



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**APPROVED MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
CENTRAL CITY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2022 – 3:30 PM
CITY HALL - 8th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33301**

Board Members	Present/Absent	Cumulative Attendance September 2021-August 2022	
		Present	Absent
Ray Thrower, Chair	P	6	1
Justin Greenbaum	P	1	0
Shane Jordan	P	5	2
Christina Robinson	P	4	2
Dennis Ulmer, Vice Chair	P	7	0

At this time, there are 5 appointed members to the Board; therefore, 3 constitute a quorum.

Staff:

Cija Omengabar, CRA Planner/Liaison
Clarence Woods, CRA Manager
Officer Brian Blount
Jamie Opperlee, Prototype Inc. Recording Secretary

Communication to the City Commission:

Motion made by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Jordan to recommend the City have a public service campaign to discourage people from giving donations to panhandlers. Motion passed unanimously.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum

Chair Thrower called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. and Roll was called, and it was noted that a quorum was present.

III. Introduction of Board Members and Staff

Board members and guests introduced themselves.

IV. Approval of Minutes

- Rescheduled Regular Meeting January 12, 2022
- Regular Meeting February 2, 2022

Chair Thrower noted a correction to the January 12, 2022 minutes.

Motion by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Jordan to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022 meeting as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Jordan to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2022 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

V. Homeless Initiative Discussion

Officer Brian Blount, Homeless Outreach Team

Officer Blount described outreach efforts in coordination with the City's partners, to help the homeless transition into getting off the streets. He remarked that many people refused services and chose to remain homeless. He said Community Court was held every Wednesday to allow people to gain access to services if they wished. Officer Blount said they also visited HOPE South Florida once per week to offer services. He noted the lack of shelter beds and services available and said Covid Protocols were still in place in the shelters.

Officer Blount stated they were overwhelmed in Fort Lauderdale. He said when a homeless person was released from the main jail in Fort Lauderdale, they often stayed in the City. In January, they estimated 2,500 homeless in the County and 750 in Fort Lauderdale.

Officer Blount said people must stop giving money to panhandlers, which would hopefully encourage them to seek the services available. He said they were starting initiatives to get this message out to the public.

Officer Blount said beds were distributed through the County Task Force for Ending Homelessness. The biggest issues for providing services were low staffing and lack of budget. He said Homelessness was often at the bottom of the list for City and County budgets.

Officer Blount described the Community Court process and how people were tracked.

Officer Blount said during Covid last year, the City had used Covid and FEMA funds to house the homeless in a hotel. The City had investigated buying a hotel to house people and offer the services, but the problem was no one wanted such a residence in their neighborhood.

Chair Thrower wanted to send a Communication to the City Commission that it should make more of an effort to tell the public not to give money to homeless people.

Officer Blount said per the annual surveys, the number of homeless in Fort Lauderdale had remained fairly consistent.

Ms. Robinson asked how the Board could partner with HOPE South Florida. She suggested creating an area on their property with benches or chairs and tables with shade to allow them to eat. Or they could move the feeding area onto the parking lot on the other side of Andrews, away from the residential area, because they did not need all that parking. Officer Blount felt that would be a good start. Ms. Robinson asked if Officer Blount would suggest street lighting the Board could fund to help with the homeless situation. Office Blount said every business came thought the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, which advised them where lighting would serve as a deterrent.

Ms. Robinson asked about the closed streets and Officer Blount said the streets had been closed during the crack epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s to prevent people from the western suburbs from cruising side streets in search of drugs. He stated these closures were preventing crime.

Chair Thrower said he lived on a street that was not blocked and he felt safer there. He thought they should consider reopening some of the closed streets.

Mr. Ulmer pointed out that the County controlled homeless funds, so they needed to remind the County that it was not doing its job.

VI. Discussion and Recommendation

- Street Closure FPL Lighting Installation Cost Estimates

Ms. Omengebar had provided Board members with the cost estimates from FPL for the lighting: \$12,000 for eight light poles. The City would cover the energy costs of \$203 per month.

Mr. Greenbaum asked how much money they could allocate to something that was not an incentive program. Mr. Woods said operational/administrative costs should be no more than 20% of the total budget. Ms. Omengebar said the Board would vote on the budget in May or June.

Mr. Woods said they had been concentrating on completing the rezoning project. In the past, they had discussed starting conversations about other projects they could do, such as creating design standards and guidelines for facades but the previous Board had wanted to concentrate on the rezoning.

Mr. Greenbaum wanted to include an agenda item to discuss a residential improvement incentive program.

Motion made by Mr. Greenbaum, seconded by Mr. Jordan, to include the FPL street lights in the next capital project budget, and to include a contingency of up to 20%. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. Program and Project Status Update

- Rezoning Project

Ms. Omengabar said they were finishing the scope of the proposal and would then solicit firms to complete the Land Use Plan Amendment. The proposal was projected to be done by the end of the year.

- NE 4th Avenue Streetscape Project

Ms. Omengabar said they were still in the FDOT approval process.

- Incentive Programs

Ms. Omengabar had received a draft application for a tenant at 603 NE 13th Street and hoped to present it to the Board in May.

VIII. Communication to City Commission

Board members discussed the City discouraging people from giving money to panhandlers.

Mr. Greenbaum suggested signs in the downtown area. Mr. Jordan suggested using social media. Mr. Ulmer said they should suggest a public service campaign and let the City decide how.

Motion made by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Jordan to send a communication to the City Commission to recommend the City have a public service campaign to discourage people from giving donations to panhandlers. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Old/New Business

May Agenda Items Suggestions

1. Discuss instituting a residential façade program.
2. Review the LauderTrail plan so the Board could make suggestions to improve it in their area.
3. Review commuter rail options that would affect the CRA so the Board could provide input.
4. Discuss what they could do to partner with HOPE South Florida.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on May 4, 2022.

[Minutes written by J. Opperlee, Prototype, Inc.]