



City of Miami Marked Agenda

City Hall
3500 Pan American Drive
Miami, FL 33133
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SEOPW and OMNI Community Redevelopment Agencies

Michelle Spence-Jones, Chair
Marc David Sarnoff, Vice Chair
Angel González, Commissioner
Joe Sanchez, Commissioner
Tomas Regalado, Commissioner

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Monday, November 24, 2008

5:00 PM

FREDERICK DOUGLASS ELEMENTARY
(IN THE CAFETERIA)
314 N.W. 12TH STREET
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33136

Present: Commissioner Sanchez, Commissioner Regalado, Chair Spence-Jones
and Vice Chair Sarnoff

Absent: Commissioner González

On the 24th day of November 2008, the Board of Directors of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for the Southeast Overtown/Park West and Omni Districts of the City of Miami met in regular session at Frederick Douglass Elementary, 314 NW 12th Street, Miami, Florida. The meeting was called to order by Chair Michelle Spence-Jones at 5:06 p.m. and was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT:

James H. Villacorta, Interim Executive Director, CRA
Gail A. Dotson, Assistant General Counsel, CRA
Pamela E. Burns, Assistant Clerk of the Board

FINANCIALS

1. 08-01344 CRA REPORT

FINANCIAL SUMMARY THROUGH MONTH ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2008

Financial Summary .pdf

DISCUSSED

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. So we're going to go 'head [sic] and get started. And I believe we are missing -- Miguel is out and he's on vacation in Puerto Rico, but Clarence will be giving us an update.

Clarence Woods (Assistant Executive Director. Community Redevelopment Agency): I'll do my best Miguel impersonation.

Chair Spence-Jones: Sure. Welcome.

Mr. Woods: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Miguel is a little taller than I am, too, so I need to make that adjustment. Good afternoon, Commissioners -- board members. On page 1 of the financial report, we have a combined statement of financial position as of October 31, 2008. Under the cash unrestricted category, we're disclosing the

amount of \$100,000 for the Southeast Overtown/Park West CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency). And under Omni, we're also disclosing \$100,000. For the affordable housing workforce projects, we have budgeted to date the amount of 5,860,142, and that has been budgeted for the affordable housing projects. Of this amount, it's 4,860,142 has been encumbered, and approximately 2,223,211 has been spent. We also wanted to report that there are no reportable conditions, and the audit has been completed. We're just waiting for the Law Department to send over the letter to that fact.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Woods: If there are any questions, we can try to deal with them in the best way we can.

Chair Spence-Jones: I don't know if any of my fellow colleagues have any questions.

Commissioner Sanchez: We'll wait 'til he's back from vacation.

Mr. Woods: There you go.

Commissioner Sanchez: I'm going to spare you.

Mr. Woods: There you go.

James H. Villacorta (Interim Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): I think that Miguel sent everyone an e-mail (electronic) saying that there's no reportable conditions.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, great. And then, Jim, if you want to -- I know that I did have a meeting with him late Friday afternoon in the office, and to my understanding, the report we got back so far on the audit, it looked very good, correct?

Mr. Villacorta: Yeah. It looks like we're going to have a clean audit. As Clarence mentioned, we're just waiting for the Law Department to give the legal confirmation letter that there's no legal issues out there that would substantially affect the financials.

Chair Spence-Jones: Great. If we can also -- 'cause I know that the schoolchildren are having their after-school program, if I can get somebody from the CRA to close -- at least close that door so that we don't hear children in the background. We also have now joining us Commissioner Sarnoff.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Sorry.

Chair Spence-Jones: No. Welcome. All right. So thank you very much.

RESOLUTIONS

2. 08-01336 CRA RESOLUTION

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE BOARDS OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE SOUTHEAST OVERTOWN/PARK WEST AND OMNI REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO APPLY FOR COMMUNITY BUDGET ISSUE REQUEST GRANTS FOR THE PROJECTS LISTED IN EXHIBIT "A," ATTACHED HERETO, AND OTHER PROJECTS DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS FOR SAID PURPOSE.

Cover memo.pdf, Legislation.pdf

CRA-R-08-0060

MOVED: Joe Sanchez

SECONDED: Marc David Sarnoff

Motion that this matter be **ADOPTED PASSED** by the following vote.

AYES: Vice Chair Sarnoff, Chair Spence-Jones, Commissioner Regalado and Commissioner Sanchez

ABSENT: Commissioner González

Chair Spence-Jones: We're going to move on to number 2 on the item -- on the agenda, and I'm going to ask for Jim -- turn it over to Jim.

James H. Villacorta (Interim Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): Item number 2 is a joint resolution of the boards of Commissioners of the Southeast Overtown/Park West and Omni Redevelopment District Community Redevelopment Agencies authorizing the executive director to apply for Community Budget Issue Request grants from the State of Florida for the projects listed in Exhibit A attached hereto and any other projects deemed appropriate by the executive director. This is -- we've been applying for CBIRs (Community Budget Issue Request) grants every year for the last couple years. Last year, we got \$100,000 for the North Bayshore Drive rebuild.

Commissioner Sanchez: Storm water work.

Mr. Villacorta: Yes. As part of that process, there has to have been an approval at a public hearing for us to apply for the particular projects.

Commissioner Sanchez: So move.

Chair Spence-Jones: Have a motion --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Second.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- and second. All in favor?

The Commissioners (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. This item passes. We move on to item number 3.

Commissioner Regalado: Just want to ask, is this state or federal?

Mr. Villacorta: This is state funding.

3. 08-01366 CRA RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE OMNI REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000, FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF TREES ALONG THE RIGHT-OF-WAY ALONG NORTHEAST 13TH STREET, BETWEEN NORTHEAST 2ND AVENUE AND NORTH BAYSHORE DRIVE; ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM OMNI TAX INCREMENT FUND, "OTHER

CONTRACTUAL SERVICES," ACCOUNT CODE NO.
10040.920101.534000.0000.00000.

Cover Memo.pdf, Financial Form.pdf, Legislation.pdf

CRA-R-08-0061

MOVED: Marc David Sarnoff

SECONDED: Joe Sanchez

Motion that this matter be **ADOPTED PASSED** by the following vote.

AYES: Vice Chair Sarnoff, Chair Spence-Jones, Commissioner Regalado and
Commissioner Sanchez

ABSENT: Commissioner González

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Item number 3, actually, our district Commissioner is championing this effort for more trees in the Omni area. I don't know if you want to speak on this, Commissioner Sarnoff?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: It's just -- it's simply to -- none of the trees that we put there will be harmed. They'll be actually replanted in a park on 19th Street, but this is to get a more robust tree --

Chair Spence-Jones: Canopy?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Yeah, exactly. And the amount that Jim got is not extravagant. And since I pretty much know trees pretty well, he's done a nice job of getting the trees for it. And as I said before, none of the trees will be harmed. They'll be replanted. They've only been in for about a little less than a year.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Villacorta: This --

Commissioner Sanchez: Question on that.

Mr. Villacorta: -- is a joint res -- a resolution of the board of Commissioners of the Omni Redevelopment District Community Redevelopment Agency authorizing the expenditure of funds, in an amount not to exceed 25,000, for the replacement of trees along the right-of-way along Northeast 13th Street, between Northeast 2nd Avenue and North Bayshore Drive.

Commissioner Sanchez: Second for the purpose of discussion. Commissioner Sarnoff, you made the motion, correct?

Chair Spence-Jones: You're recognized.

Unidentified Speaker: Yes.

Commissioner Sanchez: On -- just a question, no discussion on it. The trees that are being removed are being transplanted at a nearby park --

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- and the new trees that are going to be placed, what description do we have as to the inches and type and how tall they are?

Mr. Villacorta: We're replacing what's there, which are live oak, and the specification is five-and-a-half to six-inch caliber, seven foot clear underneath the tree, and a twelve --

a minimum twelve-foot spread.

Chair Spence-Jones: So these are bigger trees?

Mr. Villacorta: These are larger trees. The ones that are there have failed to thrive and right now are under stress, so we --

Commissioner Sanchez: Well --

Mr. Villacorta: -- wanted to --

Commissioner Sanchez: -- the ones that are there will never provide the type of canopy that the oak trees will provide to enhance the area.

Mr. Villacorta: It would take a substantial amount of time --

Commissioner Sanchez: All right.

Mr. Villacorta: -- for that to happen. And this is an allocation. We're still receiving the bids, but we think it'll be close to this number.

Chair Spence-Jones: How many new trees, just for the record?

Mr. Villacorta: Seventeen.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. All right. All right, so we had a motion and a second. Any other questions?

Commissioner Sanchez: Call the question.

Chair Spence-Jones: All in favor?

The Commissioners (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. We're going to move on to the next item, which is --

Pamela E. Burns (Assistant Clerk of the Board): Madam Chair, for the record, the motion was made by Commissioner Sarnoff?

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Ms. Burns: Thank you.

4. 08-00948 **CRA RESOLUTION**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE SOUTHEAST OVERTOWN/PARK WEST COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AUTHORIZING A GRANT, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000, TO CAMILLUS HOUSE, INC. FOR ITS COURTYARD PROGRAM, AT 726 NORTHEAST 1ST AVENUE, MIAMI, FLORIDA, PROVIDED THAT THE GRANT IS MATCHED BY OTHER FUNDING SOURCES; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AT HIS DISCRETION, TO DISBURSE THE GRANT ON A REIMBURSEMENT BASIS OR DIRECTLY TO VENDORS, UPON PRESENTATION OF INVOICES AND SATISFACTORY DOCUMENTATION; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR SAID PURPOSE, IN A FORM ACCEPTABLE TO GENERAL COUNSEL; ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM SEOPW TAX INCREMENT FUND, "OTHER GRANTS AND AIDS," ACCOUNT CODE NO.

10050.920101.883000.0000.00000.

Cover Memo.pdf, Financial Form.pdf, Backup.pdf, Legislation.pdf

CRA-R-08-0062

MOVED: Joe Sanchez

SECONDED: Tomas Regalado

Motion that this matter be **ADOPTED PASSED** by the following vote.

AYES: Vice Chair Sarnoff, Chair Spence-Jones, Commissioner Regalado and
Commissioner Sanchez

ABSENT: Commissioner González

Direction by Commissioner Regalado to the Interim Executive Director to identify additional funding for the Camillus House to defray the costs of programming for the homeless, to be discussed at the next CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) meeting.

Direction by Vice Chair Sarnoff to the Interim Executive Director to coordinate with the City Attorney to distribute the last draft of the homeless feeding ordinance, to be brought back to the Board for review.

Direction by Chair Spence-Jones to the Interim Executive Director to contact the DDA (Downtown Development Authority) regarding meters for homeless donations and provide the Board with a status report on said meters.

Chair Spence-Jones: We're moving on to item number 4, which is the Camillus House grant.

Commissioner Sanchez: So move.

Commissioner Regalado: Second. Discussion.

Chair Spence-Jones: All -- okay. All in -- okay.

Commissioner Regalado: Thank you.

Chair Spence-Jones: The floor is open to you.

Commissioner Regalado: No. I think -- and I know very well this courtyard program because it's also part of the Homeless Trust that I sit on it, and the courtyard program has been more than a success. It was more than expected. Actually, it has reduced drastically the population of homeless throughout downtown. However, because it's so successful, it's becoming a problem for Camillus House because they're running short on the money. So I think that -- well, I support this. And you know, we have two situations now and it was discussed at the Homeless Trust the other day. We have some people from churches who are going out of the feeding program, and a lot of merchants in downtown are complaining because of the situation that it creates when they feed out of the van, you know, the plates and the -- and forks and cups and all that, plus the health situation. If we can support this courtyard program, which is for spending the night but also to expand the feeding program, I think that we will solve that. And actually, the Homeless Trust was directed last Friday to go out and discuss this situation with the different churches who means well, but they need to go to the feeding program. Actually, the feeding program has been so successful that we're talking already of more than a million meals in the time that they have already started that. So Madam Chair, I think that maybe the executive director can discuss this to see their needs. I know that they are getting some money from DDA (Downtown Development Authority), and I hope that they may be able to get some money from the

Homeless Trust, but I think it's important because it gives -- this courtyard program gives dignity to the people that, unfortunately, does not have a home. So maybe 100,000 is what they need right away, but we really need to think if we can come up with some additional money for them to defray the costs 'cause they're running these programs and they're running short of money. And of course, everybody knows that they're moving, so my proposal is that next month we will discuss maybe another tier of funding and have the Camillus House board bring to this Board the expenses, you know, detailed expenses and numbers and all that. So I'm supporting this because I know what they're doing and I've seen this, and through the Homeless Trust, also they got their support.

Chair Spence-Jones: So we had a motion and we had a second on this item. I do know that there were some questions around it -- and I see Camillus House -- and them needing the additional support because of funding shortages that have taken place regarding the homeless-based programs that you provide now. I think that -- at this point, we've already approved it. I would suggest -- and I guess your recommendation is -- is it to have the Camillus House folks sit down with the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) to relook at it?

Commissioner Regalado: And you know, explain the sense -- and give the Board the sense of urgency because everyday there is more and more people growing. I mean, I know that during the last two threat that we have from hurricanes that we never got, there was an overpopulation in the courtyard of hundreds and hundreds of people. They all came from throughout downtown and Overtown, the Omni area, so it is important because, you know, the City can claim now that the homeless issue is being tackled, so it is important not to drop the ball on this courtyard issue.

Chair Spence-Jones: If I can also add because you did mention that there are several feeding programs that are going on. I'm not really sure what's happening in the downtown area, so I don't know if the district Commissioner or you can speak on it. What is it, churches from the outside area are coming in?

Commissioner Regalado: Yes. Churches from outside --

Chair Spence-Jones: Where are they setting up?

Commissioner Regalado: We're talking from -- churches from Pinecrest, from Coral Gables, and these are people that really mean well --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Regalado: -- but they just come -- they just go there -- they cook the meals at their homes and they decide -- they get into two vans, they open the back doors and start calling on the homeless, giving one plate. Try this, you don't like this, and they come back and they just take one or two spoons and they throw it away. Came back; they call -- call your friends, you know, and it's becoming -- it's getting out of control. And remember that it was this situation what prompted the Homeless Trust and the City and the homeless program of the City of Miami to do this feeding program. Feeding program is working. I mean -- and the people are getting counseling and the people are getting advice. It's indoors. It's very -- with a lot of dignity, but you know, people are wandering the streets, and these folks from the church believe that because of the situation -- economic situation as it is, well, everybody is hungry and they come and they invite everyone and it's becoming a mess. Plus --

Chair Spence-Jones: This is on the streets? Is that what's happening?

Commissioner Regalado: Right on the street. I mean, we have -- the Homeless Trust identified at least six or seven intersections --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Commissioner Regalado: -- within the core of downtown Miami which they are doing that.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. And Commissioner Sarnoff -- both of you guys -- and then I don't want to spend a lot of time on it, but I do want to ask, are there -- have there been feeding sites set aside for --? No.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Well, they're not supposed to. And actually, one of the churches that this CRA --

Pamela E. Burns (Assistant Clerk of the Board): Excuse me, Mr. Vice Chair. Would you --? Yeah. Thank you.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: One of the churches that I think is going to come back -- and I think it was Commissioner Sanchez required it -- stop the feeding program at Trinity, I think it was.

Chair Spence-Jones: I was going to bring up -- that was going to be my --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- next --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: And I don't -- as of a couple of weeks ago, Trinity had not stopped, but that was a requirement for the funding.

Chair Spence-Jones: Oh, they haven't stopped, but they're in Overtown now.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Oh, okay.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, so what's happened is they've left North Bayshore Drive and now they're at Mount Zion, and all of the work that we're putting together on 3rd Avenue, now they're feeding on 3rd Avenue. So I guess they've eliminated it being an issue on North Bayshore Drive, but now we have an issue with it happening on 3rd.

Commissioner Regalado: Yeah.

Chair Spence-Jones: So I was just asking if there's -- maybe there's some way -- because we want people to help people, but can we drive these churches and these individuals to --

Commissioner Regalado: No, no, no, no. Sixty-nine groups and churches are within the feeding program, sixty-nine.

Chair Spence-Jones: Right.

Commissioner Regalado: I mean, these people, they just want to be out of the --

Chair Spence-Jones: Oh, they don't want to be a part of the system?

Commissioner Regalado: -- or they don't know or -- I mean, they're being contacted. I just don't want to think that they don't want to be -- but they're being contacted by the Homeless Trust, also by the City of Miami Homeless office, and they have been warned that they will be fined if they continue to do that because we have, as you know, five sites --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Commissioner Regalado: -- for feeding.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Do we have an ordinance on that that precludes people from feeding the homeless?

Commissioner Regalado: We were to have an ordinance, but instead of the ordinance, we came up with this feeding; and the Commission assigned me because I was on the Homeless Trust and it was very successful. And you know, it has worked and the people go there and the people get counsel. The people get -- and there're counselors there, so -- and I hope that this -- they were supposed -- last Friday, the chair of the Homeless Trust, Ron Book, he directed David Raymond and the staff to go out and talk to these people. The City's talking to them, and maybe we are able to bring them into the feeding program.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But do you think it's a good idea or the conversation should begin or the debate, if you will, to start an ordinance?

Commissioner Regalado: Oh, yeah. I think so, Commissioner, because if they just don't listen -- I mean, there is no -- the police -- there's not much that the police can do, just to say, you know, you're obstructing traffic or whatever. But this -- if we have -- if we were to have an ordinance in place, they just can't do it.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: How far did we get with the drafting? Have we ever started the drafting?

Commissioner Regalado: Yes, we did, and the City Attorney's Office -- and this was like two or three years ago.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Why don't we let Jim --?

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. You want to direct him, Commissioner Sarnoff?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Yeah. Jim, can you -- could you coordinate with the City Attorney to see what the last draft they had of the homeless feeding ordinance was and maybe bring it before this Board so we could take a look at it, or once you're satisfied it's in draft form, that if we could look at it?

Mr. Villacorta: Yeah. I'll have them distribute the last draft to each Commissioner's office.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: You seem familiar with it. Are you?

Mr. Villacorta: Vaguely.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Vaguely, okay.

Commissioner Regalado: Yeah. But I know that we tried, but -- because that ordinance only punish. We decided to go the route of solving the problem, and we thought we did and we did, but for a while -- but now this situation is a little out of control.

Mr. Villacorta: And Commissioner, I've spoken with Trinity. They -- I've spoken with Trinity Church. They've told us that they've discontinued feeding at their location as of October 31. And what's been relocated to Mount Zion is not their program --

Chair Spence-Jones: It's not? Oh, it's a City program.

Mr. Villacorta: -- but there was a City feeding program has now moved to Mount Zion. And --

Commissioner Regalado: But that's inside. And Mount Zion is one of the five locations, but that's inside.

Chair Spence-Jones: No, it's not.

Commissioner Regalado: We're talking --

Chair Spence-Jones: It's not inside. They're doing it outside.

Commissioner Regalado: Well --

Chair Spence-Jones: So we just need to --

Commissioner Regalado: It's within the church grounds.

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Regalado: It's not supposed to be done --

Chair Spence-Jones: But it's --

Ms. Burns: Madam Chair --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- what's happening is that the -- no, what's happening is the line is going on 3rd Avenue.

Commissioner Regalado: Oh, okay. Well, the lines, that's different. But this --

Chair Spence-Jones: You're talking about something separate.

Commissioner Regalado: -- has nothing to do -- this is separate. This is on the street corner --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Commissioner Regalado: -- open vans, you know, plates, hot plates, and all that. Everybody -- you know, like Kool-aid and all that.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. So, Jim, you -- I keep going out on the mike. I don't know why.

Commissioner Regalado: You touch it. You're just touching it.

Chair Spence-Jones: I'm sorry. So, Jim, you got the direction from --

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- Commissioner Sarnoff.

Mr. Villacorta: I'll track down that homeless feeding ordinance and provide it to each office.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Villacorta: Also, Camillus House has provided us with a budget for this courtyard program, and their calculations are that it's running \$800,000 a year to operate that program, so this is one-eighth of that.

Chair Spence-Jones: And I just want to say -- first of all, we did get a -- Madam Clerk, we got a motion and a second on it, right?

Ms. Burns: That's correct.

Chair Spence-Jones: We had some discussion. Is there any more discussion on this item before we close out on the item? No?

Commissioner Regalado: No. Just next meeting, I think we should discuss further this issue.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Is there any comments or anything that you'd like to actually put on the record? First of all, let me start with Camillus House because Dr. Ahr is -- this is his item. All of the Commissioners, you know we support the Camillus House and whatever we can do to support all the great work you do, we do it already. We will continue to do it, so I --

Paul Ahr: Thank you.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- just wanted to make sure you knew that.

Mr. Ahr: Thank you. Paul Ahr, president and chief executive officer of Camillus House, doing business at 336 Northwest 5th Street. First of all, we appreciate the hundred thousand. Jim has accurately reflected what the cost is. This is a program we estimated would serve 40 to 60 people, the ones who had been historically living on the street in front of Camillus House. Last night there were 277 persons who were there, and during the last kind of hurricane scare, in addition to the 270 persons in residence (UNINTELLIGIBLE) on mats at night, another 130 showed up for a safe haven. So this has gone far beyond our -- any estimates that we would have had in the first place. We have approached the DDA. We have met with the secretary of the Department of Children & Families for additional support. But I think, as you all know, that area of Northeast 1st no longer has people living in front; there are some on 8th. Our requirements continue with the economic problems. Just an example, what we used to give out each month 70 food boxes; there are now over 200 food boxes to housed people. The other issue, which is kind of a silent problem for us, is that many of the churches who had originally come from Lot 16 to work with us -- and we have more feeding nights than any of the other sites. We do Wednesday night, Thursday night and Saturday -- many of them, for their own economic problems, have dropped out or no longer bringing food and just basically serve. So our -- we estimate the food cost alone for the courtyard program at \$200,000 a year. The Commissioner's right in terms of the street feeding. Probably the easiest way to describe it is kind of -- and it's a management problem for us, kind of the schoolyard when the Good Humor truck goes by. What happens when the vans comes along is that our whole property evacuates. And I will admit that we were part of the problem for the longest time because we only fed one time on Saturday and Sunday, and I felt that we needed to provide three meals before we could come to anybody and say please stop this problem, and we've been feeding three meals for probably five to six months and, still, folks kind of run out to the street when the word is out there that there's a van. We see it as a health problem. We have enough problems with rodents in terms of just our own -- maintaining our own facility -- and many of the individuals that receive the food throw the containers down on the ground. We have to end up cleaning it up, so it's a serious issue for us and we appreciate an ordinance either to ban it or create a zone, a no-feed zone, within a certain perimeter of a homeless shelter because otherwise we're just going to export this problem to Allapattah, which I think will be a problem for all of us. So I'd be happy to answer any questions that you have.

Chair Spence-Jones: Any questions for Dr. Ahr of Camillus House?

Commissioner Regalado: No. I was wondering if we can probably redirect those groups that are just feeding on the street to the courtyard.

Mr. Ahr: And we have -- every time we encounter them, both the off-duty policemen and Frank Ferrar (phonetic), who's our food service manager, try to engage them, invite them to come in, and you know, to -- so everybody can be part of the solution to this

problem. But it's a serious issue. We appreciate Commissioner Sanchez's work with the DDA to get us some immediate relief. Hopefully, we'll get immediate relief today, and then we'll be happy to meet with Jim just to lay out the entire initiative, including the other sources of funding that we're looking for.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, Dr. Ahr. You're recognized, Commissioner Sarnoff.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Commissioner Sanchez, was there going to be some sort of a meter that the DDA was going to do, a feeding meter where you were able to --?

Commissioner Sanchez: It wasn't a feeding meter. It was a meter to raise money for --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- the homeless, and that idea was brought from Denver, where certain city staffers, and of course, different organizations went to visit and they're implemented in Miami. But it's got nothing to do -- that is basically for the homeless to use. So that money could certainly go towards that. The DDA is committed and the service committee, through the direction of the board, will be making a recommendation of \$50,000 towards the Camillus House, and that will be coming up at the next DDA board meeting for a vote.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: What's the proper phrase to use for these meters? What are they called or --?

Chair Sanchez: The meters --

Mr. Ahr: If I might, this was an initiative of the Homeless Trust, where there were basically a parking meter-type --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Ahr: -- device where people could put their loose change. And the notion was to --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Ahr: -- redirect -- people that were charitably minded, who might be reluctant to give it to a panhandler, could put it in this meter with the notion being that it would pay for street feeding -- you know, programs like ours.

Commissioner Sanchez: And it's been very successful in Denver, and hopefully, it'll be very successful here in Miami too.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But what is the status? We heard about -- I remember hearing about this about eight or nine months ago and --

Commissioner Regalado: It was required as part of the panhandling ordinance, and they -- I know that --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: You're right. That's when it came up.

Commissioner Regalado: Yeah. And it was required.

Commissioner Sanchez: It was not required. It was not --

Commissioner Regalado: Well --

Commissioner Sanchez: -- required, Commissioner.

Commissioner Regalado: -- it was --

Commissioner Sanchez: It was not required.

Commissioner Regalado: -- approve along with the panhandling ordinance, and they went to Denver. I know that the NET (Neighborhood Enhancement Team) director went to Denver. I know that David Raymond, the executive director of the Homeless Trust, went to Denver, and they liked what they saw in terms of (UNINTELLIGIBLE). But I don't think that even the funds have been even appropriated to build those meters, nor I don't think that there is an immediate plan, not -- I can tell you -- I don't know about the DDA, but I can tell you that, not from the Homeless Trust, there is no movement on that direction, but it was a condition, and I -- you know, we can pull the minutes, and it was a condition when the panhandling ordinance was approved by the City Commission.

Commissioner Sanchez: For the record, if I may, with all due respect, it had nothing to do with that condition. It was something that was -- it was brought forth because it worked very well in Denver, and it was added towards us coming up with a vital plan to raise money in a way, as you stated before, that people who aren't very comfortable giving their money to homeless, but they could put it in a meter and the program is generated -- it's projected to generate funds for that, but it had no conditions as to the panhandling ordinance. It was just an idea that came forth brought by everyone to implement such a device to raise money for the homeless.

Chair Spence-Jones: Commissioner Sanchez, is there --? So just so that I'm -- I'm sorry. Do you have another comment on it? I just want to --

Commissioner Regalado: No.

Chair Spence-Jones: Is there any way that -- just feeding off of what you're asking -- is there any way, Commissioner Sanchez, that we can maybe perhaps get some sort of update as to where that is so maybe we can bring it back to the next CRA meeting? Even though it's not really relevant right now for this particular -- for our issue that we're voting on, but just for the sake of us knowing, just in case we want to implement it in other areas throughout other CR -- throughout different CRAs. So is there any way that you can let us know where --? Is that a D -- is that a function that DDA was working on?

Commissioner Sanchez: It is a function that the DDA -- and the appropriate steps to take here is to have the executive director contact the DDA and have the executive director, at the next CRA meeting, come and give a presentation as to the status of the program. That would be the appropriate thing to do.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, no problem. So, Jim --

Mr. Villacorta: I'll take care of doing that.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Any -- okay, so we -- thank you, Dr. Ahr, and no more questions on this item. We already had a motion and a second, and I believe I asked all in favor.

The Commissioners (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right, so this item passes.

5. 08-01334 **CRA RESOLUTION**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE SOUTHEAST OVERTOWN/PARK WEST COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AUTHORIZING A GRANT, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$400,000, TO ST. JOHN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,

INC. ("ST. JOHN") TO REHABILITATE THE ST. JOHN APARTMENTS, AT 220-250 N.W. 13TH STREET AND 1300 N.W. 2ND AVENUE, MIAMI, FLORIDA, PROVIDED THAT ST. JOHN DEMONSTRATES IT HAS OBTAINED THE BALANCE OF FUNDS NECESSARY FOR THE REHABILITATION; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AT HIS DISCRETION, TO DISBURSE THE GRANT ON A REIMBURSEMENT BASIS OR DIRECTLY TO VENDORS UPON PRESENTATION OF INVOICES AND SATISFACTORY DOCUMENTATION; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR SAID PURPOSE, IN A FORM ACCEPTABLE TO GENERAL COUNSEL; ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM SEOPW TAX INCREMENT FUND, "CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS," ACCOUNT CODE NO. 10050.920101.670000.0000.00000.

Cover Memo.pdf, Financial Form.pdf, Backup.pdf, Legislation.pdf

CRA-R-08-0063

MOVED: Joe Sanchez

SECONDED: Tomas Regalado

Motion that this matter be **ADOPTED PASSED** by the following vote.

AYES: Chair Spence-Jones, Commissioner Regalado and Commissioner Sanchez

NOES: Vice Chair Sarnoff

ABSENT: Commissioner González

Direction by Chair Spence-Jones to the Interim Executive Director to coordinate a meeting with David Alexander to create a report detailing the breakdown of the costs for the St. John project and to provide said report to the Board.

Chair Spence-Jones: We move on to number 5. St. Johns rehab. Jim.

James H. Villacorta (Interim Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): Item number 5 is a resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Southeast Overtown/Park West Community Redevelopment Agency authorizing a grant, in an amount not to exceed \$400,000, to St. John Community Development Corporation, Inc., to rehabilitate the St. Johns Apartments at 220 to 250 Northwest 13th Street and 1300 Northwest 2nd Avenue, provided that St. John demonstrates that it has obtained the balance of funds necessary for the rehabilitation; authorizing the executive director, at his discretion, to disburse the grant funds on a reimbursement basis or directly to vendors upon presentation of invoices and satisfactory documentation; further authorizing the executive director to execute all documents necessary for said purpose.

Chair Spence-Jones: And before we open it up to my fellow Commissioners, I do know that already for St. Johns, we've already worked with them on getting new roofs on the building, correct, Jim --

Mr. Villacorta: Yes. We previously --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- and the painting --

Mr. Villacorta: -- have given a grant for --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- and the façade, correct?

Mr. Villacorta: Yes. We have previously painted the buildings, and just recently, funded the re-roofing of the three buildings, and I believe that's been completed.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. And then to my understanding, Commissioner Regalado actually did a tour of all of the vacant units that we have available in the heart of Overtown, which -- a very successful tour, and this is one of the sites, I believe, that we went to. And there's very few apartment buildings we have with three bedrooms in it that are this big.

Mr. Villacorta: Yeah. These are probably the largest apartments in Overtown, perhaps even including the Bayview Towers and Madison in Park West, and they're two- and three-bedroom units, very nice units, just they've had a lot of deferred maintenance and some hurricane damage and need some substantial improvements.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Before we open up to the floor, I want to just at least hear from my fellow Commissioners. Are -- is there any questions we have on this item?

Commissioner Regalado: No. I think that's the best thing that could happen, to have the possibility of rehabilitation instead of building. Which, by the way, I am trying to get a report for all of you because last Friday on the Homeless Trust there was a discussion about the problems that affordable housing is having in Miami-Dade County in getting tax credits and money from the State. There is a huge cut in future and present projects for --

Chair Spence-Jones: I heard.

Commissioner Regalado: -- from the State of Florida. And I ask them to have the -- all the numbers which they are trying to get right now. But it is very -- I mean, it's -- we should be concerned because this would affect every affordable housing project. So if we have now the possibility of rehabilitation. I mean, this is a now project not a future project. I just wanted to -- is -- the house on fire was one block away?

David Alexander: Two blocks, Commissioner.

Commissioner Regalado: Two blocks. It was abandoned too.

Mr. Alexander: Yes.

Commissioner Regalado: And they have to --

Mr. Alexander: It wasn't properly boarded. The word in the community is that it was torched, but we don't have any proof of that, so you know.

Commissioner Regalado: Which leads to what you have been saying.

Chair Spence-Jones: Oh, let's not even talk about that house because --

Commissioner Regalado: No, but I mean --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- that house, I've gone by there like for the last year.

Commissioner Regalado: -- they had to evacuate the whole building next to it because of the flames.

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah. And we just had a conversation about this today regarding the issue of this same house that I've been talking about for a year that has been boarded up, and that we've been trying to get the structure knocked down because we felt that it was an unsafe issue. And yesterday, I passed by and the building was burnt out. So then the question becomes, okay, are we going to have the structure that is still unsafe, now unsafe [sic], still sitting there for another year without somebody

from Building or Unsafe Structures or whatever to come knock it down?

Mr. Villacorta: Actually, the Fire Department can demolish an unsafe structure after a fire, so we're reaching out to them, quicker than the Building Department, so we're reaching out to them, which we had done previously. This is about the third fire that's happened in that building, but this one totally engulfed the building.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Weren't we supposed to get a list of units that either were in such bad shape in the CRA and then go to the City Attorney with them that they either be foreclosed upon or unsafe structures and --? You know, great that we could find out that the Fire Department can do it, but not everybody's going to have a fire.

Mr. Villacorta: Right. We've been sending to Code Enforcement, every other week or so, a list of properties that need to be code enforced and/or demolished. And your chief of staff has asked us to provide copies of the ones that we felt should be demolished to your office, so we'll send that around to all the Commissioners.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, thank you. Okay, so any other questions before we open it up to --?

Commissioner Sanchez: Yes, Madam Chair. I have one. St. Johns, your funding is coming from the County also, correct?

Mr. Alexander: That's correct, Commissioner.

Commissioner Sanchez: And do you have the adequate funds to complete this?

Mr. Alexander: Yes. We have a contract for the funds, and we have established our closing documents and submitted them to the County for approval prior to going to the County attorney.

Commissioner Sanchez: And it is to your best judgment that you will have sufficient funds to complete this?

Mr. Alexander: Yes, sir. May I put my name on the record? David --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes, you may.

Mr. Alexander: -- Alexander, president, St. John CDC (Community Development Corporation). Commissioner Sanchez, when we first came to the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) over a year ago, we sat with Commissioner Jones [sic] and the reality was St. John CDC promised that we wouldn't be asking for all the money for the project at that time. Commissioner explained that it would be much better if we could find matching funding for our projects, which I must say was very hard to do, but we did it. And we have a million dollars that's already committed to this project from the County for the refinance. We have achieved an additional \$500,000 in a surtax loan that matches the CRA grant. This project was going belly up, as you probably remember. It's one of the first tax credit deals in Dade County, Florida, and it was scheduled for removal from the public sector into the private sector. Our original plan was to do a condo conversion for affordable housing. The State doesn't want to do that because it would set a precedent. As you know, there's over 15,000 units in the state that are now coming up for that transition. So what we decided to do was to go back and rehab it from the ground up. These units are in pretty good shape. They're not in -- it's not a gut rehab, so most of this stuff that we're doing comes in at a fairly good price per unit. We are very confident, especially since the roof is done now and there's no further damage.

Commissioner Sanchez: And we know the dire need for affordable housing. I just want to make sure that we don't fund you to fail, if you know what I mean. I want to make sure that you do have the money to get it done --

Mr. Alexander: Yes. We --

Commissioner Sanchez: -- as quickly as possible.

Mr. Alexander: -- appreciate your concern, Commissioner, because, as you know, anything can happen in rehab. But we've actually done two test units in this building, and we believe that we'll be able to bring it in on time, on budget, just like we did with the roof. As a matter of fact, the City of Miami Code inspectors forced us to do change orders on the project, and we discussed it with Jim, and Jim, I believe, is going to recommend approval of that, and we came in under the amount of money that you gave us to do the roof, so we'll be able to apply it, those dollars, if you agree, to the actual rehab of the project of the interiors.

Commissioner Sanchez: And just -- Jim, on the rehab, you know, there has to be a way that we could simplify the process where the City, along with the CRA, works with the individuals that are doing the rehab. You know, at times I often say this, the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. Therefore, it makes it much harder --

Mr. Alexander: And more expensive.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- for -- and more expensive when you don't have that open communication to resolve those issues. We want to get this done as quickly as possible in a most efficient manner as possible, and therefore, it's important that we have that working -- good working relationship with whoever the developer may be, whoever is rehabbing with you and the City as to the permits.

Mr. Alexander: Commissioner, I would ask, if it is at all possible -- because I discussed this with the CRA director -- you know, we have the commitment from the County, which is a half-a-million-dollar commitment, but you know, trying to close a loan with the County can take a long time. We do have a contract with them. So I was asking Jim if he would recommend to the Commission that you fund the whole project and I will pay you back on the County loan that I have, that way we would be assured of finishing the project in a much shorter space of time, and Jim would be involved in the process from beginning to end. See, I have the half-a-million-dollar commitment, I have a contract, but to close a contract with the County these days is rough. The way it's set up right now, Jim wants to know I've closed that loan. If at all possible, I would ask you to maybe bridge it for us or lend us the money while we finish the project, and as we close, then we pay you back off. If you were able to do that for me, you would move all the barriers to entry right now.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Well, then I have a number of questions.

Mr. Alexander: Yes, sir.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: According to your budget, it should cost you \$778,777 to complete this project, correct?

Mr. Alexander: No, sir. That's just the interior rehab and the water.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: So where's your total --

Mr. Alexander: You need --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- budget then?

Mr. Alexander: -- to take -- I gave it to Jim. I don't know if you have it. I believe this is just the interior portion of it. You should know that you should subtract 150,000 from that, and that would be the net cost to the interior plus the change orders, which is --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Well --

Mr. Alexander: -- about 100,000.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- here's my curiosity then because to me a roof is not interior, a roof is exterior. You have some --

Mr. Alexander: It is.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- drywall, which is interior, but you have a number of things that talk about the exterior of this building. You're asking us now to fund the County's portion with the expectation of getting funding back from the County. You have a \$778,000 budget, which is all I've seen. I've heard you're going to ask for -- that you will be getting 500 from us. I guess now you want 400 from us, which would leave \$900,000. And I'm not quibbling over \$112,000 or \$122,000, but let me quibble for a moment. Where does that go?

Mr. Alexander: It's not quibbling. It's a very legitimate question. If you subtract the roof from the 700 that you have there, you have the net that the general contractor bid.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Alexander: We have about \$100,000 in change orders that have taken place since then. We have not approved the change orders pending, of course, closing on the funding.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But shouldn't we, as a Commission -- or I should say as a CRA Board, shouldn't we be given the most updated information possible before we take a vote on something that's about to bind a little under a million dollars of the Southeast Overtown/Park West funds?

Mr. Alexander: No, sir. You're only binding \$500,000.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Well --

Mr. Alexander: So I'm asking you for the other five to bridge the County.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I can add; that's 900,000.

Mr. Alexander: Right.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: That's just short of a million. You didn't fly here on an executive jet, did you?

Mr. Alexander: Not the last time I looked.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Okay. So I'm really trying to understand what it is exactly we're doing.

Mr. Alexander: Okay. Let me explain. About a year and a half ago, when I first approached the CRA, the Commissioner said I'd like to do this, but let's make sure that we're doing the right thing. So we worked it out with Jim that we would do two demonstration interior rehabs on the 35-unit project so we could test it to make sure that there weren't problems in the walls. At that point in time, we came up with a number that would give us a bottom-line rehab cost per unit at a minimum cost, then we bid the project. After we bid the project, we found that the two competing best bidders, one came in real good on the roof 'cause he's a roofing contractor and the other one came in really good on the interior rehab. So we select both of them; one to do the roof, one to do the interior. Since then, I've found that I have to go out there and pay over \$100,000 to Miami-Dade Water & Sewer because we're putting in new water

meter services to the project. In addition, we have two other things that we have to do. We have to tent this building because we found termites when we went it, and then the second thing is that we have to actually test for mold and make sure we clean for mold because due to the hurricane penetrations, we did have mold in the structure. We have to remove that before we put tenants in there. All of this has been discussed with the CRA. We have enough money to do the contract. We've already invested \$1.4 million in the deal, and we're looking to maybe get you to bridge just the rest of the County money, and I will sign over the proceeds of their loan, which is a surtax loan, by the way, to the CRA.

Chair Spence-Jones: And Mr. -- I just want to -- if you don't mind, Commissioner Sarnoff. Jim, do you want to chime in on any of this so that at least the -- all the board members are clear with what he's asking for?

Mr. Villacorta: The -- we feel comfortable with what's in front of you now, the resolution that -- they have paperwork that seems to indicate the County's going to give them a loan for --

Chair Spence-Jones: So you do have --

Mr. Villacorta: -- up to 500,000 --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- you have confirmation from the County that the money's coming?

Mr. Villacorta: But the loan hasn't been closed, and what we were worried about was that we would get halfway into this rehab and there wouldn't be any money and the project would stall. I offered to propose funding all of it, provide -- in anticipation of that loan, provided we got a lien on the property at 11th and Northwest 1st Place. In the event they don't close on the loan, then we would take that property, that way the CRA would be protected. I feel this is the better alternative to make the 400,000 available to be drawn down once they've demonstrated that the County is willing to fund the other at least 225,000. When you take the 778 and take the roof out, it's a total of 625 to finish this project. If we fund 400 and they demonstrate that the County has actually closed the loan for 225, fine. If you want to bridge the loan, then I think we should be protected by having a lien on something that we can --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Jim, I feel like I got involved right after you finished dancing with the lady, and I'm just coming in for sloppy, I don't know -- but what is the total amount of -- what is the total amount needed, 1.4 million?

Mr. Villacorta: Those numbers include soft costs and --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Yeah.

Mr. Villacorta: -- other things.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Soup to nuts.

Mr. Villacorta: This is the bid amount from the contractor, 778.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I want to start all over again. What is the total amount that this project needs, and then we'll talk about funding sources?

Mr. Villacorta: In my view, 778. St. Johns wants to recover soft costs they have and cost of refinancing, and that's how come they come to the County for 500 and they come to us for 500. But the number I'm looking at is what did the contract --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: So you're looking at what I'm looking at.

Mr. Villacorta: -- yeah, what did the contractor bid to redo that building, 778.

Chair Spence-Jones: And if I can also ask, how many units are actually not in use now? Because for me, it's always about housing.

Mr. Alexander: Sixteen.

Chair Spence-Jones: So we have 16 -- whatever we do, we need to make a decision. We want to make -- you know, we want to make the right decision, but we don't want to have 16 three-bedrooms or two -- very large two-bedroom apartments that could be made available for low-income families sitting and nothing happening with them. So -- but I do understand my colleague's viewpoint. We want to make sure that before we move on anything, that we're very clear about what's going to happen with the dollars and --

Mr. Alexander: Sure.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- what's going to happen with the project. Commissioner Sarnoff, if you -- do you have anything else you want to add because Commissioner Sanchez has something he wants to add to it too?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I still, to be quite candid, don't understand this, and I don't think I'm an uneducated person. I'm looking at the same document you're looking at. I've heard the number 900,000. I've heard the number 1.4 million mentioned. To me, those are big differences, probably enough to fund many, many more projects, and I don't feel like I know enough about this to understand it. I have a budget in front of me that demonstrates \$778,777. I have heard, since I've been here, that the roofing contractor's been paid. There's a line item, number 5, roofing, \$153,840. I would -- I have a slight bit of curiosity who paid the roofing contractor.

Mr. Villacorta: The --

Chair Spence-Jones: That was a part of it.

Mr. Villacorta: -- CRA previously authorized a grant for roofing of up to 120. The roof has come in -- has been finished, and the cost is about 100,000, so there's 50,000 in savings off of this 778 number.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But wouldn't we, as a well-informed body, be better understood or better informed if we had a schedule in front of us -- what was the total cost, one was the funding, what was the resulting balance, how much do they want to recoup of soft costs -- versus being told, as we sit here, oh, we'd like to collect \$120,000 of soft costs?

Mr. Villacorta: Maybe it's best if we defer this and St. Johns can --

Mr. Alexander: Commissioner, if I might.

Mr. Villacorta: -- explain their numbers.

Mr. Alexander: May I say --?

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Let me just -- I'm going to let -- I'm going to definitely let you close out. Any other comments you want to make on it, Commissioner Sarnoff, before I turn it over to Commissioner Sanchez?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: No, ma'am.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Any comments you want to make, Commissioner --?

Commissioner Sanchez: I want him to say his --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- last comments, and then --

Chair Spence-Jones: Then he'll just -- he'll add.

Mr. Alexander: May I just say --

Chair Spence-Jones: Sure.

Mr. Alexander: -- Commissioner Sarnoff, you're right to question it. But the truth is that the numbers that you're hearing deal with historical references. And just, you know, so that we can be on the same page, when I came to St. John CDC, this project was belly up and in foreclosure. I had to go get a million four from the County to save it from foreclosure. I had to convince Chevron to walk away from a tax credit deal before the expiration date of the tax credit deal and give them indemnification in case they went south with the IRS (Internal Revenue Service), okay?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Well, David --

Mr. Alexander: So we saved that project. There's the 1.4 million, you asked.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- I understand that, and I --

Mr. Alexander: And so --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- and I've known you for a while and I respect you. But I should have on my sheet cost of -- the cost you've put into it --

Mr. Alexander: Yes.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- what you intend on recouping from it, where are your funding sources, what do you expect to make in terms of -- I don't know if profit's a good word or recoupment, if you'd like to call it.

Mr. Alexander: There's a developer fee, but that developer fee has been prorated over four years and you're not paying any of it from the CRA money. Let me just say, I'll be happy to come to you and sit down with a proforma --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: It's not coming to me. It is not -- we sit here on television for a reason. We sit here with books for a reason. That is so that a Commissioner can actually discuss something -- and theoretically, they're good communicators -- and they can communicate to the community why it is they're about to spend \$778,770 that was brought into this community. I mean, I could just sit here like a lump on a log and say approved 'cause it's going to affordable housing -- let me finish -- but I'm not going to because, to me, I should have been briefed, and not necessarily in person, but just -- and I find this with the City time and time and time again. I get involved in something. I feel like I'm three-quarters of the way through the issue. I'm told what the three-quarter is and I'm told, you know, Commissioner, you weren't here then, so you really don't know; yet, you expect to get my vote. And theoretically, I'm here to protect the taxpayers' dollars. How can I possibly make an informed judgment for anyone in this room until I understand the very beginnings, the middle, and now the conclusion? And you came up here now -- and I do respect you -- and suggest "I'd like to get another \$400,000 from the CRA" -- that's a lot of money to ask for, to me, in a very short, you know, conversation -- "and I'll pay you back." Now, if I had that budget, I might feel comfortable doing that --

Mr. Alexander: Yes.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- but I don't have that budget. I don't know what I'm voting for.

Mr. Alexander: I apologize, Commissioner. I did visit your office and I did speak with your staff twice about this project. And I -- unfortunately, I don't know whether the proforma was actually given to you, but the truth is, you know, I've been working on this for three years now and, actually, right after you were elected, I came and I presented this project to your staff. And the truth is that we have nothing to hide. St. John CDC is an open book for everybody to see, and we're probably more so than any other developer that the CRA deals with. I've never seen a situation where Jim asks a question that can't get the answer. And since you have the question, Commissioner, I'm just going to tell you right now, you know, banks are not lending money, okay. We don't have access to private sector capital. If we did, maybe we wouldn't have to ask you that. The only reason I'm doing this is because, quite frankly, it's a matter of convenience and timing. To us, every day that the project doesn't get done, there's no more housing that we can offer to the community. So to us, it's a matter of asking you for a favor. You're already proposing to lend me -- to give us a half a million dollars. I'm suggesting to you, probably unlike many other developers that have come to you to borrow money from the CRA to do the deal. I would say, Commissioner, that David Alexander represents a capital investment, okay. I don't represent just coming to you for money with my hand out all the time 'cause I can't do that. Bottom line is, if you would like to deliver the housing like I would, then it should be a no-brainer. As far as the proforma is concerned, Jim is the most cautious lawyer I've ever seen, okay. This guy is protecting the CRA's dollars left, right and center, okay. I personally believe that Bill Bloom, who is not here, but who has a facsimile, although not a reasonable facsimile, I believe that --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: A much prettier facsimile.

Mr. Alexander: Much better looking. -- you know, Bill wouldn't let anything slide through without having every "t" crossed and every "i" dotted. So it really -- let me just simplify it. You know, we've invested a lot more money than we're asking the CRA to help us with. And --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But --

Mr. Alexander: -- it's just temporary, this other money.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I understand, but understand my point. And this is a criticism I have. I don't know how the other Commissioners may feel. But if I'm going to get involved in a project, I want to know the acquisition costs, I want to know the funding of those acquisitions, I want to know the breakdowns, and there's -- they're not here. And I remember meeting with you. I never got -- I mean, there seems to be a certain level that every person should expect to get, and it's a story. Anybody that wants something from someone -- and we had some folks from GM (General Motors) and Ford and Chrysler show up to Congress. They didn't tell a very good story, but a story nonetheless, and that is why do you need the money, what due diligence have you done in this project. And I know -- and I do know that you have done due diligence, but the numbers vary in a private conversation. The numbers change and on paper they won't change. You'll have thought about it, carefully prepared that document, and then a Commissioner can read it, go through it, and feel like he's done his job to secure the taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Alexander: I guarantee you, Commissioner, first thing tomorrow morning it's going to be on your desk, okay? Because it's not like we didn't have the document. The document was forwarded in the original grant application. It has been adjusted since then. It looks even better now because we got the County commitment since then. So I'll get it to you first thing in the morning. I'm hoping, though, that you won't defer us for another 30 days because that's going to be like another nail in the coffin here, you know. We've been working on this for 11 months, Commissioner. And you didn't

cause the bank crisis; I didn't cause the bank crisis. But this would really help us. It would help us if you would take the risk of bridging the loan for us and we will give you the money from the County when it comes.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, Mr. Alexander. Anything else, Commissioner Sarnoff? Commissioner Sanchez, do you have something to add before we decide what we're going to do?

Commissioner Sanchez: Yes, Madam Chair. First of all, look, we get in this situation when the item is brought in front of this legislative body and all of a sudden there's a change to it that doesn't go through the Administration. We need to set a presence [sic] where we don't allow that --

Mr. Alexander: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- because it allows room for error and it allows us to make decisions where we don't have all the facts based on the recommendation from the Administration and the staff. So I am prepared to support this resolution, as original intended, not when we will pick up the County's portion and then you would pay us back. That has nothing to do with this; it's not here. And I don't feel comfortable when the executive director flat-out says "We don't feel comfortable doing that." So, you know, this is directed to the executive director, we need to send a clear message out that we will not have this, okay, 'cause there's already two items today that came in front of this legislative body where it wasn't what was on the original agenda, and therefore, there were changes to it. The reason for us having an agenda is because we have an opportunity to read the agenda, get educated on the issue, make an intelligent decision based on the background material that's provided for us and based on the recommendation of the CRA and the executive director, not when someone comes in front of us and then changes the proposal where we don't have that backup material to make that -- so that, I tend to agree with Commissioner Sarnoff that we need to be very careful on doing that.

Mr. Alexander: Sure.

Commissioner Sanchez: So based on testimony that has been made here, I am prepared to support the original resolution that was presented --

Mr. Alexander: Thank you.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- to the CRA.

Mr. Alexander: Thank you, Commissioner.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, so we have --

Commissioner Sanchez: I would make a motion.

Chair Spence-Jones: We have a motion to support what has been submitted and supported by the CRA director.

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: Do we have a second?

Commissioner Regalado: Second.

Chair Spence-Jones: I have a motion and a second. All in favor?

Commissioner Regalado: Aye.

Commissioner Sanchez: Aye.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Nay.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, let --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: And the only reason, for the record, I'm going to say nay is I think that we should have been provided a breakdown of costs. I respect David Alexander and I respect the fact that we need affordable housing. However, I think each Commissioner should have been afforded an opportunity to look at what the true costs are and understand numbers that have been discussed here today, and I don't feel qualified to be able to do that.

Mr. Alexander: Thank you, Commissioners. We do appreciate it, and we'll work very hard to keep your confidence. Commissioner Sarnoff, I'll stand by my promise; I'll be at the office tomorrow.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: And I'll look forward to getting it.

Chair Spence-Jones: And I just want to also put on the record, even though we've voted and approved this item, that we would like to also recommend that Jim, the director of the CRA, along with David, sit down and give us the full breakdown, including the stuff that has been done, as Commissioner Sarnoff has communicated, so that we all have the information, not just one board member, so that we're all --

Mr. Alexander: Be happy to do so.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- on the same page. I know that I've been very close to the item because I've been involved in it on a -- probably a, you know, monthly basis just trying to get people in housing, but I think it's extremely important for everyone to be briefed on what's going on. So if you can just make sure that that report is provided to us, Jim, that --

Mr. Villacorta: Sure.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- would be greatly appreciated.

Mr. Alexander: Thank you, Commissioners.

Chair Spence-Jones: Congratulations --

Mr. Alexander: I appreciate it, Madam Chair.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- David. Let's get people --

Mr. Alexander: Thank you, staff.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- in the housing.

Mr. Alexander: We appreciate it.

Chair Spence-Jones: Let me just say this. We want to hold all questions and comments until the end of the agenda. Only individuals that will be speaking on the mike are the individuals that are representing the item. That keeps it moving -- the meeting moving, okay? So as soon as it's over, then I'll -- if there're some comments that you'd like to put on the record, we will.

6. 08-01332

CRA RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
SOUTHEAST OVERTOWN/PARK WEST COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT

AGENCY, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT, IN SUBSTANTIALLY THE ATTACHED FORM, WITH DEV-CON URBAN PARTNERS & AFFORDABLE, LLC FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARKING LOT P-2, AT 229-247 N.W. 12TH STREET, MIAMI, FLORIDA.

Cover Memo.pdf, Financial Form.pdf, Backup.pdf, Legislation.pdf

CRA-R-08-0064

MOVED: Joe Sanchez

SECONDED: Tomas Regalado

Motion that this matter be **ADOPTED PASSED** by the following vote.

AYES: Vice Chair Sarnoff, Chair Spence-Jones, Commissioner Regalado and Commissioner Sanchez

ABSENT: Commissioner González

Direction by Commissioner Sanchez to the Interim Executive Director to ensure that, prior to awarding funding for the affordable housing project, the developer provides the Board with full details of the project, the timeline for the project, and the total cost of the project.

Chair Spence-Jones: Let's move on to item number 6, and -- Jim.

James H. Villacorta (Interim Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): Item number 6 is a resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Southeast Overtown/Park West Community Redevelopment Agency, with attachments, authorizing the executive director to execute an agreement, in substantially the attached form, with Dev-con Urban Partners and Affordable LLC (Limited Liability Corporation), for the development of parking lot P-2 at 229 to 247 Northwest 12th Street. This project was put out for RFP (Request for Proposals). Two responses were received. The Board recommended the Dev-con proposal -- or staff recommended the Dev-con proposal. The Board of Commissioners, by Resolution 08-0044, passed and adopted on September 3, 2008, directed the executive director to attempt to negotiate an agreement for the development of the parking lot with Dev-con in accordance with their proposal. In accordance with the proposal, the parties have negotiated an agreement for the development of CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) parking lot P-2, which consists of 40 affordable rental units, 87 percent of which are two- and three-bedroom units, replacement of 20 existing public parking spaces, which would be available for the CRA, and 8,000 square feet of commercial retail space. The developer is required to reserve the units for renters in the following categories; one-third for renters whose gross income is between 60 and 80 percent of the Dade County median income; one-third for renters whose gross income is between 80 and 120 percent of the Miami-Dade County median income; and one-third for renters whose gross income is between 120 and 150 of the Miami-Dade County -- percent of the Miami-Dade County income [sic]. The developers are seeking a subsidy of \$1.4 million during construction and no TIF (Tax Increment Fund) revenues over the life of the project. Prior to closing - - the land would be turned over to them in a 99-year lease, and prior to closing on that lease, the developer must present permitted plans, performance and payment bond and evidence of financing. Until that time, we would not -- and he would have to provide all that at his own expense, and then we would close on the 99-year lease.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Those are the conditions proceeding -- prior to us funding them?

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Can you list them again?

Mr. Villacorta: Our funding would be drawn down as their construction loan from the bank in proportion to that. They would not get the money upfront. As they built, we would draw down each -- if the first draw was ten percent of the project, they would draw ten percent from --

Nicole Ramirez-Seijas (Special Counsel, Community Redevelopment Agency): There's going to be a tri-party agreement with their lender, the CRA, and the developer.

Pamela E. Burns (Assistant Clerk of the Board): And your name for the record, please.

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: Oh, Nicole Ramirez-Seijas --

Commissioner Sanchez: So --

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: -- Holland & Knight.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- the bottom line, there is no risk to the CRA on this one --

Mr. Villacorta: No.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- based on what you've worked here? I'll make a motion to support it, but I do have some questions that'll be --

Mr. Villacorta: Sure.

Commissioner Sanchez: -- flushed out during the --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Is there a second?

Commissioner Sanchez: -- discussion.

Commissioner Regalado: I'll second for discussion.

Commissioner Sanchez: Okay. I would yield to Commissioner Regalado for discussion.

Commissioner Regalado: Okay. You know, we've seen the stories that Lehman Brothers cannot and will not be funding several projects in the Brickell area. This -- maybe the timing for this project is better because now with the bailout and all, but what -- and you know, my issue -- and I'm supporting this -- is not the exposure that the CRA does or does not have. My issue is that the residents and people around, if we were to approve this and if we were go ahead and move, will really believe that this project is going to go up. And the question is, you know, then what do we do or what do we say, what do we tell them if there is a delay because of the economic condition? So my question is about perception. It's more than -- I'm sure that you already have funding in place or whatever or at least the commitment, but the perception of not doing what has been promised.

Axel Rizo: To answer that question -- Axel Rizo. In a proactive approach, Commissioner Regalado, what we've done is we've had several forums and meetings with grassroot [sic] organizations from the local area. We've actually consulted with them on what the need is on a housing issue, on a social issue. We've established a memorandum of understanding to proceed in a manner where it's beneficial to the community in all aspects and in a manner where everybody's in touch and in tune with what we're doing, so we're all in accord. We seek to maximize the benefits of the award that we're asking for for the benefit of the community. With that said, I think we've, you know, canvassed, you know, the local neighborhood in approaching the right parties to make this, you know, project successful. There's some members of the community here in itself that we've met that I don't know if anybody wants to come up and has

anything to say in regards to what I'm discussing right now with you.

Commissioner Regalado: And trust me, it's not about specifically the funding. It's about the timeline and it's about the expectations 'cause I'm sure that there is great expectation for this project, and then, you know, we need to understand that it's moving forward.

Mr. Rizo: Totally agree with you because with great expectations, we all know, come great responsibilities and this is the time to -- that the banks do want to do loans and we do have a bank in place willing to finance this project, but they're also willing to see a tangible evidence from the CRA, which would support this endeavor. You know, we are going to present this. We've already had preliminary discussions with them, but they want to see tangible evidence that will support our argument with what we're doing.

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: Can I just say that within 150 days from the date that they sign the agreement, the developer has to give us a loan commitment, so we'll know -- we'll have an idea of the progress at that point.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Commissioner --

Commissioner Regalado: Finished.

Chair Spence-Jones: You're recognized, Commissioner Sanchez.

Commissioner Sanchez: Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, I had some concerns with this based on you're only asking the CRA for \$1.4 million, correct? Now the concern that I have is that you're not going out seeking tax credit on this. Could you - -? I'm a little concerned on -- I want to make sure that the funding that you have in place -- once again, it is not our role to play gotcha here. It is not our role -- we need to fund you to succeed, and I want to make sure, since you're not getting any tax credit on this and the money that you're seeking -- I mean, it's -- I believe it's too little subsidy for the project that you want to do. Now I have faith in you. I think you're going to get it done, but I want to make sure that you do have the proper mechanism, methodology in place to get it done.

Mr. Rizo: Sure. And I understand your concern. In a collective effort, we are going to seek additional subsidy at the local county level. We're going to pursue it through the state. The reason being why we don't address the tax credit issue is because tax credit is a lottery process. It is not guaranteed.

Commissioner Sanchez: Okay. And -- exactly. That's what I wanted you to put on the record. So there's other -- you're seeking other funding sources. So the beauty of this resolution and this agreement that we're entering is that you will not get the land until the financing, the final drawing and the permits are in place. So, therefore, the CRA is protecting itself and minimizing the risk in this process. That's the only issue that I had. I wanted you to put on the record because when I looked at it, I felt that you didn't have enough subsidy to get this project done. But if you assure me that you have the subsidy in place and you're going to be able to get the additional funding, then the only three questions that I -- one question that I have from you is that I would like to have project certain, time certain and cost certain. And I wish you Godspeed on that project.

Mr. Rizo: Thank you. And one of the preliminary requirements for the tax credit process is site control to enter into the lottery process to move forward.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Any other question, Commissioner Sanchez?
Commissioner --

Commissioner Sanchez: No.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- I think Commissioner Sarnoff has some questions.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Yeah. I heard you say that you wanted \$1.4 million from the CRA?

Mr. Rizo: That's right.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But I'm reading the contract and the contract calls for \$1.6 million. Now 200,000 between friends isn't a big deal, but what do you want, 1.6 million or 1.4 million?

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: The one point -- it's actually 1.4 million. The extra 200,000 is being allocated for CRA administrative expenses.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: So what does that mean?

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: It means that the developer will only see -- the CRA's contributing \$1.6 million, 200 of which are to cover its own administrative expenses and 1.4 is going to the developer.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: So 1.6 million comes out of our bank?

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: Yeah.

Commissioner Sanchez: Yes.

Mr. Villacorta: Well, 200,000 is over the life of the construction process. It's to pay for --

Chair Spence-Jones: Can you just make sure that --

Mr. Villacorta: -- an engineer --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- not just for the people sitting here, but for the people watching and listening, what that \$200,000 breaks out to? Is it for legal fee --? I mean, can you just let people know? I think that he wants to make sure that people are clear.

Mr. Villacorta: It's to be used to hire an engineer to oversee their construction of the project, a CRA employee.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But my point is, shouldn't you be saying to us up front it's 1.6 million they're -- you're seeking from the CRA?

Mr. Villacorta: It's 1.4 towards the construct -- that they're getting for the construction. We're also setting aside \$200,000 to oversee -- to pay a CRA engineer for two years to oversee their construction work. They are not receiving that \$200,000.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: No, I understand, but you're asking this Board, again, to vote on a number that it has in its mind, and the only numbers I've heard broached so far is 1.4 million. But you're actually asking this Board to vote for \$1.6 million (UNINTELLIGIBLE) \$200,00 from your budget, and that you'll pay, I take it, a project manager or engineer?

Mr. Villacorta: We'll hire an engineer, a PE (Project Engineer), to be on staff and oversee this project.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: And what occurs in the event that this goes into condo conversion?

Mr. Villacorta: We receive seven percent of the gross sales.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: What is the likelihood of this going into condo conversion?

Mr. Villacorta: Unlikely.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Okay. The last thing I had a question about is you seem to have some verbiage and language for minority participation.

Mr. Villacorta: Yes. The same as is in the Crosswinds agreement and the Jazz Village agreement, very similar to those two.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Is that allowable under federal law.

Mr. Villacorta: It's questionable.

Chair Spence-Jones: Speak up so he can hear.

Mr. Villacorta: It's probably questionable.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: It's --

Mr. Villacorta: However, the developer has agreed to do it.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: That's the only questions I have.

Chair Spence-Jones: Any other questions on this item? Commissioner Regalado, are you -- anything else you want to add?

Commissioner Regalado: No.

Chair Spence-Jones: Jim, would you like to put anything else on the record regarding this project? I mean, you have totally vetted this project out, and I know that, you know, we've had conversations back and forth on what needs to happen and whether or not we're comfortable with the fact this project is actually going to happen without having any subsidies attached to it and --

Mr. Villacorta: Well, other than the 1.4 million contribution to the developer -- and we've worked with them, we've reviewed the proforma. The County has reviewed the proforma and offered to give them four percent --

Mr. Rizo: The County has offered to do financing via bonds of an RBC (Royal Bank of Canada) capital; already evaluated the proforma and is willing to move forward.

Mr. Villacorta: And they --

Chair Spence-Jones: And you've already seen projects that they've done around the City or the County?

Mr. Villacorta: Yes. They've done private projects, you know, for -- they've constructed a substantially similar building in the City of Miami and on a for-profit basis, and they've kept the building -- or one of their investors has kept the building. The building was constructed. You're going to get a performance and payment bond. They're going to have to demonstrate they have the financing. They're going to have to have permitted building -- permanent set of plans before we do another thing other -- otherwise, they have a 104-page paperweight. Once they do those things, if they go bankrupt building it, you've got a performance and payment bond that's going to come finish that project. We went through the same procedure with Margaret Pace Park. There the developer actually did go into bankruptcy. The performance and payment bond -- the insurer came in, finished the park. I'm sure you know how well that park turned out. It's all going to come down to whether they can get the performance and payment bond and the bank financing, but they have repeatedly assured us they have

it, even without looking for other funding sources. Is that correct?

Mr. Rizo: That is correct.

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: And there is an outside date of May 1, 2010.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I'm sorry?

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: There's an outside date of May 1, 2010, so that's the outside date for the satisfaction.

Mr. Villacorta: That's the total drop-dead date --

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: Right.

Mr. Villacorta: -- if nothing's happened, you know, without having to fight them on default or if that project is not constructed or not begun by May --

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: If the conditions precedent haven't been satisfied by developer by May 1, 2010, the agreement's automatically terminated?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: And no money will have changed hands?

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: No.

Mr. Villacorta: No.

Ms. Ramirez-Seijas: Actually, we will have kept the deposit.

Chair Spence-Jones: So --

Commissioner Sanchez: All right. Call the question.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- do we have a motion and a second?

Commissioner Sanchez: Yes. I made the motion.

Chair Spence-Jones: I had a motion, and we had a second. All in favor?

The Commissioners (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. This item passes.

7. 07-01117

CRA RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE OMNI REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$3,200,000, FOR A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$4,000,000, FOR THE DESIGN AND RE-CONSTRUCTION OF OLD FIRE STATION NO. 2, AT 1401 NORTH MIAMI AVENUE, MIAMI, FLORIDA AND THE ADJACENT PARCEL AT 1441 NORTH MIAMI AVENUE, MIAMI, FLORIDA; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO DISBURSE SAID FUNDS DIRECTLY TO VENDORS SELECTED BY THE CITY OF MIAMI ("CITY") OR TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY TO ISSUE PURCHASE ORDERS TO PROJECT VENDORS; ALLOCATING FUNDS FROM OMNI TAX INCREMENT FUND, "CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS," ACCOUNT CODE NO.10040.920101.670000.0000.00000.

Cover Memo.pdf, Financial Form.pdf, Backup.pdf, Legislation.pdf

CRA-R-08-0065

MOVED: Marc David Sarnoff

SECONDED: Joe Sanchez

Motion that this matter be **ADOPTED PASSED** by the following vote.

AYES: Vice Chair Sarnoff, Chair Spence-Jones, Commissioner Regalado and Commissioner Sanchez

ABSENT: Commissioner González

Direction by Commissioner Sanchez to the Interim Executive Director to ensure that when the building is remodeled it will provide ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access to the public.

Direction by Chair Spence-Jones to the Interim Executive Director to research the ability to add outside lighting to the building, possibly utilizing the same methods as other business owners of historic buildings in the area.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. We move on to item number 7, and this is actually in Commissioner Sarnoff's district, but this is the restoration of the old fire station.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: The numbers better all be there.

James H. Villacorta (Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): This is a resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Omni Redevelopment District Community Redevelopment Agency authorizing the expenditure of additional funds, in an amount not to exceed \$3.2 million, for a total amount not to exceed \$4 million, for the design and reconstruction of old fire station number 2 at 1401 North Miami Avenue and the adjacent parcel at 1441 North Miami Avenue; authorizing the executive director to disburse said funds directly to vendors selected by the City of Miami or to authorize the City to purchase -- to issue purchase orders to project vendors. This is the historic fire station at 1401 North Miami Avenue. It's on the National Register of Historic Places. The City transferred it to the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) with the hope that the CRA would reconstruct it. In your materials is a project analysis form from the City's Capital Improvements Program, which estimates a total project cost of \$4 million. The Board has previously allocated \$800,000 for this project. For CIP (Capital Improvements Program) to begin, they need to know that the additional funding is present.

Chair Spence-Jones: Commissioner Sarnoff, do you want to speak on this 'cause I know this is in your district. The building is a beautiful building.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: It is. And it's a building worth saving, and it's --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- a historic monument worth saving, so long as it's got a good use to it. But the thing I'm impressed with on this, Jim, is we actually have a project analysis form. We actually know where the money's going to. We actually understand what it's being spent for. And that's my concern with regard to other issues so, you know, I'll make a motion to move this.

Commissioner Sanchez: Second.

Chair Spence-Jones: Got a motion and a second. All in --?

Commissioner Sanchez: The only thing that I would ask is that when it's remodeled in a way that offers complete ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access to the public. Being a historical building, I think we could have great usage for that, to even consider having an office for the CRA and possibly other entities in the place.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I thought we had a smaller place looked out for you.

Mr. Villacorta: Well, that's A --

Chair Spence-Jones: It was too small.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Ward Rooming --

Mr. Villacorta: -- being made ADA acceptable also and this will be.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- House is -- we don't want to ruin that.

Commissioner Regalado: And is this --

Chair Spence-Jones: Commissioner Regalado, you're recognized.

Commissioner Regalado: -- it's all going to be a museum?

Mr. Villacorta: Right now it's -- you know, they're developing the program for the building. In the worst case scenario, we're going to just build it wide open so that it could be -- it could accommodate a number of uses. As you know, Karu & Y and some of the other businesses in the area are complaining about the thefts and the transients that are in the area. We thought we could -- since the CRA's lease will be up, we could move there for some period of time. Eventually, this is to try and help turn that neighborhood around, have ten people coming to work everyday there. This is between the PAC (Performing Arts Center) and Karu & Y. We would hope that, ultimately, this would be something that would draw people to the area, a restaurant, a museum had been talked about in the past. At one point, it was used as a daycare center. So at least temporarily, the first use would be the offices of the CRA, unless --

Chair Spence-Jones: Right. I just want to make sure that we go back and look at also, Jim -- I'm sorry -- go back and look at what we originally said we were going to do with the CRA offices and where they were going to go.

Mr. Villacorta: Right.

Chair Spence-Jones: So -- but I'm open to it, as long as, you know, if the building is moving and it doesn't take five years like the Ward Rooming House took, you know. I don't want to -- I do not want to focus our energies on waiting for the firehouse to get built when there might be another structure for the CRA to move in immediately.

Mr. Villacorta: Sure.

Chair Spence-Jones: That's my only concern with historic buildings.

Commissioner Regalado: And you see the concern of Karu Y [sic] is break-ins on the cars. But Karu Y [sic] works in the evening, Saturdays and Sundays. The CRA works from 9 to 5.

Mr. Villacorta: They were also --

Commissioner Regalado: So you won't have ten people at night.

Mr. Villacorta: -- complaining about the theft of the copper in their phone lines. And the owners of the Vera building were complaining about the theft of the copper that

was being used to illuminate the artwork on the outside of the building, and that was happening actually during the daytime. So we thought to have another presence in the area -- there was also talk of moving the NET (Neighborhood Enhancement Team) offices into that building as well.

Commissioner Regalado: But -- I mean, they typified the situation here. The lady that just brought this delicious shrimp has been hit six times and she doesn't have an air condition.

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Commissioner Regalado: But I think, you know -- I'm all for it. I think that something more public, something more -- with more transit will be the right thing for the area and --

Chair Spence-Jones: An office.

Mr. Villacorta: The Mayor's Office of Film and Culture has also applied for a grant to try and use the space as a --

Chair Spence-Jones: Gallery.

Mr. Villacorta: -- cultural museum, so I mean there's a number of things in the works, and that's why we're proposing to have it built out as open space with, you know, the appropriate number of electrical outlets and services so that it could be used for different functions ultimately.

Chair Spence-Jones: Any other questions, Commissioner Sarnoff or Commissioner Regalado?

Commissioner Regalado: Camera.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Any other questions? We had a motion and a -- do we have a motion and a second on --?

Pamela Burns (Assistant Clerk of the Board): Yes, we did.

Chair Spence-Jones: All in favor?

The Commissioners (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Spence-Jones: I know Fred is actually -- Joseph is actually here. This item has been supported from the Omni Advisory Board. I know you've been pushing this item; it's finally moving. The only thing -- question I would like to have asked -- and I asked Jim this the other night when we were riding in both CRAs for -- in the meantime, if we could put lights on the building, like light up the outside of the building, like Eugene's building is on -- what is that, 14th Street, the big, pink, pretty old bank building.

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: Just the lighting on that building makes the area pop. So I just wanted to ask if there's any way, in the meantime, there could be some sort of lights put around the building.

Mr. Villacorta: On the fire station?

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Mr. Villacorta: Putting them on the ground is problematic because --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Mr. Villacorta: -- of the theft of copper. Putting them onto the structure is a little difficult now because the roof is collapsing and we're trying to stabilize the building. Once the building's completed, lighting it has historic preservation issues, but --

Chair Spence-Jones: So the answer's no?

Mr. Villacorta: -- not to be -- well, we tried on the bank building for a number of years and --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah, but Eugene has it up.

Mr. Villacorta: -- eventually, he got it up, yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: So I'm saying, can we look at what Eugene did?

Mr. Villacorta: Yes. We'll look into getting that building lit.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Fred, is there --? I just -- you know, I'm trying to save all my public comments to the end, but I know you represent the advisory board pushing this item.

Fred Joseph: Just please do have that building on our western side stay in our CRA control. Thank you very much. And Commissioner Sarnoff and I went to the Ward Rooming House and we made the recommendation, and maybe we can get them to move to the firehouse if their punishment period is over.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: We don't want to give them too much space.

Ms. Burns: And your name for the record, please, sir.

Chair Spence-Jones: Your name for the record.

Mr. Joseph: I'm sorry. Fred Joseph, 1717 North Bayshore Drive, Omni Advisory Board.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. All right. Let's move on -- just real quickly, I know that Commissioner Sanchez has to leave. We only have three other discussion items, which were very quick items.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. 08-01337

CRA DISCUSSION

A DISCUSSION REGARDING THE CREATION OF ADDITIONAL GREEN SPACE IN THE CRA AREAS.

Cover Memo.pdf

DISCUSSED

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. We're going to move into discussion item number 8, which is not a lot to discuss, unless you guys have any comments. But Commissioner Sarnoff, since we basically share the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) district, I had asked for Jim to come up with some sort of green space plan for any open, vacant lots, any areas that we could put tot lots or domino parks, whatever, to increase the green in -- throughout the CRA. Those are small things that we can do right now to enhance how the place looks from a green perspective. And I just wanted to make sure I had the support of all of the CRA board members on putting together a green space plan.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Jim, that'll be based on some privately held land?

James H. Villacorta (Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): There are some private landowners that have offered to let us incorporate their properties into tot lots and domino parks or other green spaces and mini parks, you know, with conditions that when they're ready to develop, that they would take the land back or in exchange for us allowing them to do something else.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I want to make sure -- 'cause we're actually doing that in District 2 with a very large piece of property -- or trying to -- on Brickell Bay -- I guess it's Brickell Drive, but I think it's the most eastern part. And I just -- I'm curious what -- I hope we all get this on the same page with what these building requirements are because sometimes they can be quite onerous on the City and sometimes, you know, they can be very good deals. I -- this goes to sort of our issue that we created, Commissioner Jones [sic], and that was we tried to get vacant property owners to maintain their properties in a park-like manner, and we've had some success. If we get who we want under our belt this week, it will be a major success. Unfortunately, when lawyers get involved, a two-page agreement has become a thirty-six-page agreement, and some things that were never even contemplated are now apparently on the drawing board. So I guess the devil's in the details, but obviously, pocket parks and parks and green space always make your city more livable, more inhabitable, and always promotes a better quality of life. How we can encourage people to do it really shouldn't be -- you think about it, it really should be just a good deed that you do, something that's just as easy to maintain it in a park-like manner than it is in a decrepit manner. And you would think people's sense of purpose and sense of obligation and sense of social contract that they would want to do this. But I know that the CRA -- and I think this is where you're going to go with this -- should create some sort of a program and maybe even some capital contributions towards doing it because any time you can create a tot lot for a parent to bring her kid, child, nephew, niece, grandchild, you know, you create a good part of somebody's day that they may not have had otherwise, and they may not go out to a park or a green space 'cause they may not want to walk the distance required to get to a, you know, more usable city park.

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: So I laud this as a great idea. I just hope we all stay on the same page on requirements. I'd hate to see us kind of crosstalk against each other.

Chair Spence-Jones: Commissioner Regalado, you have a comment?

Commissioner Regalado: I think -- you know, on a perfect world, what we would do on these empty lots will be a garden for the community. You know, several suburban community are doing this, and the community itself take care of growing vegetables and they share. Of course, we have a situation now where the pressure is so much because of bad economy that these won't even be able to get off the ground because people would just come and take whatever they want. But I am sure that what you're trying to do, what you have proposed and what Commissioner Sarnoff has always pushed is something that brings pride to the rest of the community. And I'm sure that - - you know, the only thing that we need to do is sign an agreement, sign a contract with the resident, nonbinding, but it's a contract with you, with the resident saying, you know, we are going to support that. We're going to maintain, we're going to water, we're going to call the City if a car goes into the flowerpots. It's a sense of community. It's a sense of pride, and I think it's a great idea. I just hope that we can do it, and I just hope that -- and you know, Madam Chair, as the area Commissioner, you know, it would be great to sign this contract with the resident, you know, so they can feel part of their green space because everybody love green space --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Regalado: -- you know. There's no one in the world that doesn't like

green space, so it's a sense of pride to me, and I just hope that if we do it, we have way to maintain it. That's all --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Regalado: -- that I think we should do. Thank you.

Chair Spence-Jones: Let me just add quickly, and then we can move on to -- and thank you for your support on the discussion on this item. There's two things. One, it's not - our focus is definitely to identify, Jim, new spaces, but also to enhance the current spaces that we have in the -- in our areas, our parks. I know, for instance, in the Overtown area on 3rd Avenue, the community, Commissioner Regalado, has been working for the last few months putting together a charrette and redesigning the Gibson Park facility because of the fact that whatever dollars went into that park and whatever contractors were handling it in the beginning was all patchwork. So we were able to identify additional financial support to really put together a new building and really create a larger space that will accommodate the community and that's what we're working on, and hopefully, Jim can bring it to the next Commission [sic] meeting to enhance the existing green spaces. There's also spaces owned by government and other larger entities, like the railroad. What is the -- FEC (Florida East Coast) corridor off of -- what is that, the railroad that connect between --?

Unidentified Speaker: First.

Chair Spence-Jones: First. And for us, it's horrible that you have to cross the tracks and it looks so bad, you know. And we've been trying to get them to become more engaged -- and I understand that they're focused on, you know, trying to put together this major redevelopment kind of plan for transportation, but in the meantime, the people living there, that should be a nice, green walkway. So those kind of things that we can do to enhance the area, it sends a positive message to the residents that we do care about what the area looks like, and those are things that a small, infrastructure-based projects or small projects that could just enhance the area for both sides of the track. So those are the kind of things that I'm hoping that Jim can come back to the table and say here's a green space plan for 1st Ave, here's a -- even in the Park West area, off of -- right in front of the Miami Arena, all of those beautiful palm trees that we have. All of our greenways and -- that -- it should be beautiful, especially in the CRA. If nothing else, we should be able to plant a plant and keep it clean. So these are the kind of things that I really want to see happen as a part of us -- our green initiative from the CRA, and it should -- we should get with our PR (Public Relations) folks, Creative Ideas, to come up with something that really focuses on us trying to green the CRA. So that's really what it was all about in the very beginning was to make sure that I had the support of my fellow colleagues that you're okay with us having, you know, that initiative to make it green. I mean, you're putting bigger trees in, that's a part of it, but we still need also additional things to kind of happen in the overall area.

9. 08-01338

CRA DISCUSSION

A DISCUSSION REGARDING THE NEED FOR A SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT CENTER.

Cover Memo.pdf

DISCUSSED

Direction by Commissioner Regalado to the Interim Executive Director to research the establishment and funding possibilities of a small business economic stimulus program in the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) area.

Direction by Chair Spence-Jones to the Interim Executive Director to coordinate a

meeting with Leroy Jones, Cece Holloman, and Chelsa Arscott to create a business support system that will enhance the existing program already established in the CRA.

Direction by Chair Spence-Jones to the Assistant General Counsel to request that the General Counsel be present at the next CRA meeting, currently scheduled for December 15, 2008.

Direction by Vice Chair Sarnoff to the Interim Executive Director to provide the list of abandoned properties to the City Attorney and request that she give a report at the next CRA meeting with the status of each property on the list.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, so I'm going to move to number 9, and then that'll be it on the discussions, and then, if there's any comments from the public, we'll take a few of those, and then we'll officially close out and say Happy Thanksgiving. Item number 9 was a discussion.

James H. Villacorta (Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): A discussion about -- concerning the need for a small business assistance center in the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency). We've had a number of businesses or potential businesses come to us. They are conversant with how to write grant applications or they need assistance in preparing proposals. They need the basics. They need access to a fax machine and a computer. At a meeting today, some of the businesses were talking about how their garbage pickup isn't coming on a regular basis. Companies that are licensed to do business in the City are neglecting the businesses --

Chair Spence-Jones: Overtown.

Mr. Villacorta: -- in Overtown, and they thought they could just, you know, drop that carrier and switch to a different garbage service, but there's issues where if you don't provide the proper notice to the service that they've breached their contract, they will continue to bill you and enforce a lien against your property and show up and take your equipment, your cars. And they need this sort of counseling to know how to do some of those business activities in a manner that won't get them into more trouble.

Commissioner Regalado: Well, I think it's a great idea, but I think we should do a little more. I -- Commissioner Sarnoff asked a proponent -- he had come and object, and we have seen that, you know, everybody shows up in Washington with a tin cup but in a limo and a jet. And what we have here is, number one, small business that are really struggling because, you know, always in bad economy, the little people always get screw. And the bad things start not from the top but from the bottom. And I think that this project is a great idea, but I do think that we should create an economic stimulus program for the small businesses. I remember that we implemented that in District 4 five years ago when we had a grant from Community Development, and through the CAMACOL (Latin Chamber of Commerce), what we did is we were able to grant \$5,000 to a small business in the Southwest 8th Street corridor and in Flagler corridor, and what this \$5,000 did, it was -- okay, you have an established business, so what do you need? Well, my freezer is down and I really don't have the money to buy a new freezer. Okay, let's go together and buy a freezer and we're going to pay for it. We did not give [sic] them the money to pay for salaries nor to pay for inventory, but equipment, you know, a new bell for the cafeteria, which the city told them that they have to do it. It was very expensive, so we gave them this small grant. This not only kept them working but gave them the sense that they were being supported by the government, that we did not want them to go out of business. And now -- you know, I was really shock -- I shouldn't be, but I was, when I was introduced to the lady that brought the shrimps [sic] and the conch. And she crossed the street, she walk, and you know, and I was talking to you and said, were -- can we help them with bars so she won't have any other break-in? Can we help in buying the new air conditioner because she doesn't have air conditioner because they have taken the air conditioner three times. And she said, I just bought a new unit, but it's inside. And you know, it's important that in this

times when people are out of their jobs, when the perception is that you cannot spend money because you don't know what next week is going to bring, that we come to the aid of the small business and say well, you know, okay, we want to bring Marshalls and Sears and Publix to Overtown, that would be great, but now we have Two Brothers [sic] and she's -- you know, she said to me that she had to come from her home every night because the police called them because there was a break-in. So my proposal to you all -- and I think that we have some money available -- can we bring something in the next month meeting in terms of small business economic stimulus program? I think it's important. I think that we can rally the people around this project. I think it would be money that will be spent because it will send a message that you're not alone, that, you know, we're trying to do something for you. Please hold on. Things will be better, times will be better in the future. So, I mean, that's a thought and I tell you, it worked very well in the Southwest 8th Street corridor. In fact, because of a new freezer or a new state-of-the-art kitchen, some of these small cafeterias -- and mind you, we have, on our district, from 27th to the Palmetto Expressway -- 372 small businesses on that Southwest 8th Street corridor alone. And these people kept employees because they thought, oh, we're getting a new -- and now that we were able to get the -- because we push and push and push to get the census bureau to waive the so-called 51 percent poverty level requirement, we will be able to do a façade program in Southwest 8th Street and Flagler, and even in Coral Way. So I just hope that we can use the money, and I know that money is short because, you know, we don't want to be like Congress, you know, another trillion, another trillion, another trillion. But if we can only set aside some money to try this stimulus, I think, you know, it may not be front-page news, but it certainly will be a lot of help to a few people that are thinking whether or not they can make it to the next month in their payments. So if you allow me, Madam Chair, can we --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Commissioner Regalado: -- ask the executive director to bring back for discussion that possibility and see -- the funding possibility?

Chair Spence-Jones: Sure, Commissioner Regalado. Actually, what we will do is probably enhance the existing program that we have I know that's already happening in the CRA. Most of the funding that we have provided for the small businesses has been really for the façade and the enhancement-based stuff. But we also do have dollars and provide dollars for things like your refrigerator and your cooler. And many of the businesses that are sitting in here -- and I'm looking in the audience and I see most of them -- all of them have received funding for the inside of their businesses for those kind of things, Two Guys being one of them. I know that they've received monies for equipment and additional things like this in the past. But now that we are enhancing 3rd Avenue and really getting people prepared for the growth, there's going to be an additional step that's needed to assist them with that growth because they're used to a certain number of people coming in the business. Now they're going to have an expanded group of people may now -- coming to the area because of all of the improvements that we've done. And they have to be prepared for that type of growth. But the only thing that I'm going to recommend and I -- for all the funding and stuff that we have coming from the CRA, I'm expecting all of them to go through some sort of training program -- and Jessica's been working with us for all of the agreements that we have regarding the -- that -- for the new businesses and the existing businesses that we provide funding for is to provide them with training 'cause we want them to be able to be self-sustainable and not just constantly give. And then, if I'm not here, you're not here, or whatever, the CRA's not here, then we really haven't really prepared them for growth. So that's one of the things that we're requiring. Whatever we give, there's some sort of training program, very similar to what Leroy does, maybe on a condensed -- Leroy Jones does with NANA (Neighbors and Neighbors and Association) -- and he's someone that I'd like for Chelsa, which [sic] is working on that, along with Jim, to also work along with Cece Holloman 'cause they're doing a great job in the West Grove area to come up with a business support center that will provide, yes, these stimulus-based grants in there, but if they're going to get these stimulus-based grants, they have to go

through a four-week or five-week training or something along that line so that we really prepare them for growth and for the future. So I think the existing program we have, we can expand on that and make that happen, but if you can't -- based on what Commissioner Regalado's -- has requested, Jim, come back to bring -- and bring at the next CRA meeting how you plan on doing what they've done already on -- in Little Havana.

Commissioner Regalado: But -- and if I may?

Chair Spence-Jones: Sure.

Commissioner Regalado: And I know what we have and I know what we have done. But the reason for the word "stimulus" is because we are going through extraordinary times --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Commissioner Regalado: -- and the perception in the business community is that the small business are being abandoned by government.

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Regalado: And you know, they see, well, big business, you know, Citigroup and General Motors bailouts, you know, but if we were to implement a pilot (UNINTELLIGIBLE) or whatever, it is important to send the message --

Chair Spence-Jones: Oh, yeah, by all means.

Commissioner Regalado: -- that it -- that the government is there to support, that the government wish them to remain, that the government is asking them to fight on, to hold on because there will be better times. So I think it's nothing new, but it's something additional to bring back the faith in government that some of these people have lost because they have seen that things are happening so quick and so drastic, so that's what the whole idea, if you can --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: If you could, Jim -- I mean, I see this maybe slightly differently and maybe we can incorporate it into the same thought. Obviously, everybody's looking for a place, a place that they can go in and learn something new. And while I certainly support small business, I think you also have to look at technical assistance to make people even employable because many of the folks out there may have felony convictions that could be cleared up, that could be expunged, or that could be sealed; many of them don't have resumes, they don't have a place to create a resume. They really don't have the technical understanding of what it is to get up early in the morning and go to work. And while it's nice and interesting and purposeful to fund small businesses, even in good times, 92 percent of all small businesses fail, so that's going into no wind at all. Can you imagine going into a headwind now with the economy the way it is and trying to set sail and say I'm going to be -- it's got to be more than -- it's got to be probably 95 percent of all businesses will fail. Yet, all of us want a job. We all want a job. We all want to be compensated, and we all want to work. And you know, as much as we want to work in a small business, sometimes a big employer -- and we need to attract them, and I know you are attracting them, but it's the bigger employer that's going to provide health insurance. It's the bigger employer that's going to provide dental insurance. It's the bigger employer that's going to provide the things that you really attribute to a job, and they're the ones that, if you work long enough, you may get a 401k. It's very tough on small businesses to really focus on those things. So one of the things I'd like to bring to this place, this place that we'll call a better life that we'll create here on -- in this district should be technical assistance on simply to get a job, on how to get a job, on how to appear at a job interview. What does an employer expect out of you? What should your resume show? What can we clean up from your past that doesn't need to be reflected today? You could be very employable

having spent some time away and having learned some good lessons there, but to the -
- to an employer seeing that or hearing it and not hearing it the right way, he may not
even consider you. I mean, our NANA friend, he's -- what would he be like five, ten
years ago? Yet he's very employable today. So instead of necessarily only focusing on
small businesses, which is a lot of fund to talk up here as an elected official and say
let's support some small businesses, I think sometimes you got to get to the
fundamentals. And I think the fundamentals in this area really could use a real
clean-up, and that is just simply teaching people what it is and what employers expect
out of you, and getting some really fundamental technical assistance in this place that
we'll call opportunity. 'Cause maybe that's what we should call it, the Opportunity
House. You know, maybe that's what it should be for us here. So if that's a little bit of
a twist -- it's a little bit of a spin away from small businesses, I do apologize. But on
the other hand, some of the things that you and I look for are really -- they come from
bigger employers, and I think you'll meet more people -- I think your strained dollars
will go much further if we just get some good old-fashioned technical assistance or
just good old-fashioned common sense out there. Get somebody in there who can run
this program, clean up some resumes, clean up some records and teach people some
basic skills as to what employers need. Thank you.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right. So, Jim, do you want to add --?

Commissioner Regalado: You know, whatever helps helps, but you know, 82 percent
of all businesses in the United States have less than 50 employees, and that's the
reality. And I --

Chair Spence-Jones: So no Joe the Plumbers --

Commissioner Regalado: -- do agree --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- here, right?

Commissioner Regalado: Huh?

Chair Spence-Jones: No Joe the Plumbers here.

Commissioner Regalado: Well, I mean, Joe the Plumber was trying to convey a
message that he wanted to have a small business --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Commissioner Regalado: -- and everybody has -- wants to have a small business. I
mean, you know, to me the American Dream is for people to be independent and that's
what people want to be. I mean, I always worked for a company, radio and TV
(Television), but I think -- I have seen many, many, many small business owners that
are proud of what they built --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Regalado: -- are proud of even the hardship that they have to go
through to support them. So I mean, it's great. Your idea is great. My idea is
(UNINTELLIGIBLE). But still, we should try. We should try all avenues. I mean, it
doesn't --

Chair Spence-Jones: And maybe the support center can be a combination of both
because the reality is, you know, even those individuals, these small businesses that
have to hire people from the neighborhood, they want to also send their people that
they want to hire through some sort of training or some sort of job readiness, so it
could be a job readiness program that small businesses can offer to their employees. I
think the whole purpose of the business support center in the very beginning and the
thought was -- Actually, Reverend Willie Williams, his place, as the chairperson and the

president of the merchants association on 3rd Avenue, people already come to his facility or his barbershop to fax and use the Internet. And you know, he's opened his doors to do that and that's been great, but the reality is now that the -- we're talking about at least in the next year we're going to have eight new -- eight or nine new businesses coming to the area and all twenty of them can't come to Reverend Williams' barbershop to say Rev, can I use the fax machine. So you know, eventually, we want to get them to the point they have their own fax machines in their facility. And I think that a business support center should -- we should not go into it saying that it's going to be there five years. It's a pilot program to see how well it does, how well it works, and if they want that stimulus grant, they have to come to the business support center to know what they need to do to put their paperwork in order. They should have a business plan in place. So the business support center should work with them on it --

Commissioner Regalado: Look what CAMACOL did was train them --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Commissioner Regalado: -- as to what they need. No, I need a plasma TV. No, you don't. You need a new kitchen because yours is 12 years old. And you know, and let me explain to you and you have to fill this paperwork. Do you have credit? Do you have collateral? Do you have this and do you have that? And they did that.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: But just as importantly, you know, some of the folks out there have never sat down on a computer screen.

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: And you know, a check-in clerk for Home Depot -- not one of my favorite people, but -- has to know how to use a computer. There's almost nothing today that you can do that at some point somebody doesn't ask you to punch in on a computer. And some folks out there are not comfortable even turning one on, let alone does anybody know what logging in means. That's -- I think that's the level you're at. By the way, I've been in small business for 25 years. I'm ready to go big employer.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Jim, before we open up to the floor -- and I'm going to ask my senior -- my -- the person that actually started -- wanted to hit the mike first, if you can at least give him the opportunity to speak first, Grady, I greatly would appreciate it 'cause he was the first one to step up to the mike, and then you can just join him right after that. But Jim, do you want to put anything on the record before we do that?

Mr. Villacorta: I just -- we do have an existing business grant program for businesses on 3rd Avenue that have been -- that meet certain criteria and we can -- there's still funding left in that we can look at, you know, making some alterations to that because you had to be in business three years --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Mr. Villacorta: -- and various other criteria. Also, the next -- the agenda for the next meeting -- the next meeting was moved up --

Chair Spence-Jones: I know.

Mr. Villacorta: -- because of the holidays, so the agenda for the next meeting has already been set, but I'll work to bring these back in January.

Commissioner Regalado: Okay.

Commissioner Sarnoff: Pocket item.

Mr. Villacorta: I have to (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Chair Spence-Jones: Just want to add, though, Chelsa -- if Chelsa can raise her hand. In our last meeting, we requested that Jim identify someone to work along with the businesses and the institutes that we have created to make sure there is a solid program --

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- put in place, so that is up and running. And the only thing that I requested for Jim, while I know Overtown needs a lot of support and the CRA has been doing a wonderful job, many of the businesses in the Omni CRA area and around the Performing Arts Center need the same type of support. And there's more money actually in his district than it is mine, so I would really want to make sure that there's a drive -- especially all those little restaurants that are around the PAC (Performing Arts Center) area, they need help, you know.

Mr. Villacorta: Sure.

Chair Spence-Jones: But there's not that outreach happening with them. Like I'm out on the streets everyday on 3rd Avenue making sure we do whatever we need to do in here in Overtown because I know they need the extra help. But people assume just because they're by the Performing Arts Center, you know, that they're doing okay, which is not -- which is really not the case. So I just want to make sure now that we have that business person in place, that kind of outreach happens so that they have programs made available to them as well.

Mr. Villacorta: Sure.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay?

Mr. Villacorta: Yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: I'm sorry. And we're going to open up the floor. I just wanted to make sure you had the opportunity to speak first. Each person has at least two minutes. We're going to officially close out the meeting after that.

L. F. Ricks: My name is L. F. Ricks. I live at 1161 Northwest 1st Place. My complaint is about 1149 1st Place.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Ricks: This house have caught on fire three times and I can't get nothing did about my house. It was almost set on fire last night; done broke out all my windows.

Chair Spence-Jones: And this is the house that we talked about that burned down earlier.

Mr. Ricks: Yes. I have three properties there and all of them done got (UNINTELLIGIBLE) from the fire, from the heat. All the windows is gone on one side of my building.

Chair Spence-Jones: Well, we are definitely -- I know that the executive director is working on that, and I can tell you -- what's your name, sir, again?

Mr. Ricks: L. F. Ricks.

Chair Spence-Jones: Mr. Fritz [sic], I can tell you --

Mr. Ricks: Ricks, R-I-C-K-S.

Chair Spence-Jones: Ricks, okay. I can tell you personally that we have been out there, have called every City department that was necessary to call before that house even burnt, even the last time, and I'm telling you -- and this is what I'm speaking of when I start telling you about foreclose project -- properties and all these different things that need to be knocked down, okay, so -- this is an issue. Here's a senior that's living next door -- that fire could have easily spread to them, and where are they going to go from here?

Mr. Villacorta: It melted the windows on the south side of his building and burned the eaves.

Mr. Ricks: The air conditions -- all the air conditions (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Mr. Villacorta: The --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Commissioner Sarnoff has made a suggestion. Madam City Attorney from -- Gail Dotson, is there any way that we can have the City Attorney -- he'd like to have the City Attorney, Julie Bru, attend the next meeting so that we can begin to deal with -- to address these type of issues that are actually happening. Also, I think -- is it Building or which department were you not getting a response from too, Jim, for the abandoned, vacant properties?

Mr. Villacorta: We've been meeting with them. They've been fining the properties and opening cases on them, but there's a process where, you know, they notify them, then they get so long to correct the problem, then it gets scheduled onto a hearing and it seems to take six months.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Jim, get the list that you prepared for my chief of staff --

Mr. Villacorta: Okay.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- give it to Julie Bru, ask her to come to the next Commission [sic] meeting to find out what the status on each one of those properties is or are, whatever the right word is --

Mr. Villacorta: Okay.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: -- and then let's find out what we can do in the future. And then we have the new ordinance from -- that we just passed recently that will trump the first mortgage holder, which nobody will ever let themselves get trumped, and let's start making sure that we're using all of those notices in this CRA area. That's new. That's only about six weeks, seven weeks old.

Chair Spence-Jones: And Madam City Attorney, I want to make -- I don't want to bypass you because you are our official representative from the City Attorney's Office. Is there any way that you can at least work along with Jim to make sure that we have that information at the next meeting?

Gail A. Dotson (Assistant General Counsel): Yes. And we should also get the City Manager's Office involved as well because it's more --

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Bring him here.

Ms. Dotson: -- of a business decision. A lot of these have been business decisions, so you need the Administration here as well --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, so we need to have --

Ms. Dotson: -- involved.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- somebody from the Manager's office. That's a very good suggestion, and we will do that. We will make sure that we address the issue, sir.

Mr. Ricks: All right. Thank you kindly.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Thank you for coming out. Okay, Reverend Williams.

Willie Williams: Good afternoon, Commissioners. I just want to say hello to you, and you're doing an excellent job in this community, especially to our Commissioner, Ms. -- Commissioner Jones [sic]. My com -- not complaint, but I stand, you know, in the -- on the behalf of the Overtown Merchants Alliance, who -- which -- whom have been here for -- since 1995. I am the founder of it, but yet and still, every time we begin to get strong, someone come and dangle money in front of our members and bring them right back out and tie up their time and tie up their -- all of the energy that they do not have time to come back and strengthen what we already have. I'm asking -- this is the best time --

Chair Spence-Jones: There's a lot of noise in the house. Can we please quiet down inside?

Mr. Williams: -- ever to strengthen what we have started since 1995 in this community. This community need their own. The Overtown Merchants Alliance been here since 1995. We have the expertise and we have the power, we have the energy. And if we have to bring in technical assistance from the outside, we're willing to do it in order to give ourself [sic] a name that has been here for a long time. Now I'm a person -- I believe in hanging in there and doing what I'm supposed to do because my family started that same barbershop where we're in and that -- what you spoke of earlier, 1950. We've been here in the same place since 1950, and we thank the CRA for helping us look a little better than what we was. And I came in 1983 and took the business over and bought -- you know, took it to another level and purchased the building. So now it always been in -- on my heart since 1983 that we need to start something among the businesses in the area, and I came up with the Overtown Merchants Alliance in 1995. And now that we're here, I hear -- I see a spark. I see the energy here again. Commissioner Regalado, I thank you for, you know, what you're doing here, and all of the Commissioners as well. But we need to go 'head [sic] and strengthen that Overtown Merchants Alliance. We have an agenda. We have the expertise here as well, and we have the support, and all we need is your lead to making sure that we have everything that we need in order to make this a success.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, Reverend Williams, and we are definitely going to support the Merchants Alliance because we think that it's important. This is not about the CRA or any of us running any of the programs or anything that's going on on 3rd Avenue, any of the businesses. The idea is for us to provide you with the technical assistance and the support to get you to the point that you can stand on your own without having the CRA there. So hopefully now you have a great street, you have businesses that are there that are getting -- finally getting the kind of support -- new businesses coming in. So now you have the critical mass that's necessary to attract the people to get people to stay and be a part of it. But the staff -- Jim, I just want to make sure that -- and I know really it's going to be Chelsa that's really going to be focusing a lot of her energies on working along with you guys to reestablish that to make sure it's running the way you need for it to run.

Grady Muhammad: Grady Muhammad --

Chair Spence-Jones: Make sure you're timing, Madam Clerk.

Mr. Muhammad: -- 1730 Northwest Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 201. I concur with both of you all. First we need a stimulus for the businesses specifically, and a stimulus is just that, a stimulus to stimulate the businesses. And Commissioner Regalado -- Commissioner Sarnoff, without question -- we're talking about jobs. I go back to what I

read in the Miami New -- Today, when our CRA director talked about the 10,000 jobs. Well, there's about roughly 8,000 people in Overtown, but despite the jobs --

Chair Spence-Jones: Let me correct you on that 'cause that's -- it's 19,000 people in Overtown.

Mr. Muhammad: Nineteen thousand.

Chair Spence-Jones: Nineteen.

Mr. Muhammad: At 19,000, even with the 10,000 jobs, business owners, hoteliers, not the developers, are going to actually be doing the hiring of those residents or potential residents. And if Overtown residents has, whether it's crime, drugs, mental health problems and all of those things, and when these jobs and these projects are coming out, we need to be doing what Commissioner Sarnoff said. We need to be training them. It's going to cost \$75 to get their -- get them listed off of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. 'Cause if you get it sealed or expunged, if you don't pay the \$75 to Florida Department of Law Enforcement, it'll still be, when they Google you, in the database. If you pay that, then when they -- when you Google you and/or if they ask you if you ever been arrested, you literally can be able to say no because they won't be able to find no records to that, and I think that's what we have to do on both ends. And to the business center, we have to ensure -- we have Park West. We have the Downtown Development Authority. We've already worked with Overtown through the Miami Downtown -- Downtown Miami Partnership. I think we must work with the Beacon Council to market 3rd Avenue, market businesses since they're the official economic development agency. I think we need to start maximizing funds using other entities that have funds to be able to do this, and I think we have a -- create a potential win-win partnership. Thank you.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, Brother Grady.

Charles Cutler: Charles Cutler, Overtown resident. I want to talk a little bit about the job creation piece. I think that we're missing out on a tremendous opportunity in terms of actually creating jobs for Overtown residents. There's a lot of projects that we're doing through the CRA and a lot of projects that we're doing through the City of Miami. And one of the main initiatives coming from Washington is jobs because without jobs, you're not going to be able to pay no rent, you're not going to be able to buy no house. You're not going to even be able to eat. So I think that we need to put -- we need to have a job creation program either working in concert with the Hospitality Institute and -- so that it will allow us to gain access to all of the contractors that do business within the CRA. Now we was able to get some people working on the 3rd Avenue streetscape project from Overtown residents, and a couple of those people are here today. And that is a very difficult chore. That's why, Commissioner Sarnoff, you hit the nail right on the head. We had to actually take the people from Overtown all the way out to West Hialeah just so that they can do the applications before they could even qualify to go to work. So they're going to definitely -- there's definitely a missing link. And in terms of the actual employment opportunities, we've got to be able to get an opportunity to talk with these contractors before they get the contracts because I know there is nothing legally that we can do in terms of set asides, even the first-source hiring agreement. But they need to understand that in this community we're trying to do some things different. We're trying to create a new mold, something that's going to be beneficial for a community -- and Overtown is really not that big. So the only thing we're asking is that they come to the table, listen to what we're planning to do, as leadership and as the community, and what we're actually saying to them is will you help us. And if you can help us, we'll put together a system to facilitate because, just like with Jackson Soul Food, it's working out. We've got some people going over to get some jobs over there tomorrow.

Chair Spence-Jones: How many new jobs is Jackson hiring?

Mr. C. Cutler: They're going -- around 20.

Chair Spence-Jones: That's a lot of jobs --

Mr. C. Cutler: Because they're opening up --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- all because of this new restaurant.

Mr. C. Cutler: -- two different shifts. But my problem is, you got to have some -- somebody's going to stay up on top of this because we just passed a \$4 million road project that's going to be happening over in the Omni, but if you don't actually facilitate this thing, the opportunity will go right through the window and we'll totally miss our target. And I'm not saying take everybody from Overtown and put them on a job, you know, one or two on this job; one or two on that job; two or three on that job; one over here and one over there, and it will make a tremendous impact. And the only thing that we want you to know is that we really do appreciate what y'all are doing, and I pray for y'all because, I'm telling, I know it's not easy. And one time I thought I wanted to be a Commissioner, but not no more.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, Charles.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: Well, Mr. Cutler --

Pamela E. Burns (Assistant Clerk of the Board): Sir, your two minutes are up.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, Charles Cutler. We got your point. And basically, Charles point is we need to make sure if we're going to be stimulating these businesses and creating, you know, opportunities for them -- and Commissioner Regalado has pushed this from day one since I've been sitting on the CRA Board -- is to make sure jobs actually come from the neighborhood and that these contractors actually hire local people. And I think that we have done a better job, but can we do better? Yes. We can do better than what we have been doing. And I know that Jim has been working hard to do that, to make sure people get placed.

Mr. C. Cutler: But we're going to definitely have to have somebody on the ground to facilitate the process so that when they come in, they just won't be sticking stuff upside of the wall and saying we've done what we're supposed to do and then don't get out to the public, nobody even know what's going on. Then when you look up at the job that the public has been anticipating it, then they don't see nobody in their community working on the job.

Vice Chair Sarnoff: We need to create an opportunity center right here where you could simply just fax out your resume, learn how to create a resume, learn how to get on a typewriter, learn how to get on a computer, technical assistance. It should be there. It should be open. It should be available to the community. Change is here. If you're not a part of that change --

Mr. C. Cutler: I like that. Thank you, Commissioners. God bless.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, too, Charles. Cutler number two.

Anthony Cutler: Cutler number two. First of all, happy holidays to, you know, everybody. My name is Anthony Cutler. You know, point of information. It was some items that was -- came up and the Board apparently ratified them, but then shouldn't the community voice before the ratification process is done to actually assist the Board in making a conscious decision for the best interest of the community?

Chair Spence-Jones: Let me just add to you one of the things that came up from the discussion, if you were all the way with us -- maybe you weren't in the room -- was one -- from at least two or three of the Commissioners here, they communicated if it's not

in writing, meaning if it's not something that's being brought up that's actually is a part of the legislation, then we're not addressing it, we're not ratifying anything. It is only what is being presented to us today that we will actually approve. So what you've asked for is exactly what we did today.

Mr. A. Cutler: Well, with taking the public input when the items is discussed is what my concern was, you know, because, like I said, it help the Commissioners and the Board make a conscious decision, and that's all -- see, 'cause right now, if the community wanted to say something about those projects that's passed, you have to go through a process now to even try to correct it, so like I said, it was just point of information.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. A. Cutler: Thank you very much.

Chair Spence-Jones: Well taken. Point well taken, Charles [sic] -- I mean, Anthony.

Gerald Muhammad: Good evening. Gerald Muhammad, 935 Northwest 3rd Avenue, here in Overtown, also a business owner at Gerald's Graphics and Printing at the same address. First of all, I want to thank Commissioner Jones [sic] for the work that's in -- on the 3rd Avenue. I was a part of the streetscape, which it looks marvelous on my opinion. Two things. One, we're in full support, the business owners, of the small business center. Yes, we do need a center to support the businesses and the community residents, and also the economic stimulus that Commissioner Regalado brought. I think that's very important. You have some businesses in Overtown, as you know, that's been in business for over 20 years, 30 years, and the statistic that you brought up, Commissioner Sarnoff, we've been -- the small businesses in Overtown on 3rd Avenue have been very successful, with no help from the CRA, and -- but that needs to change.

Mr. Villacorta: If I --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, let's collect -- correct that now.

Mr. Villacorta: -- might interrupt.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Well, it's changing.

Mr. Villacorta: Gerald's Graphic has received \$25,000 in grants --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Villacorta: -- from the CRA.

Chair Spence-Jones: All right.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: And that was three years ago, and that was --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: -- equipment, and Mr. Villacorta --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, okay, guys --

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: -- yes.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- let's -- let me just say something to you, Gerald. First of all, let's allow for the public to communicate 'cause they have the right to communicate. That's number one. Number two, but, Gerald, also, at the same time, you have to

realize that when you speak about the CRA, you're speaking about a group of people that are sitting over there you know that work relentlessly in trying to make sure that the businesses receive something. So just make sure that when you put a fact on it is the -- add all of the details to the fact.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Yes, ma'am.

Chair Spence-Jones: You have received it, but it's been three years.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Right, and we were a part in initiating that grant --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, but just, you know -- do you understand his point, though?

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Without question.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay, all right.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: I know Jim very well. Now, but I must admit, though, there -- I'm not the only business -- I'm one of the new businesses that's been there for 12 years. You have Two Guys that's been in business and you have the barbershop; you have Jackson Soul Food. You have several other businesses that's been in businesses for over 40 years. They haven't received any assistance. I know Two Guys and Jackson have, but I want to just make --

Mr. Villacorta: I can go down the list, if you'd like.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: I don't mean to be contentious. However --

Chair Spence-Jones: Just go ahead and put your point --

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Yes, ma'am.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- on the record.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: The CRA --

Chair Spence-Jones: What would you like to see? Would you like to see the --

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: I would like to see --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- economic stimulus --

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Yes, ma'am.

Chair Spence-Jones: -- business program 'cause you feel that it's important to have that happen.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: Right, and Overtown Merchants Alliance, which Willie have been working relentlessly, he need support. And I appreciate the work that's going on right now, the way that 3rd Avenue and the way the CRA is working. I know how hard they work. But family, this is an area that the CRA was created to change --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: -- so let's keep that in mind. And I don't mean to be argumentative, but I do appreciate the work, but I want to just encourage them to keep up the good work, especially Commissioner Jones [sic], Commissioner Regalado --

Chair Spence-Jones: All of us.

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: -- and Commissioner Sarnoff, and thank you again.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you for your --

Mr. Gerald Muhammad: That's it.

Mr. Villacorta: And staff.

Chair Spence-Jones: Last two comments and then we're going to close out.

Sonny Wright: Good evening. My name is Sonny Wright, and I want to congratulate all of you, Commissioner Jones [sic] and Commissioner Sarnoff and Commissioner Regalado, for the effort and the energy that you exerted in Overtown. I think it's a good thing, and I think that now that you have started the engine running, that we need to join you and do whatever we can to make it basically all we want it to be. Very briefly, I have been in this community all of my life, and I have -- all my life meaning the last 50-some odd years. I came as a young man. And I operated a business on Northwest 3rd Avenue across from Mt. Zion Church. We bought a hotel, the Carver Hotel at one time. We -- I operated other businesses in the community. I'm presently now in the real estate business and so on and so forth, but that's not what it's all about. I came here to tell you that I think that what you're doing is good, and I had been like on the sidelines watching, looking, and I wanted to say to you that the sidelines is no place for me to be; it's no place for anybody to be. It's time now for all of us to get up and see what we can do to support you and maybe bring some new ideas and support the ones that you bring forth because Overtown really -- and I don't want to take more than my two minutes. But I've been here when Overtown was Overtown, when the stars from the Beach would come over and they would live here because they couldn't live on the Beach. And we'd walk down the street and you'd see Sammy Davis, Jr. and Nat King Cole. You've heard about those things; I lived through it. And what I'm saying is that I watched the demise of Overtown. I watched when the expressway came through and they took the houses. I watched when the urban renewal came through and they took the houses, took the businesses. So we have really not received our fair share of anything since I've been here. Now you're trying to make it where we can maybe come back and develop the community and help the people, and I'm saying to you that I'm all for it and to whatever extent that I can be a part of it, I'd like to be a part of it. So thank you very much and I look forward to seeing you again and working with you too. Good luck.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, Mr. Wright, for your comments. This is our last comment.

Mr. Villacorta: And if he has any pictures from the celebrities --

Chair Spence-Jones: Oh, if you have any old, historic pictures --

Mr. Villacorta: -- we'd like --

Chair Spence-Jones: -- that could be made available for CRA, they would like to -- Jim, just --

Mr. Wright: I wouldn't have any pictures. (INAUDIBLE).

Ms. Burns: I'm sorry. We need you on the microphone if you speak.

Chair Spence-Jones: That's okay. Okay.

Shirley Meadows: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Shirley Meadows from Two Guys Restaurant, 1205 Northwest 3rd Avenue. And first of all, I want to thank you for the water pressure that we're getting. It was very low before, but now we're getting good pressure. I want to say that I'm in a building where it's very deplorable

and been broken into six times for this year. And I'm just asking for some additional help because, as Gerald said that we had got help before, we had got help from the CRA once. We was awarded money before, but we didn't get it. So therefore, we're just asking for some additional help to carry on with our process that we are going through --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Ms. Meadows: -- and towards moving to our new location where we're supposed to be.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Ms. Meadows: Thank you very much.

Chair Spence-Jones: Thank you, Ms. Two Guys. All right. That concludes our evening and meeting. Any questions or comments from my fellow colleagues before we leave? If not, you guys have a wonderful, wonderful turkey day. Happy Thanksgiving, and I'll see you on December 5 [sic].

10. 08-01339

CRA DISCUSSION

UPDATE ON THE 3RD AVENUE STREETScape PROJECT.

DISCUSSED

Chair Spence-Jones: One, I want to just take number 10 first so that Commissioner Sanchez can depart us. Everyone should have a copy by now of the Overtown Folklife Festival, and it's really the grand opening celebration for 3rd Avenue. I don't know if you guys saw on the way coming in on 3rd Avenue, but there's so much happening on that street. The street is a beautiful street. People are very excited about the new trees, the lighting. I don't know if CIP (Capital Improvements Program) -- I don't know if our contractor's here, but we -- I just wanted to really acknowledge them and make sure that they understand how important -- for us all to understand how important it is for you to be there on December 5 as we actually not only tour all of 3rd Avenue and the businesses in the area, but we [sic] also going to tour all of the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) areas. So, especially for Commissioner Sarnoff, when we hit the Performing Arts area and the Omni area with the press and media, we'd like to definitely make sure you're a part of that media tour so that people actually see what the CRA's doing in the area. But we're extremely excited. The merchants are excited. The residents are very excited about what's happening in the area. And these are the kind of projects, infrastructure projects that we should have happening in neighborhoods. It's turning -- I mean, just the mindset of the people has totally changed regarding the issue of keeping the area nice. So I don't know if you have any comments on that. I just wanted to make sure I personally invite my fellow colleagues to take part of this because we all are responsible for what we see on 3rd Avenue. Do you have any questions or comments or confirmations that you'll be there with us on the 5th?

Vice Chair Sarnoff: I'll be there.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. Any comments? Okay.

Commissioner Sanchez: See you there.

James H. Villacorta (Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency): And on the 6th, the street's going to be closed down and there's going to be a concert and festival, and the public is invited to that --

Chair Spence-Jones: Yes.

Mr. Villacorta: -- as well as the ribbon-cutting on the 5th.

Chair Spence-Jones: Yeah. All of the activities are actually on here, and it's basically just to really bring some solid, positive attention to the Overtown area. We were having this annual event that takes place every December in the heart of Overtown in the street, so we just wanted to make sure everybody was a part of that.

Mr. Villacorta: And one other thing. Ms. Meadows of Two Guys commented on the increased water pressure and stability of her water service, which was part of that waterline that was added to the project --

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Villacorta: -- and --

Chair Spence-Jones: Very good, Jim.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS

NA.1 08-01450

CRA DISCUSSION

EXPRESSION OF APPRECIATION TO FREDERICK DOUGLASS
ELEMENTARY AND TWO GUYS RESTAURANT FOR THEIR SERVICES
AT TONIGHT'S MEETING.

DISCUSSED

Chair Spence-Jones: Let the record reflow [sic] we have -- reflect that we have Commissioner Regalado and Commissioner Sanchez, and I believe we have Commissioner Sarnoff on his way. But we do want to go ahead and get started because of so many items that we need to address. First of all, welcome to the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) meeting. Before we get started, I'd like to -- I don't know if there's any clear issues that the Clerk needs to put on the record before we get started.

Pamela E. Burns (Assistant Clerk of the Board): No, Madam Chair.

Chair Spence-Jones: Okay. All right, so we're going to go ahead and get started. Happy Thanksgiving to all. I want to say thank you to the school, Frederick Douglass, for hosting us. I don't know if the principal's here, but we want to thank her for hosting us. We'd like to also acknowledge a small business in the area that is providing you today -- tonight with some fried conch and shrimp from Two Guys Restaurant, so we want to acknowledge them. I don't know where the owner is, but she was here earlier.

Commissioner Regalado: Right there.

Chair Spence-Jones: If she can wave so you can see her. So when you come to Overtown the next time -- Two Guys, can you please stand -- please stop at her facility. The CRA has been very supportive. Let's give her a hand.

Applause.

Chair Spence-Jones: I've encouraged the CRA from now on that it's extremely important for us to support the local businesses in the area. When we're having these dinner breaks or, you know, the refreshments and stuff, we need to support the people that are right here in the neighborhood. It's extremely important to do that.