

City of Lauderhill

*City Commission Chambers at City Hall
5581 W. Oakland Park Blvd.
Lauderhill, FL, 33313
www.lauderhill-fl.gov*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, March 25, 2024

3:30 PM

City Commission Chambers

Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting (CRA)

CRA Executive Director Sean Henderson

LAUDERHILL CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Ken Thurston

Vice Mayor Lawrence Martin

Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn

Commissioner Denise D. Grant

Commissioner Sarai Martin

Desorae Giles-Smith, City Manager

Andrea M. Anderson, City Clerk

Angel Petti Rosenberg, City Attorney

I CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thurston called to order the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Meeting at 3:30 PM.

II ROLL CALL

- Present:** 4 - Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn, Vice Mayor Lawrence Martin, Commissioner Sarai Martin, and Mayor Ken Thurston
Absent: 1 - Commissioner Denise D. Grant

ALSO PRESENT:

Sean Henderson, Executive Director
Zach Davis-Walker, Assistant City Attorney
Constance Stanley, Police Chief
Andrea M. Anderson, City Clerk

III CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Mayor L. Martin, seconded by Commissioner S. Martin, that this Consent Agenda was approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Yes:** 4 - Commissioner M. Dunn, Vice Mayor L. Martin, Commissioner S. Martin and Mayor K. Thurston

Abstain: 0

IV APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A.** MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) MEETING FOR JANUARY 8, 2024.

Attachments: [January 8, 2024 - CRA Meeting Minutes](#)

These Minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

- B.** MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) MEETING FOR JANUARY 29, 2024.

Attachments: [January 29, 2024 - CRA Meeting Minutes](#)

These Minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

- C.** MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) MEETING FOR FEBRUARY 12, 2024.

Attachments: [February 12, 2024 - CRA Meeting Minutes](#)

These Minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

D. MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) MEETING FOR FEBRUARY 26, 2024.

Attachments: [February 26, 2024 - CRA Meeting Minutes](#)

These Minutes were approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

V THIS WILL BE A LIMITED AGENDA MEETING. THE ONLY ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED WILL BE:

1. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FINANCIAL STATEMENT (REQUESTED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEAN HENDERSON).

Attachments: [CRA Fiscal Year 2023 Audit Presentation \(As Referenced Within Minutes\)](#)

Roderic Harvey, partner at HCT, the CPA firm of record for the City of Lauderhill, gave a PowerPoint to review the CRA'S Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), as detailed in the backup, highlighting the following:

- HCT issued a clean or unmodified opinion
- The audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS); the audit strategy remain unchanged, and the necessary auditor's reports were issued; there were no outstanding matters to date
- No accounting pronouncements needed to be implemented in the current fiscal year
- No matters to report for uncorrected misstatements, corrected misstatements, or financial presentation and disclosure matters, no control deficiencies, no related party issues
- The "Other" information category dealt with if the CRA financials were used in another document, the auditors should be allowed to review that document to ensure the financial statements were, in fact, what the auditing firm issued
- There were no matters to report, but the document detailed which matters the auditors must report to the CRA; for example: illegal acts, subsequent events, any disagreements with management, etc.; they were proud to say there was nothing to report
- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) deemed HCT as independent.

CRA Executive Director Sean Henderson continued the presentation, reporting on the CRA's current financial condition as of February 28, 2024 or 41.67 percent into the current fiscal year:

- Fund balance was \$2.15 million
- Revenues were \$5,013,125.00 - this was not revenue coming in, as the CRA was asset rich, but cash poor; this was due to the CRA assuming ownership of Wingate Plaza
- Expenditures were \$746,000.00 or 38 percent

- All revenues and expenditures were on pace to meet projected yearend totals
- Cash and investments on hand: \$1.4 million
- The CRA was in a strong position to accomplish all budgeted projects.

Mr. Harvey continued the presentation, focusing on the audit results for fiscal year ending September 30, 2023:

- A comparison was done to show where the CRA was September 30, 2022 (9/22) versus September 30, 2023 (9/23)
- There was no matter(s) to report of any significant deficiencies, or material weaknesses.

Deputy City Manager/Finance Director Kennie Hobbs observed, as it related to fund balance, and the reduction in assets, this was due to the CRA demolishing the Renaissance Plaza. When a structure was demolished, the owner had to write the value of that property down, so the demolition of Renaissance Plaza had a direct impact on the asset value, and that had a direct impact on the fund balance, hence the negative numbers shown in the report year over year. He noted the next fiscal year audit covering October 1 2023 to September 30, 2024, would show the other assets the CRA was acquiring, and other asset values would, again, increase; specifically, the Wingate Plaza, and the other plaza the CRA would be closing on with Darryl Allen (Tobolski property at 1451 NW 31 Avenue); revenue would go up, with the CRA collecting rent on both these properties of between \$20,000.00 and \$30,000.00 a month.

Mayor Thurston wondered how the CRA handled the debt on the Renaissance Plaza property.

Mr. Hobbs replied the CRA was paying down that debt, as it was part of the CRA's line of credit.

Vice Mayor L. Martin asked about accounting best practices, and CRA staff putting out information on artists and others involved with handling such transactions for upcoming events ahead of time to reduce the need to do retroactive funding approvals. It seemed a better approach to get in such requests ahead of time, versus after the event; he wondered if this was something the auditor might counsel CRA staff on.

Mr. Harvey responded, from an internal control perspective, it was best for any organization to have approvals in advance of expenditure, so the process was clean. However, there were times and circumstances that this was not possible, and the main factor in any controlled environment is that there was a paper trail that could be explained. He stated CRA staff did a great job of explaining such expenditures, enabling such transactions to be audited; thus, his firm felt the internal control environment of the CRA was very strong. If such instances were observed to happen continuously, they would be flagged, but they did not rise, in the auditors' judgment, as an item to be noted as a significant deficiency, or a material weakness.

Mr. Hobbs added Mr. Harvey's firm had an auditing team onsite with CRA staff

for a number of weeks, and during that time, they worked hand-in-hand with Assistant Finance Director Karen Pottinger, and the City's Comptroller Qi Pan. Thus, they held such conversations on a daily basis, discussing anything thought to be out of line. He said at the end of the audit, there was a meeting between Mr. Harvey and his team, and Mr. Hobbs and his team, so they could discuss anything the auditors thought warranted further discussion; following this meeting, there was a meeting between Mr. Harvey, City Manager Giles-Smith, and him to discuss the audit. Therefore, there were multiple opportunities throughout the auditing process, before the final report was presented to the CRA board, for staff and the auditors to discuss any findings, and possible improvements to facilitate accounting best practices that staff should implement. With respect to the retroactive funding requests, Mr. Hobbs remarked one of the procedures the CRA implemented was to have more meetings, hence the meetings now mirroring Commission meeting dates, as this allowed the CRA to keep the CRA board informed rather than waiting an entire month to bring matters to the board's attention. As the CRA's business grew, it necessitated meeting more often, and this was in line with satisfying the board's requests to receive information in a more timely manner. City staff did not speak once a year with the auditors; he spoke periodically throughout the year with Mr. Harvey; for example, if his finance team had accounting questions for which he needed further information, he called upon Mr. Harvey.

2. CRA RESOLUTION NO. CRA-24R-03-06: A RESOLUTION OF THE LAUDERHILL COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) ACCEPTING, APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE CRA COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (CAFR) FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2023; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEAN HENDERSON).

Attachments: [CRA RES-24R-03-06 Approve CAFR FY 2023.pdf](#)

[AR CRA-24R-03-06](#)

A motion was made by Vice Mayor L. Martin, seconded by Commissioner S. Martin, that this Resolution be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Commissioner M. Dunn, Vice Mayor L. Martin, Commissioner S. Martin and Mayor K. Thurston

Abstain: 0

3. CRA RESOLUTION NO. CRA-24R-03-08: A RESOLUTION OF THE LAUDERHILL COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPROVING THE AGREEMENT WITH OLD SKOOL GANG VENTURES, INC. TO PROVIDE BOOKING AGENT SERVICES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF RAP ARTIST JUVENILE, IN CONNECTION WITH THE 5TH ANNUAL BEER-B-QUE EVENT TO BE HELD NOVEMBER 2, 2024; AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$38,000.00 FOR SERVICES AND EXPENSES; AUTHORIZING THE CRA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS; PROVIDING FOR PAYMENT FROM THE APPROPRIATE BUDGET CODE NUMBER(S); PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE (REQUESTED BY CRA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SEAN HENDERSON).

Attachments: [CRA-RES-24R-03-08-Agreement CRA Beer-B-Q Juvenile AR CRA-24R-03-08](#)
[Old Skool Gang Booking Agent BeerBQue 2024 - Juvenile 3-20-24](#)

This Resolution was approved on the Consent Agenda. (See Consideration of Consent Agenda for vote tally.)

4. A HOUSING UPDATE PRESENTATION (REQUESTED BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEAN HENDERSON).

Attachments: [March 25 - CRA meeting \(As Referenced Within Minutes\)](#)

Mr. Henderson gave a PowerPoint presentation, updating the board on CRA housing, as contained in the backup, highlighting the following:

- Renaissance Pointe infill housing project: for the four homes built by Minority Builders, the CRA would be closing on the last two homes over the next three days; staff was working diligently with the new general contractor (GC) for the construction of the remaining two homes, holding conversations with the architect and the GC to figure out how to value engineer, and reduce costs further based on the plans to ensure the homes were as affordable as possible, and standing firm on building workforce housing; the four lots across the street illustrated in blue were in the process of being transferred from the Lauderhill Housing Authority (LHA) to the City of Lauderhill, after which they would be transferred to the CRA; that matter would be an agenda item on a subsequent CRA meeting; this bid was being worked on, and the CRA board's recommendations from the last meeting were included in those discussions, such as allowing the CRA to incorporate into the bid documents the bonding limitations, etc.; the bid would soon be sent out; they would be working on the corner lot to construct those homes at the same time
- The CRA recently put out its annual newsletter, courtesy of Administrative Manager Lahoma Scarlette to make people aware of what the CRA was doing in the Central CRA community, which included housing; residents were encouraged to own versus rent their home.

Mr. Hobbs added the properties highlighted in blue were already transferred to the City from the LHA; this took place in February 2024, and those deeds were recorded. City Attorney Rosenberg told him Mr. Balocco, the title attorney the City worked with, should have the new deeds ready to move them from the City to the CRA; this matter would likely be on the board's April meeting agenda. At the same time, the request for proposal (RFP) was in the process, as it was staff's goal to have the RFP ready to go out once the properties were transferred to the CRA. He noted the homes were already designed, similar to the previous homes, reducing the wait time to begin construction; the CRA was required to do a new RFP based on the discussion at the last CRA meeting, and staff's discussion with legal staff.

Commissioner S. Martin asked to be sent a copy of the finalized RFP when it was sent out.

Vice Mayor L. Martin inquired as to the CRA continuing to pursue the acquisition of other properties in the area, particularly the multifamily properties on the west side.

Mr. Hobbs affirmed offers were made on multiple properties in the past as they became available, coordinating in order to move forward on any of them where possible, particularly in the areas behind Renaissance Plaza, Canon Point, and Devonhunt. These were three areas staff monitored closely for properties coming up for sale, getting the City's realtor to make contact with the owners wishing to sell.

Vice Mayor L. Martin wished to know about the big square illustrated in the northwest corner.

Mr. Hobbs replied it would be housing, likely single-family; finance and CRA staff were communicating, but more discussion was needed with the City Manager.

Vice Mayor L. Martin mentioned the southwest corner, going south behind the Endeavor Elementary School, asking if the piece of land Broward County gave the City was on the other side of the school, or its north side.

Mr. Hobbs responded it was possible to drive down the road straight onto the property; it was slated for a community park use.

Vice Mayor L. Martin felt a missing element in the subject community was recreational park space.

Mr. Hobbs reminded the board that about a month prior the Commission approved a supplemental appropriation, allowing staff to move money around to provide funds for planning, and that park was included in the planned recreational spaces.

Commissioner Dunn recommended Mr. Henderson ensure the new GC was fully briefed on the City's Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program to ensure all contracts over \$250,000.00 had local participation.

Mr. Henderson affirmed he would.

Mayor Thurston asked who was the new GC.

Mr. Hobbs replied Eric Haynes, Gemini Construction.

Mayor Thurston observed Mr. Haynes grew up in Lauderhill.

Mr. Henderson continued his presentation as follows:

- The homes indicated in red were designed and built by the LHA about six years ago; they set a standard for the area, as no new homes had been built for many years
- In the CRA Plan that drove the CRA's activities, it spoke to the subject community as to homes not matching one another to represent a neighborhood
- When going out, CRA staff worked with an architect to design the homes to mimic those built by the LHA, so the neighborhood would look more cohesive in relation to the architecture of the homes
- The areas highlighted in blue showed the projected spots on which those home designs would be built going forward; this included the Renaissance Plaza site, the two infill sites, and the four-lot site.

Mr. Hobbs added this would be considered the third phase; these homes would take a little more work for the CRA to proceed on; they were working with Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Director Daniel Keester-O'Mills, and Assistant City Attorney Davis-Walker on changes that needed to be made. The Renaissance Plaza property was zoned commercial, so to allow a residential use on that site, amendments were needed.

Commissioner S. Martin asked if the large blue area illustrated was located near the Tree Gardens community.

Mr. Hobbs affirmed it was; it was located on the corner of NW 19th Street and NW 55th Avenue where the convenience store was once located. The plan was originally to build out that site, and include it as part of the Tree Garden's community that would require entrance through the existing guard gate to drive around to the new community. He said in discussions with the previous city planner, they spoke about developing homes similar to those in Inverrary where the back of the homes faced the street, versus the front of the homes; thus, the back of the proposed homes would face NW 19th Street, and NW 55th Avenue, so they would be fenced in. However, access would still be through the security gate to drive around to the homes that would be built in the large blue area.

Commissioner S. Martin wished to know if staff communicated with the resident associations of Tree Gardens, and Windermere as to who the gates belonged to, etc.

Mr. Hobbs said the gates were owned by the Safe Neighborhood District (SND).

Commissioner S. Martin wondered if the new homes would have their own homeowners' association (HOA).

Mr. Hobbs answered no; they would be a part of the SND, but he was unsure if they would automatically become a part of the Windermere HOA, as there were other homes in that community that were not a part of the Windermere HOA, but they were a part of the SND.

Mr. Henderson continued his presentation as follows:

- The homes shown in red had a just value as of January 2024 of \$395,050.00,

which was never the 100 percent value; calculating it as being at 80 percent of the value, there was a projected market value of \$464,000.00, and \$448,000.00 for homeowners in residence close to five or six years

- The current site plans for the CRA sought to place about nine homes on the Renaissance Plaza site, and incorporating that development into the Windermere SND, so the new homeowners would be paying members and enjoy the security this brought; on the elevation to the right, the plan was to build both two-story and one-story homes, ranging between 1,870 square feet, and up to 2,173 square feet
- CRA staff wished to broach the topic of a program to encourage homeownership, by helping potential buyers to realize their dream of owning their home; one of the concepts CRA staff previously brought before the board related to the CRA putting together a housing assistance program; as staff found there was a gap between people trying to enter the lottery and buying the new homes, and, with grants, staff could only do so much with regard to first-time homebuyers; at present, two of the four homes Minority Builders built received grant funding, but because of the income requirements, and the CRA building workforce housing, rather than affordable housing, this was more of the 120 percent, not 60 or 80 percent
- CRA staff was working on putting an incentive together that encouraged workforce housing in the area via either providing zero or low-interest second loan to get them in the home; there would be no cash cost to the CRA, just deferring receiving that payment until the homeowner refinanced the zero or low-interest second loan.

Mr. Hobbs added this was something staff was working with the City Manager and the City Attorney on; the City Attorney advised staff the matter had to be brought before the CRA board for approval to enable implementation. Thus, the program was for a deferred loan to the homeowner, allowing the latter up to five years to refinance the property, and repay the loan to the CRA. He said another factor staff was advised the CRA Board had to consider was who could participate in the programs. Staff did a survey some time ago, as there was a lottery system opened to everyone, city employees and non-city employees. He noted the current lottery had about 3,000 to 4,000 participants that went through the lottery, and part of that process revealed it included city employees; the CRA Board was not being asked to change any rules, etc., but, similar to the RFP, staff was asking for guidance specific only to the proposed program for the CRA. Thus, if there were city employees who were neither receiving a grant, nor any dollars from the City or the CRA, could they participate through the lottery system for the subject program, should it be approved by the CRA board. Mr. Hobbs mentioned staff researched other cities with CRAs, and they all confirmed they allowed city employees to participate in their housing programs, with the exception of city employees directly working with the program. Staff wished to know what the CRA Board's position was, so they could finalize the work on the program to bring the matter before the board for consideration.

City Manager Giles-Smith thought staff and she were still discussing whether to allow city employees to participate; her initial response was that they should not, because of the initial elements that were put into this, asking if Mr. Hobbs was

referring to subsidized homes.

Mr. Hobbs replied none of the homes were subsidized, and even the ones being discussed were not subsidized; staff received new appraisals, and they were selling at market rate.

City Manager Giles-Smith thought the homes to come online later were the ones being explored to allow city employee participation; she could support city employee participation only for homes that were not subsidized at all.

Mr. Hobbs commented that the decision was at the will of the CRA Board.

Vice Mayor L. Martin asked if the second, soft loan could be used strictly for closing costs, and would the loan amount be capped.

Mr. Hobbs answered staff suggested a cap of \$40,000.00, knowing the final amount was the board's decision. Normally, the down payment, and closing costs were paid by the borrower out of pocket. The program's funding was to cover the principal gap, not down payment and closing costs, as they had to be a cash payment.

Vice Mayor L. Martin wondered what the next step would be if five years later a homeowner was unable to secure any type of refinancing due to changed circumstances.

Mr. Hobbs responded, if after five years a homeowner could not refinance to repay the CRA, then interest would begin accruing, with the homeowner would end up paying more than the CRA lent them, and the homeowner would have to start making payments to the CRA. The inception of the second loan would result in a lien recorded against the property, and the homeowner could not sell or refinance the property until the CRA was first paid back.

Commissioner Dunn sought confirmation that the program was for middle-income persons.

Mr. Hobbs answered yes.

Commissioner Dunn remarked these were still middle-class individuals, such as teachers, who did not qualify for low-income housing, but they still could not afford the housing prices without some help. The proposed program sounded reasonable, one that would benefit the Lauderhill public, and the proposed safeguards would minimize the CRA's risk. She liked the idea of encouraging city employees to live in Lauderhill, though she agreed with the City Manager about making sure there was no appearance of nepotism; she saw no problem extending the proposed program to city employees in the next round of market rate housing projects.

Mr. Hobbs added, just recently, even the leadership in policing asked him about such a program. Legal staff examined the Attorney General's opinions, etc. to establish a precedence with regard to practices in other cities.

Commissioner Dunn stated it was a yes on both programs from her.

Commissioner S. Martin supported the participation of city employees in the proposed program, as long as it was done in a proper manner. He opined it was easier to apply the program to CRA properties, as it was not actual cash out of hand, asking if the product would be open to the purchase or refinance of any home in the CRA district.

Mr. Hobbs responded this was not the plan; the program was being proposed only for homes owned by the CRA.

City Manager Giles-Smith indicated the City had grant programs that provided assistance to persons wishing to move into Lauderhill, or purchase a home in Lauderhill; the funds were available for people with low to moderate incomes, as just based on the purchase price, it was difficult to purchase a home, so the City provided up to \$50,000.00 per approved applicant.

Mayor Thurston remarked when staff mentioned the architect would be drawing the new plans with the rear of the homes toward NW 19th Street, and NW 55th Avenue; he said this was a beautiful thought, as there would be a guard gate entry a block away. He was thinking about all hopes being lifted, as about a decade ago, there was a hope that Windermere would go back to owner-occupied status, rather than investor-rentals. A number of entities were working on making this so, and City employees were serving on the board of the HOA at Windermere when the SND was established. He said it appeared that by just natural development of the new homes being built on the corner, the new homes would become a part of Windermere. He wished to know how many condominiums in Windermere were presently owned by an entity of the City, and the probability of making them owner occupied through sales the CRA would originate.

Mr. Hobbs stated staff would get the board that information ahead of the next CRA meeting.

VI ADJOURNMENT - 4:32 PM