

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION/CRA WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**AUGUST 21, 2023**  
**4:30 P.M.**

This Commission Meeting was conducted utilizing Communications Media Technology. Some Staff members were present in the Commission Chambers while others were present via the Zoom application.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor  
Sheldon Jones, Vice-Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 1  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2  
Sunshine Mathews, Commissioner, Ward 2 (Present via ZOOM)  
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1  
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3 (Entered the meeting at 4:31 pm)

**STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney  
Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Edward Johnson, Interim CRA Director  
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director  
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police  
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk  
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant  
Cheryl Miller, Finance Director  
Matt Misco, Finance Manager  
Jenny Silverio, CRA Administrative/Compliance Coordinator

**STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:**

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Mayor Bryant opened the meeting at 4:30 pm.

1. **BUDGET DISCUSSION (J.FREEMAN/C.MILLER)**

Mr. Freeman recapped the previous budget discussions. Specifically, the fairs and festivals funding were highlighted. Mr. Freeman presented a word document with specific talking points based on previous discussions. The word document was included in the Minutes.

Commissioner Jones discussed with two volunteers on the Mainstreet Board, who don't believe they're equipped to run the multi-cultural festival and 4<sup>th</sup> of July event. According to Commissioner Jones, they don't feel comfortable with planning those events, as of right now. He opined that he agreed with Commissioner Cornwell to allocate the cost from the City to have the CRA staff continue running these two events for now.

Commissioner Williams wanted to make sure with the Attorney and Mr. Johnson that this would be allowed. Mr. Barnebey stated that the CRA should not be running the operation. They can participate as a sponsor. He emphasized that the actual operation question doesn't have to be addressed today. The CRA staff can operate as City employees. However, they would have to be supervised by City staff, not the CRA director. Commissioner

## **City Commission-CRA Workshop**

**August 21, 2023**

**Page 2 of 4**

Williams questioned what a sponsorship would include. Mr. Barnebey answered that they are allowed to sponsor an event based on disseminating information to promote the CRA. Commissioner Williams would like to see someone from the State Attorney's office or the FRA's Attorney give an official opinion on what they are planning to do before he votes for it. The only real question today is the budget portion of this topic. They can move forward with allocating funds and figure out the operation standpoint at a later date. Commissioner Williams thinks they should remove these events for this year and gather more information before moving forward in a year from now.

Commissioner Cornwell really liked the budget that Mr. Freeman proposed for the total spending of events. She believed this would be all inclusive for the two events. Setting a budget is how she would like to proceed, and adjustments can be made if needed. Operational decisions can be talked about further. Mr. Freeman suggested moving forward with the budget and the unknown organizational pieces can be discussed further. He also suggested putting a line item in both the City and CRA budgets for sponsorships in the amount they would like to allocate towards these events. Discussions continued regarding the possibility of the Mainstreet program taking over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event and then the multi-cultural the following year.

Commissioner Jones was in favor of the overall proposed budget for fairs and festivals. The location of the multi-cultural festival was briefly discussed.

Commissioner Smith was not in favor of the budget being presented. He believed there needed to be at least \$10,000 additional needed for each event. If the CRA staff is doing the work, they need to be paid for it. He stated that he was going to stay out of the recruitment of entertainment. He mentioned the scoreboard of \$100,000 line item in the budget version 1. The money has been moved to the following areas, \$70,000 land acquisition and \$30,000 for the Lincoln sign. As far as the Mainstreet Board, he doesn't know the members. He wants to make sure all the allocated money is going towards those two events. Mr. Johnson responded that the sponsorship would be for the two events that they're discussing. He wants to know who the Mainstreet board members are before assigning these tasks. He thinks they need to maintain the level of festivals they have in the past.

Commissioner Mathews appreciated what Mr. Freeman put together. She agreed with Commissioner Williams and wants to make sure they are doing everything above board. She doesn't know if the CRA running it makes sense. She wants to make sure its appropriate for them to do that.

Mr. Rayan noted that there may be ongoing construction for a concession stand at Lincoln Park. Also, it will be January and it may be too cold to utilize the splash pad.

Mr. Freeman reiterated that the budget can be amended as needed. Mr. Freeman noted that the CRA staff would not be getting paid additional monies. The City would pay for the hours that the CRA staff would be working on these events. Mr. Freeman suggested putting a sponsorship line in the CRA and City and move forward with the budget.

Commissioner Jones spoke about a local talent that reached out to them last year.

Commissioner Williams reiterated that Attorney Barnebey gave his opinion. He would like to be given the contact information for the Attorney General or the FRA's Attorney to request their legal opinion. He doesn't think they'll be allowed to do this.

Commissioner Smith stated that we need to stay out of other City's events.

Mr. Freeman would like a consensus on having a \$50,000 sponsorship from both the City and CRA for these two events, along with an additional \$10,000 from the Convention Center. Commissioners Cornwell, Jones, Smith, and Mathews stated that they agreed. Commissioner Williams stated that he did not, without confirmation from the State's legal counsel. Mayor Bryant expressed her concern with putting this on staff. The staff has too much on their plate. The real job of the CRA is to improve the community. She will look for other options to manage these events. Mr. Barnebey doesn't believe we've been violating the law. He believes their recommendation is to go in a different direction going forward.

## **2. PARK RESTROOM DISCUSSION (M.RAYAN)**

Commissioner Williams shared that the park restrooms are being misused. Pictures were shown of the disgusting way bathrooms have been left at the parks. He doesn't want the employees to be put in danger. He would like the bathrooms to be closed at 10:00 pm.

Commissioner Smith thinks they will have the same problem, no matter the time they are open. He stated that these problems will be moved to the streets if the bathrooms are closed. He would rather them be in the bathrooms, than on the streets. He noted that Mr. Rayan needs more employees in Public Works.

Mayor Bryant noted that City of Bradenton's Park bathrooms close at 10:00 pm.

Mr. Rayan doesn't know if closing the bathrooms at 10:00 pm will fix everything. He and Chief Tyler do think this will deter some activities if the bathrooms are closed overnight. Commissioner Cornwell would like to know the timing of these pictures. Mr. Rayan will get that information. She also doesn't think the bathrooms being closed overnight will stop these occurrences from happening. Commissioner Cornwell questioned Chief Tyler with individuals sleeping under the overhangs. Chief Tyler stated that his officers are constantly patrolling. Even over the past 6 months, more and more people are living in parks and parking lots. They try to offer services and move them along. It would greatly simplify their procedures when they can list hours at the parks or bathrooms. Riverside Park being open 24 hours, is becoming increasingly problematic.

Commissioner Mathews asked for clarification on the hours of the bathrooms. They are currently open 24 hours a day. At one time, they closed at 10:00 pm. She asked who would be responsible for locking the bathrooms. It was answered that generally Public Works employees would open them in the morning and the Police Officers would close them at night, for the current parks that have hours.

Commissioner Jones spoke about the Riverside Park and the restrooms at other parks. He thinks it's going to happen no matter the hours. He referenced a past discussion of selling the property to a restaurant and letting them deal with it. Mayor Bryant noted that the restaurant is still on the radar, and it will happen eventually.

Commissioner Smith reiterated that Mr. Rayan needs more employees.

**City Commission-CRA Workshop**

**August 21, 2023**

**Page 4 of 4**

Commissioner Williams agreed that they need more staff. He believed that if you close it earlier, there is less time for this to happen. He thinks they need to look at this problem and decide if they want to adjust the hours.

Mayor Bryant appreciated the people who clean up these messes. She thinks they should follow Bradenton's lead and close the bathrooms at 10:00 pm.

Mr. Freeman clarified that the budget workshop for next Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup> is not needed by staff and they are prepared to move forward with the tentative budget public hearing on September 11<sup>th</sup> and the final budget public hearing on September 28<sup>th</sup>. He proposes cancelling next Monday's Workshop. He asked for a consensus from the Commission. All five Commissioners stated that they were in favor of cancelling the budget workshop on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 5:41 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 25, 2023

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN  
CITY CLERK