correa. They need to make this happen. Commissioner Brown moved to pass Consent Item 3 (b) as presented. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

REQUEST TO APPROVE 2010 Promotional Campaign – Sam Deputy (917 Carr Street) & Angela Murtagh (726 St. Johns Avenue), Downtown Palatka, Inc. – Mr. Deputy said they have been working on this for some time. His mother is celebrating 45 years in business at their location. People are surprised to hear his mother is still alive and working at that location. People don't come to downtown to do business for various reasons and spend too much money outside of Putnam County. There are 1½ to 2 million people within 100 miles of Palatka. They want Palatka to be the place to do business. People come through Palatka all the time. They need to re-educate local people and those in the perimeter to shop downtown. They have gems in the downtown they don't take advantage of, some being the Bronson House, Tilghman House, Larimer Arts Center, and Railroad Museum. Those should be destinations. Ravine Gardens' visitor numbers are rising. When people arrive at the airport they should be told what's available. Their theme is Meet Me In Downtown Palatka. This can be tailored for any event. Bob Beacham came up with that title prior to his passing.

They would like to make Downtown Palatka Inc. a promotions group. They have almost 200 locations and businesses on 56 blocks. They included government offices that attract people in that count. They want to work with the City Manager once this plan is approved. They are advertising Palatka as a whole and as a destination. They want to begin advertising the buildings to attract businesses that will complement existing businesses. They need to "brand" Palatka. Other remote cities are packed on weekends because they have branded themselves. As to signage, this is not wayfaring signage, but business signage. School inserts and brochures need to be enhanced.

Commissioner Kitchens asked if the local businesses have their share of this advertising money, or will it all be spent out of county? Mr. Deputy said some will be spent with local businesses via radio and television. They want to reach people outside the local area to bring business and shoppers in. Commissioner Kitchens asked if they are putting out bids for the brochures, etc. Mr. Deputy said they will. Commissioner Kitchens said websites are less expensive. She's put out inquiries as to whether TIF funds can be spent on websites. She has heard they cannot but that could be wrong. Rather than listing a contingency, they can always come back to ask for more money for whatever they need it for. Mr. Deputy said he doesn't go to the City's website to find out what's happening in the City. They are looking for a website to bring people to downtown and all businesses in the downtown can link to this website. The City's website regularly crashes his computer. Commissioner Kitchens said she's had three people tell her this is an exorbitant price for a website. She'd like copies of any contracts to come to City Hall. There was discussion regarding use of the Chamber's website. Mr. Deputy said not all downtown businesses are Chamber members, and not all Chamber members are downtown businesses.

Commissioner Brown said she mentioned doing postcards advertising local businesses. People look for packages advertising area businesses. They can be passed out when they go places. She asked Mr. Deputy to look into a postcard program. Mr. Deputy said Commissioner Brown brought back postcards from Natchez, MS and that prompted them to

look into postcards and cemetery tours. Commissioner Brown said they need to promote a walking tour downtown for people who get off the train or come looking for former landmarks. Other cities have walking tours. Mr. Deputy said there are two current walking tours; one belongs to the Hiking Group of Florida who would like to turn their tour over to Downtown Palatka. It is 13-1/2 miles and one receives a Palatka "patch" to say you've done it. The other is the Chamber's walking tour for downtown, which they are seeking "ownership" of. As to markers, the historical society is looking into that. Harriet Beecher Stowe visited St. Mary's church in 1874. There are many people who follow her "trail." This is not marked, so it is not in the "trail" book. Discussion ensued on films made in Palatka. Mayor Flagg said in the sub-allocation of funds, they need an intrinsic and extrinsic plan, and the advertising budget must reflect both. People will come to Palatka for their needs, but as for those on the fringe areas of Putnam County, they will go out of County. They need public service announcements to encourage people to take advantage of shopping opportunities in Palatka. Mr. Deputy said they've been looking at Arbitron ratings for Palatka stations and find they have markets in other counties. Commissioner Norwood asked as to the though process under contingencies, and why they feel they will need a contingency. Ms. Murtagh said if they spend money in both TV and radio, if radio is working better, they will pull money out of TV and put it into radio. Commissioner Norwood asked if the City Manger will approve anything coming out of contingency. They said it will. They will not pull anything out of contingency that doesn't come before Mr. Boynton.

Commissioner Myers moved to approve 2010 Promotional Campaign. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. Commissioner Kitchens asked Mr. Holmes if they can ask for a contingency without spelling out what it is for. She understands it will go to the City Manager for approval. Mr. Holmes said as long as it goes to the City Manager before the funds are spent, this provides certain controls. They are not allocating all the money specifically, it allows them some latitude. Commissioner Kitchens asked if they can set TIF Money aside without spelling out what it is for. Mr. Holmes said they can. Mayor Flagg said there should be a request to shift funds around. This should at least be an option. This is a reasonable request. Mayor Flagg asked the record to reflect that Mr. Deputy will need to abstain from the vote as one of the CRA Board members is part of the request. Mr. Deputy recused himself from voting and filed CE Form 8B, Memorandum of Voting Conflict, with the Clerk. There being no further discussion, the motion was voted upon and passed, six in favor, one recusal.

REQUEST TO REIMBURSE the cost of repairs to the James Hotel Building – Ruth Burk, owner - Robert Griffith, 510 Mulholland Park, said he is Mrs. Burke's agent. He said Mrs. Burke was not able to apply for the BIG grant in time to make these repairs, which were required by Code Enforcement. With respect to the question, Mr. Griffith noted the package given to them is the presentation.

Mr. Boynton said this will set a precedent if this is approved after the fact. They denied two applications during the last cycle as the work was done before the cycle opened up. The application clearly states the work has to be done after the award. The Code Enforcement Board has shown leniency in these instances in the past, and in all likelihood would have shown her the same leniency had she appealed to them for an extension. They have taken cases under advisement until grant funds are available. Commissioner Kitchens said when she served on the Codes Enforcement Board it was their policy to work with citizens, and they granted extensions of up to a year to make improvements. She believes if Mrs. Burke had appealed to the Codes Enforcement Board for a time extension, they would have granted her an extension. The process for the BIG program is you get the grant and then do the work.

Mr. Deputy said if that option was never explained to the building owner, the building owner wouldn't know that option was available. Mr. Griffith said there was a weather problem in getting the work done. She asked for a 30-day extension and received it. She didn't know she could ask for an extension from the Code Enforcement Board. Commissioner Kitchens said if they grant this, they will have to go back and award the two grants that were denied on the basis the work was done prior to a grant award. Mr. Griffith said those weren't Code cases. Mayor Flagg said people don't need to come directly to the CRA with this type of request without a vetting process or hearing on their specific case. He respects the package they put together, but this circumvents the process. Commissioner Brown moved to deny the request. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

REMARKS/COMMENTS

Mr. Boynton thanked everyone involved in this process over the last two years. They have put over \$500,000 into renovations in the Downtown area. The enthusiasm you see and feel on St. Johns Avenue is catching. The attorney and he will be working with Mr. Ham over the next month to work out the finance plan and transfer of land. In October they will see further progress in that area. These are small steps, but steps nonetheless.

Mr. Deputy said he'd like future discussions on two items. Blue Crab was quite successful. By this time next year the North 100 Block will be unavailable and the power sources will be gone. They need to reinvent festival areas and need other electrical capability. They need to plan for space and electrical availability for 2011 festival seasons. Festivals will move further west up St. Johns Avenue as the riverfront develops. They need to work with the County on this.

Mr. Deputy said today the CRA funded money for promotions for events. If they are going to continue to do this, they need a mechanism for this. They will soon be inundated with requests. They need to know how they relate to and benefit businesses.

Commissioner Brown said she is happy to see things happening and that people have come together to work as a team.

Commissioner Myers said he is encouraged and heartened by the entire agenda and presentations, and concurs with Vice Mayor Brown that they are moving in a positive direction. People are optimistic.

Mayor Flagg said as they talk about the "hub" they talk about the significance of Palatka's location. If they are not careful, the Amtrak will cease to come through Palatka if the Florida East Coast tracks are relocated. They need to make sure they are at the table in the regional transportation study that is being undertaken. There was a pilot program where passengers rode a train from Miami to Jacksonville and Palatka was not a stop. If that proposal goes through, Palatka will be out of the loop. Downtown Palatka, the Chamber and West Volusia County all need to be at the table. This is going to be a major push. Regional transportation authorities will look out for Jacksonville and Miami.

ADJOURN – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Kitchens.