AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
CITY HALL, 501 W MEADOW STREET
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 5:01 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City of Leesburg Carver Heights/Montclair Area CRA held a special meeting on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at Leesburg City Hall. Chairperson Burry called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. with the following members present:

Commissioner Allyson Berry
Commissioner Jay Connell
Commissioner Erika Jasper
Commissioner Mike Pederson
Commissioner Alan Reisman
Chairperson Jimmy Burry

Also present were City Manager (CM) Al Minner, City Clerk (CC) J. Andi Purvis, City Attorney (CA) Grant Watson, the news media, and others.

INVOCATION

Chairperson Burry gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

2. APPROVE MINUTES:

A. Regular meeting held July 24, 2023

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of July 24, 2023 and Commissioner Jasper seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Jasper	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Chairperson Burry	Yes

Six yeas, no nays, the Commission approved the meeting minutes.

3. RESOLUTIONS:

A. Resolutions amending the Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 and adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 for the Carver Heights / Montclair Area Community Redevelopment Agency.

1. Resolution of the Carver Heights / Montclair Area Community Redevelopment Agency of Leesburg, Florida, approving the amended Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget; Appropriating certain funds to specific redevelopment projects; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 104

Commissioner Reisman introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Jasper seconded the motion.

Chairperson Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

CM Minner stated he and the Budget Director put together a quick recap that covered all the discussions from the workshops. The revenues for the Carver Heights CRA are about 1.14 million dollars and that is the TIFF increment. Fifty percent comes from the city and another fifty percent comes from the county. That was a sixteen percent increase. Approximately $86,000 is for personnel. That covers the housing and redevelopment manager's wages and benefits. The operations of the resource center are about $57,000. The debt payment for the resource center was done through a low interest loan from the electric fund and that was just under one million dollars. It was $96,000, and the balance of that loan is about $800,000. In order to update the blight study, it will cost about $50,000. The new Boys and Girls Club tuition subsidy grant program will be $120,000. There is $229,724 dollars that will be coupled with their rollover money that will cover the modified home improvement program. That went from $5,000 to $25,000. With the roll over money mixed with the $229,724, they will have about $300,000 for the new program. The original budget had the police officers' wages in it, but they transferred those positions to the general fund. The original budget had almost $388,000 in cash from the reserve fund. However, they went back and modified the budget. They put the $236,000 back into this CRA fund because the assessed values are greater in the general fund. He recommended funding the three officer positions in the general fund and not the CRA fund. There were long discussions about that. They planned to use about $300,000 to do Corrine Williams Park, but that was transferred to the DST fund. After making those changes, the CRA fund is now back a little in the black. There is about $67,000 of cash that will go into the reserve fund. All things being equal, if the expenses are exactly as predicted, come September 30, 2024, the reserve fund will be $621,693. **Commissioner Connell** asked about fifty thousand dollars being used for blight studies. **CM Minner** answered it would be to update the study. **Commissioner Connell** commented that anyone could drive around the town and see what looks terrible and what needs to be cleaned up. Why would we pay fifty thousand dollars for someone to tell us that? **CM Minner** said if they want that removed they will do that. **Commissioner Connell** stated that is a lot of money. **Commissioner Pederson** mentioned that he pushed back on that during the budget discussions.

Commissioner Jasper agreed. It is not necessary to spend fifty thousand dollars on a blight study. **Commissioner Berry** said her concern was, if they needed consultants, money would be available to do studies such as a blight study for district one including both the east and west sides. **Commissioner Connell** remarked that they do not need to pay fifty thousand dollars for someone to drive around, to tell us what does not look good, and what needs to be torn down or redeveloped. **Commissioner Pederson** stated he would prefer to spend that money in the trenches to fix stuff. Other than that, this budget is fine. He mentioned that there was an email that came out today to all the commissioners from John Christian. **CM Minner** said that email is for an item in the general fund. However, he spoke with him before this meeting and he withdrew his request. **Commissioner Jasper** said it was not necessary to have fifty thousand dollars budgeted for a blight study. They could see with the visible eye that there is a lot of blight in the CRA community. We do not need to pay fifty thousand dollars for a study. When talking about the home improvement grant, she wanted to make sure that, since the funds are coming from the CRA, that it is open to all residents within the CRA and not just one section of the CRA. **CM Minner** replied that they have not rolled out that plan yet. They adopted the new home grant program in June. The overall plan is for the dollars to cover the entire CRA community. The plan is applicable to all of the community. The specific funding will come from the Carver Heights CRA. They modified section four of the agreement. It was modified to say one of the criteria was based on applications that come in be ranked based on the neighborhood. If they receive a preponderance of applications in one area, they could use that criterion to rank the applications. If the applications come in and they are scattered throughout the community, they will address that at that time. If they receive a perponderance of applications from an isolated area the grant program allows them to cluster those to focus on that area. It is a little wishy-washy, but the answer is yes. It is for the entire CRA, but the criteria that were put in there were approved by the city commission and they can use neighborhoods as a criterion to make recommendations on funding. **Commissioner Jasper** said that was okay from a legal standpoint, but her concern was making sure they met the needs of all residents within the community. They need to make sure that some specifications and guidelines are in place to ensure that individuals who make the improvements are able to get homeowners insurance because there is an insurance crisis. If they are going to spend the money, they need to ensure that they have adequate roofing. They need to have a four-point inspection of adequate roofing, windows, plumbing, and electrical. She wanted to ensure that people would be able to gain homeowners insurance if the city were to make an investment. This needed to be throughout the community and not just one specific section. There are pilot programs, but she wanted to make sure they were fair and equal to all residents within the CRA. **CM Minner agreed**, that was how the program was written with the criteria for how they are to rank the applications. All the improvements mentioned, like roofing and plumbing are eligible repair items. **Commissioner Jasper** inquired about the elderly. Is there a ranking criterion for that? **CM Minner** responded that the ranking criteria is open to all and they have criteria to allocate based on income and location, but not age. **Commissioner Jasper** asked about the severity of need. **CM Minner** answered it is based on location and income. **Mayor Burry** added that they need to be owner occupied. **Commissioner Jasper** said her concern was that it would be an elderly person versus someone who was middle-aged and working. How would they decipher that while making sure this was equitable and fair? **CM Minner** pointed out that age was not a criterion. It is based on location, income, and owner-occupied. They also modified the plan to include the lien issues. It was originally proposed for a three-year lien. However, the commission made a motion and it was approved by a three to two vote to modify the lien requirement. So, if the applicant brings ten percent to the table, they will avoid any lien restrictions. If they take the grant and do not bring cash to the table, there will be a five-year lien added which will decrease twenty percent each year until it sunsets. They also included a catch-all where the commission may consider waiving a lien for whatever reason. For example, if someone were to die and they needed to sell their home, they might waive that lien. It provided the commission with the opportunity to waive it if necessary. **Commissioner Jasper** wanted to be clear that residences in Carver Heights and Woodland Park would be entitled and it would not be just one neighborhood and that everyone would be equitable. **CM Minner** said yes.

Commissioner Jasper remarked that was what she needed to know. **Commissioner Berry** commented on the blight study. Her thoughts were for any type of consultant to come through to review the area that Fifty thousand dollars may be high, but if they needed an analysis done, funding would be available for it. If it were not used, it would not be used. She would like to keep it there for blight studies. **Chairperson Burry** inquired if she wanted it there as a safety net with hopes they may not use it. **Commissioner Berry** replied yes. **Commissioner Pederson** said, without getting bogged down on this subject, this is a new program, so they could wait a year to see how it goes. He would rather wait a year to see how the projects go. He would rather put that $50,000 into the home improvement grant program. **Commissioner Berry** said they may have other avenues for the home improvement grant and she would really like to keep that for any type of study needed. **Mayor Burry** said if they were going to deviate from the resolution, they would need a motion to amend the budget. **CM Minner** stated they would need a motion to amend it if they want to modify that $50,000.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to amend the budget, to take out the $50,000 for a blight study, and add it to the home improvement grant since they have enough reserve funds if deemed necessary for a blight study down the road. They currently have enough cash to fund it. Commissioner Jasper seconded the motion.

Commissioner Connell wanted to verify if they were moving the money or taking it out completely. **Mayor Burry** stated there was a motion on the floor to move the fifty thousand dollars from the blight study to the home improvement grant program. It would raise the total for the home improvement grant program to $350,000. **Commissioner Jasper** said she was in favor of this because those funds would be allocated to all residents within the CRA. **Mayor Burry** asked for any discussion on the amendment to the original budget. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	No
Commissioner Reisman	No
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	No
Commissioner Jasper	Yes
Chairperson Burry	No

Two yeas, four nays, the Commission denied the amendment to the resolution.

Mayor Burry asked if there was any further discussion about the original budget. **CM Minner** said that option failed, so the $50,000 for blight study is still in the budget.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to vote on the budget as presented and Commissioner Reisman seconded the motion.

Chairperson Burry asked for any further discussion. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Jasper	No
Commissioner Connell	No
Chairperson Burry	Yes

Four yeas, two nays, the Commission adopted the resolution.

CM Minner stated that the vote approved the budget for the Carver Heights/Montclair CRA. There is one more bite at the apple, which will be on September 25th for the second reading. **CC Purvis** pointed out that they still needed to discuss item 3.A.2. Item 3.A.1 was to amend the FY 22-23 budget. Item 3.A.2 is for the upcoming 23-24 budget. **CM Minner** stated they jumped on discussions. **CC Purvis** inquired if they could do that motion for 3.A.2 and move backwards? **CM Minner** stated unless they want to do a re-vote since they jumped to item 3.A.2. **Commissioner Reisman** asked if they needed to reintroduce 3.A.1. **CC Purvis** reread item 3.A.1. **Commissioner Pederson** inquired what the amendment was for. **CM Minner** stated to clear everything up they should suspend that vote or throw it away and start over.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to suspend the last vote and Commissioner Berry seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Jasper	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Chairperson Burry	Yes

Six yeas, no nays, the Commission suspended the vote.

Mayor Burry pointed out that they were back to 3.A.1. **Commissioner Jasper** made a motion to take the fifty thousand dollars from the blight study. **Commissioner Reisman** pointed out that would be under item 3.A.2.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to reintroduce 3.A.1 and asked that it be read by title only. **CC Purvis** reread the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to approve the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Mayor Burry remarked that this item was to amend the current budget. **CM Minner** stated this was a housekeeping item.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Jasper	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Chairperson Burry	Yes

Six yeas, no nays, the Commission adopted the resolution.

2. Resolution of the Carver Heights / Montclair Area Community

Redevelopment Agency of Leesburg, Florida, approving the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget; appropriating certain funds to specific redevelopment projects; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 105

Commissioner Reisman introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Chairperson Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Jasper made a motion to take the fifty thousand dollars out of the budget for the blight study and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Commissioner Jasper stated she would like to take that fifty thousand dollars for a blighted study out of the budget. **CM Minner** stated there was a motion on the floor to approve the budget and this new motion would amend the budget to remove the fifty thousand dollars for blight studies. **Chairperson Burry** added if everything goes accordingly, that would give a cash reserve balance at the end of an extra fifty thousand dollars. **CM Minner** said it would be $671,000. **Chairperson Burry** stated they would not spend it on anything.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Jasper	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	No
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	No
Chairperson Burry	No

Three yeas, three nays, the Commission denied the amendment.

Commissioner Pederson stated they could amend the budget later in the fiscal year if needed. **Chairperson Burry** agreed. **CM Minner** said at that price any study would come back before the body. **Commissioner Pederson** clarified he was trying to pad the home improvement grant with another fifty thousand dollars. **Commissioner Berry** said she appreciated it. **Chairperson Burry** added that they do not want to spend the $50,000. **Commissioner Connell** agreed. **CM Minner** pointed out that there was an amended motion that failed and they now need to vote on the original motion.

Commissioner Berry made a motion that they vote on the proposed budget as presented and Commissioner Reisman seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	No
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Jasper	Yes

Chairperson Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission adopted the resolution.

4. ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Jasper questioned the empty seat on the CRA. How do they define the parameters of the candidate? Do they have to reside within the CRA or do they have to live in the City of Leesburg? **CM Minner** answered that they have to reside in the CRA. They need to comb over the applications, but he does not think they have any applications right now that would fill that position. They will keep it posted and review the applications as they come in. **Commissioner Jasper** said she appreciated the comments.

Commissioner Connell had no comment.

Commissioner Reisman had no further comment.

Commissioner Pederson had nothing to comment on.

Commissioner Berry had no further comment.

Chairperson Burry had no comment.

5. ADJOURN:

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES NEEDING ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THESE PROCEEDINGS SHOULD CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, ADA COORDINATOR, AT 728-9740, 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.

F.S.S. 286.0105 "If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, they will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purpose they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based." The City of Leesburg does not provide this verbatim record.

With a motion by Commissioner Reisman and a second by Commissioner Pederson, the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.