



MEETING MINUTES

Lealman Community Redevelopment Area Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, July 26, 2023, 6 PM

Committee Members Present In-person: Steve Cleveland, Jeremy Heath, Jennifer Post, Kim Blessinger, Dominic Howarth

Committee Members Absent: Marsha McCoy, Oscar Seguban, Charles Flynt,

Pinellas County Staff Present: Chris Moore, Felix Nunez, Tanya Kurtin, Amanda Coffey (Virtual), Tom Almonte (Virtual), Derrill McAteer (Virtual)

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM by Chair Steve Cleveland

II. Introductions

Each Committee member and County Staff member present made introductions.

III. Citizens' Input

Community resident David Lee of the Neri Park neighborhood feels that the county does not properly maintain the ditches and therefore the CRA should not be providing any funds for enhanced ditch maintenance when the county does not properly maintain the ditches. He also feels the County should not be building any new roads with ditches if they can't properly maintain those ditches. He feels those funds could be better allocated to crime reduction and clearance of CSX railway.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Jeremy Heath motioned to remove line 3 of Community resident David Lee's comment from the minutes for June 28, 2023, and approve the minutes. Dominic Howarth Seconded. The committee unanimously approved the minutes for 6-28=2023.

V. Lealman CRA Updates

• Proposed FY24 Work Plan (Voting Item)

The first item discussed was ditch maintenance plan. Chris Moore addressed David Lee's comment regarding the work plan. He understands the ditch maintenance level of service per the community is not sufficient. The CRA's aim is to improve that level of service. The CRA is trying to elevate the level of service from the basic service the county provides. Steve Cleveland and Jen Post just suggest a change in the wording of maintenance to differentiate what exactly this maintenance is going to entail.

The second item discussed was to increase the residential façade program budget from 10,000 to 15,000 to be able to offer more services under one grant due to the increase in costs of goods and services. The increase in grant amount will improve the number of services and the impact that the grant will have on the community's redevelopment efforts.



Jeremy Heath stated he was happy to see the progress over the last two years and it is noticeable.

Jeremy Heath made a motion to approve the work plan for FY24. Dominic Howarth Seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The FY24 Workplan was approved.

Jeremy Heath did interject that he would like to see the CRA advisory committee being able to direct how some of the budget can be spent, not just the county staff directing the budget spending.

- **FY23 Work Plan Highlights**

Chris Moore thanked the committee for all of their support and dedication.

CRA Highlights –

Chris went over his presentation for the county commission

Residential Improvement Program - \$10k grants FY 23 forecast was 9 applications approved for funding for a total of \$90,762.00, 8 additional applications in process for a total of \$80,000.00, and 15 additional applications anticipated for a total of \$150,000.00.

Commercial Improvement Program- \$40K matching grants FY23 forecast was 2 applications funded at \$41,245.00, 3 additional applications approved for funding at \$94,425.00 and 1 additional application in process for \$40,000.00.

Home Investment Program – Provides Habitat for Humanity with up to 55K for each affordable home developed and sold to buyers earning less than 80% of the median income. Up to 15K for hard construction costs and up to 40K for land acquisition costs. Fifteen homes were developed in the first year for a total CRA investment of \$500,000.00.

CRA Alley Improvement Program – Florida Dream Center cleared 31 alleys and responded to Hurricane Ian as well.

Events – The CRA invested \$20K to the Lealman Engagement Committee along with many other sponsors who were responsible for the Lealman Tree Lighting Ceremony, The Honey and Arts Festival, and the Lealman Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration.

Mural Program – Creative Pinellas put up many murals this year with grants from the CRA on 28th Avenue, including Lealman Innovation Academy.

Wayfinding – Many wayfinding and street signs went up this year and three gateway signs.

Neri Park – Playground was installed as was the mural outside the playground. The parking lot



was paved, and the pond was cleaned out bringing back wildlife. New Signage and fencing were installed at 40th Street entrance. Sidewalks - 40th Street N Connection from 46th Avenue to the Neri park entrance at Lown ST and 40th Street N allows safe access.

- **St. Petersburg Foundation – Lealman Exchange presentation**

Activated full takeover of building management for 15 months successfully.

Began building a collective impact in the community partnering with community partners. Identified new partners in the community and built a collective of partners to bring to the center.

- Collective impact activation group – 55 orgs. – every 6 weeks
- Guiding group - Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, Jeremy Heath, CRA staff, and County staff – discuss the ideas from the larger group meetings.
- Tenants group – tenants meet on an operational level to work closely with each other.
- Needs Navigator – partnering with St. Pete Free Clinic, the navigator fills the gaps in providing that our other partners can't fill.

Facilities – April 1st Management began – Officially August 1st. St. Pete Foundation manages all facility issues, including facility enhancements and tenant enhancements. Created tenant handbooks and improved leases.

Working on ECO-friendly and economical. Working on safety lighting for the parking lot. Expanding facility access to the community. The gym is open to the community in the evenings through the YMCA.

Tenants – AmSkills has moved into several new offices becoming a permanent and newest tenant. The YMCA has expanded its space in the facility, expanded more programming, and open Gym. Broach School, now CES Academy has expanded and taken over all of building C.

Funding – Duke Energy has provided a 10K communication grant, St. Pete Free Clinic has donated 10K toward the kitchen remodel, and the YMCA has donated 25K toward the kitchen remodel as well. The American Heart Association donated a commercial refrigerator to the exchange.

Developed a new Lealman exchange logo and Lealman exchange website as well as an events calendar.

Involved in the Lealman Voice Newsletter.

Outdoor basketball court is halfway through the build, kitchen remodel is about to begin, and security enhancements are about to start as well. The Neri room is going to be updated as well.



Future capital projects. Gym bathroom renovations and stage renovations. Also LED sign on 54th Avenue for the LEX .

Events this past year. FEMA on site to assist after the hurricane, SPCA quarterly on-site for vaccinations, Reading with the Rays, STEAM Day event, and other special community events.

VI. Advisory Committee Member comments

Jen Post just wanted to comment on how simple and inexpensive it was to use one of the facility's spaces. She also commented on how excited she is about the Lealman Voice. There were no other advisory board comments.

VII. Adjourn

Kim Blessinger motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Jennifer Post seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:08 PM