MINUTES **FINAL**
COCOA CRA
September 12, 2023

The Special Meeting of the Cocoa Community Redevelopment Agency was held on September 12, 2023 at City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, FL, as publicly noticed.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair BLAKE called the meeting to order at **5:02 pm**.

INVOCATION: Chairperson **BLAKE** led the assembly in the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Agency Member **ETZ** led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

Michael C. Blake	Chairperson
Lavander Hearn	Vice Chairperson
Rip Dyal	Agency Member
Janne Etz	Agency Member
Alex Goins	Agency Member
Lorraine Koss	Agency Member
Candace Rogers	Agency Member
Anthony Garganese	Agency Attorney
Ryan Browne	Recording Secretary

PRESENT:

Michael C. Blake	Chairperson
Lavander Hearn	Vice Chairperson
Rip Dyal	Agency Member
Janne Etz	Agency Member
Alex Goins	Agency Member
Lorraine Koss	Agency Member
Candace Rogers	Agency Member
Anthony Garganese	Agency Attorney
Ryan Browne	Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

None.

STAFF PRESENT:
City Manager Stockton WHITTEN and Community Services Director Charlene NEUTERMAN.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

AGENDA: Special Meeting, September 12, 2023 as written or with amendments.

* **MOTION by Agency Member KOSS; SECONDED by Vice Chairperson HEARN to approve the Agenda for the Special Meeting of September 12, 2023, as written.**

AYES: BLAKE, HEARN, DYAL, ETZ, GOINS, KOSS, ROGERS.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

III. DELEGATIONS:

1. Alex Greenwood.

IV. PRESENTATIONS: None.

V. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Request Agency review and approval of Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.
    i. Introduction. Director NEUTERMAN. FY 24 Budget was presented to the Agency in detail last month.
        1. Salary, Operating, Capital.
        2. Salary. Set from HR. Previously, increases have been notated that happened due to staffing changes, as well as insurance or retirement cost increases.
        3. Operating Services. $50,000 has been budgeted for a Consultant to conduct the CRA Plan Update. The Communications cost is new. The former Redevelopment Coordinator did not have a City Cell Phone, the new one does. Legal expenses are down. The Lease for Orange Street Tower (CVP/Post Office) is going into years 4 and 5 of the lease, which each contain a 3% increase. Insurance costs have increased. Maintenance Orange Street Tower. Marketing materials. Legal advertising has increased as well. Conference. Infrastructure. Lee Wenner Parking – Draft RFP getting ready to put out soon. One item that was accidentally omitted was the $50,000 for the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant program. That will be added

back. Also, there is the transfer to the General Fund of $150,000 for Riverfront Park maintenance. And the CRA Police Overtime Weekend Detail cost of $72,800. We will bring back to you a Trued-Up Budget in November, as we rollover, expenditures.

ii. Discussion.

1. Agency Member GOINS asked if the Christmas Lighting in the Consent Decree Area was part of the budget. Director NEUTERMAN replied that the cost was higher than the previous Public Works Director wanted; but that the issue can be reintroduced. She plans to follow up with the new Interim Public Works Director to re-address the costs and feasibility and plans to bring back solid numbers in the next month or two.
2. Agency Member ROGERS asked about the $1.9 million set aside for the Lee Wenner Parking Project and whether that money was rolled over. Director NEUTERMAN responded that yes, it is rolled over and that because we do not have a good idea of how expensive this project will actually be bid, staff built a cushion into the budget numbers. Agency Member ROGERS asked about the status of the Boat removal process. Director NEUTERMAN responded that she will follow-up with the County on the status of the boat removal process, but reminded the Agency that this process can take approximately 6 months. Agency Member ROGERS asked if we were planning any other projects for this year. Director NEUTERMAN replied that other projects are not planned at this time, until we receive the results of the CRA Plan Update, which may dictate new goals and objectives. Agency Member ROGERS asked if staff were considering things like FIND Grants which she feels will be needed to help clean up the Village. Director NEUTERMAN agreed these kinds of grants will be needed. Agency Member ROGERS asked the Agency to consider whether the current location and service level of the Post Office was sufficient – in her estimation, it is not. She wants the Agency to entertain the idea of possibly moving it to, for example, the new future mixed use property on Florida Ave and Rosa Jones (and rename the Post Office, Rosa Jones). She believes this could allow a larger use of the Post Office, while keeping it in the Village. She believes that the Agency could solicit the support of Congressman Posey to that end. Could we do better?
3. Agency Member ETZ gave praise to the relevant staff who made the Village parking space painting project a great success. She said that she has been contacted by numerous other merchants expressing their gratitude as well. She asked staff to consider painting the parking spaces on Oleander next. Director NEUTERMAN said she will consult with the Public Works Director to address this issue.
4. Agency Member GOINS asked the City Manager if we could discuss the possible purchase of 203 Orange St. on the corner of Orange and Hughlett Avenue. He noted that this is a part of the Consent Decree

Area. City Manager WHITTEN replied that he is currently in discussions with the owners of the property, actually consisting of two parcels, AT&T. The seller is preparing an offer. The City Manager is hoping for a reasonable price. This property would then be able to be used for affordable housing.

5. Agency Member ROGERS asked if there has been any additional movement on the idea of proactively laying out ordinances for restaurants and bars vs. special venues. The City of Orlando has done a good job defining their downtown and she would like us to model ourselves after their design. She has submitted the City of Orlando's ordinances and codes regarding this matter to Director NEUTERMAN who will review them. Agency Member ROGERS next questioned the City Manager about what is being done to combat the rise in issues regarding the homeless gathering in Lee Wenner Park. She said that caravans of RVs and SUVs are parked in the park at night, some for several months at a time. Getting so comfortable that they are putting up clotheslines to air dry their clothes and grilling. She has received lots of complaints. Because they are locked out of the restrooms, they have begun squatting and defecating in public view. She asked if we could "Tag and Tow" in the parking lot to help clean it up. She mentioned the murder of a homeless man that occurred several weeks ago in the area. She feels as though it has become like the Wild West down there.
6. Chairperson BLAKE responded that there was recently an urgent meeting called to which Agency Member ROGERS was invited, but, unable to attend, where the community, merchants, the City, the Police department, and non-profits, such as Matthew's Hope, were able to gather and discuss the homelessness issues faced by Cocoa Village. He encouraged anyone witnessing any such behaviors as disruptive to public good and decency to immediately report the issue at hand to the Police as well as utilize specialized tools designed to assist with the reporting process, including anonymous reporting. He reiterated the use of the "Drop A Dime" program, which allows you to report issues. There will be a follow-up meeting again in September and he invited Agency Member ROGERS to attend that meeting, to which she replied that she would. Chairperson BLAKE reminded the Agency that although there are actions being taken to fix this complex issue, we cannot control people.
7. Agency Member ROGERS agreed and mentioned that we should be working collaboratively to solve these issues, rather than having 'sister cities' who have admitted they are "dumping" homeless persons onto our streets.
8. Vice Chairperson HEARN asked if overnight parking was currently permitted in the Village? City Manager WHITTEN responded that, yes, it is, because we have businesses that need those spaces for their evening patrons to use. He mentioned that it will be difficult once

construction begins on the Lee Wenner Park project. Vice Chairperson HEARN stated that he would think that getting the towing companies involved may help. He is also interested in what kind of Signage is already in place.

9. Agency Member KOSS asked if the Lee Wenner Park parking project will close the parking lot entirely or in phases. City Manager WHITTEN replied that he does not know, but, that phases will cost extra. Agency Member KOSS asked how long this project is supposed to last. City Manager WHITTEN said that current estimates are for a 9-month project. We need to see the bids first in order to know for sure. Director NEUTERMAN reminded the Agency that as scope increases, such as adding phases, the price will also rise. Agency Member GOINS asked if temporary parking could be found, such as at the bank, for example. Both City Manager WHITTEN and Director NEUTERMAN responded, yes, that could be a possibility.
10. Agency Chairperson BLAKE said that he found the "Drop A Dime" Program email address: DropADime@CocoaPolice.com
11. City Manager WHITTEN corrected earlier statements concerning 203 Orange Street that AT&T is the current owner and that they have agreed to sell us the property for $75,000. To which all of the Agency Members gave verbal approval.
12. Chairperson BLAKE asked the Agency for a motion to approve negotiations.

***MOTION by Agency Member GOINS to allow the City Manager to engage in negotiations with AT&T for the two parcels located at 203 Orange Street; SECONDED by Chairperson BLAKE to approve the motion.**

AYES: BLAKE, HEARN, DYAL, ETZ, GOINS, KOSS, ROGERS.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

13. Agency Member GOINS mentioned that he would like to see an "I Heart Cocoa" sign somewhere in Riverfront Park for people to take photos with.

iii. Vote. Budget approval.

***MOTION by Agency Member GOINS; SECONDED by Agency Member DYAL to approve the resolution.**

AYES: BLAKE, HEARN, DYAL, ETZ, GOINS, KOSS, ROGERS.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

VI. ATTORNEY'S REPORT: None.

VII. UPDATES AND STAFF REPORTS:

1. Community Services Director – Staff Report.
    i. **Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA) Annual Conference**,
        1. Date: **Wed. Oct. 25 – Fri. Oct. 27, 2023** at the
        2. Location: **Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa, Ponte Vedra Beach.**
        3. The following members voted yes to attend:
            i. HEARN, KOSS, and ROGERS.
            ii. Any changes? No.
            iii. Ryan will send out individual detailed itineraries for you to review.
        4. Any questions, please contact Ryan.

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE:

Monday, October 2, 2023, at **6:00 pm** in the Council Chambers located in Cocoa City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, Florida.

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

* **MOTION by Agency Member DYAL; SECONDED by Agency Member ETZ to adjourn the meeting.**

AYES: BLAKE, HEARN, DYAL, ETZ, GOINS, KOSS, ROGERS.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 5:40 PM.

Michael C. Blake, Chairperson

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ryan Browne, Recording Secretary