

City of Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency Minutes April 17, 2023

Minutes of the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Auburndale held on April 17, 2023, at 8:03 p.m. in the Commission Room of City Hall, after having been properly advertised, with the following members present: Chair Ellie Harper, Vice Chair Tim Pospichal, Dr. Dorothea Taylor Bogert, Keith Cowie, Richard Hamann, Jack Myers, and Bill Sterling. Also present: Assistant City Manager Amy Palmer and City Clerk Brandon Henry.

**Motion** by Dorothea Taylor Bogert, seconded by Vice Chair Tim Pospichal, to approve the Community Redevelopment Agency Minutes of the February 20, 2023 meeting. Upon vote, all ayes.

Assistant City Manager Amy Palmer announced that the 2022 Annual Report was published, per State statute.

Chair Ellie Harper asked if there were any requests to add additional items to the agenda. There was none.

She asked if there was public comment on any item not on the agenda. There was no public comment.

## 1. FINANCE REPORT

Finance Director Christopher Reeder presented the Finance Report for the first six months of the fiscal year, ending March 31, 2023.

**CITY OF AUBURNDALE  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
DETAIL SUMMARY REPORT - MARCH 2023**

**CRA REVENUE**

Account Number	Description	Budget	MTD Amount	YTD Amount	Balance	% REC / EXP
151-311-1100	CRA TAX INCREMENT -COUNTY	\$1,021,687.00	\$0.00	\$1,184,184.98	-\$162,497.98	115.9
151-311-1500	REIMB TAX INCREMENT(CITY PORTION	\$629,613.00	\$0.00	\$725,325.53	-\$95,712.53	115.2
151-361-1100	INTEREST INCOME	\$100.00	\$2,812.31	\$11,741.90	-\$11,641.90	11741.9
	<b>** GRAND TOTAL **</b>	<b>\$1,651,400.00</b>	<b>\$2,812.31</b>	<b>\$1,921,252.41</b>	<b>-\$269,852.41</b>	<b>116.3</b>

**CRA EXPENSE**

Account Number	Description	Budget	MTD Amount	YTD Amount	Balance	% REC / EXP
151-6087-519-3200	CRA AUDIT	\$4,100.00	\$70.00	\$5,010.40	-\$910.40	122.2
151-6087-519-4000	TRAVEL CRA	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,548.39	\$951.61	61.9
151-6087-519-4350	CITY UTILITY BILLING (CRA)	\$15,000.00	\$778.21	\$5,916.06	\$9,083.94	39.4
151-6087-519-4650	REPAIR OF MOTOR EQUIPMENT	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	0.0
151-6087-519-4995	SER CONTRACT - PALMS/CLOCK TOWER	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,136.00	\$6,864.00	31.4
151-6087-519-5212	MAINT REP ANTIQUE LIGHTS	\$10,000.00	\$2,434.50	\$5,910.97	\$4,089.03	59.1
151-6087-519-5230	AGRICULTURAL HORTICULTURAL SUP	\$10,000.00	\$156.09	\$9,217.79	\$782.21	92.2
151-6087-519-5250	CITY VEHICLE REIMB	\$2,500.00	\$209.85	\$1,258.96	\$1,241.04	50.4
151-6087-519-5400	SUBSCRIPTIONS MEMBERSHIPS	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,045.00	-\$45.00	104.5
151-6087-519-5850	INCENTIVE/LOAN PROGRAM	\$150,000.00	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	33.3
151-6087-519-6335	SIDEWALK - REPAIRS NEW	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	0.0
151-6087-519-6339	CITY REIMB. LABOR	\$172,997.00	\$14,416.42	\$86,498.52	\$86,498.48	50.0
151-6087-519-6370	CIVIC CENTER DESIGN	\$1,000,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000,000.00	0.0
151-6087-519-6372	UPDATE STREETScape	\$100,000.00	\$3,404.17	\$42,161.13	\$57,838.87	42.2
151-6087-519-6399	CRA IMPACT FEE REIMBURSEMENT	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	0.0
151-6087-519-6400	CRA CAPITAL OUTLAY EQUIPMENT	\$3,500.00	\$1,925.66	\$1,925.66	\$1,574.34	55.0
151-6087-519-8110	OPERATIONS/ADMINISTRATION COSTS	\$152,803.00	\$21,129.94	\$28,126.19	\$124,676.81	18.4
	<b>** GRAND TOTAL **</b>	<b>\$1,651,400.00</b>	<b>\$44,524.84</b>	<b>\$241,755.07</b>	<b>\$1,409,644.93</b>	<b>14.6</b>

**COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
POOLED CASH TOTAL - MARCH 2023**

**\$5,300,181.39** Pooled Cash  
**(\$2,500,000.00)** Prior Year Reserves - Civic Center  
**(\$455,397.00)** Incentive Loan Program  


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**\$2,344,784.39** Adjusted Pooled Cash

## 2. CONSIDER PROPOSED CHANGE TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Assistant City Manager Palmer said in 2014, the Community Redevelopment Agency Board created an incentive program that was intended to encourage new development and redevelopment within the Community Redevelopment Agency's boundary. The Redevelopment Grant program was put in place that reimbursed property owners up to 50% of eligible capital-related expenses, with a maximum grant amount of \$50,000. Since 2014, the Community Redevelopment Agency has awarded over \$572,000 in incentives for private redevelopment activities.

Following input from the Community Redevelopment Agency Board at the January 2023 meeting, staff is presenting an amendment to the program that would address large investment projects.

Assistant City Manager Palmer presented examples of projects that were previously awarded redevelopment grants, and potential large investment redevelopment projects.

The new program parameters are proposed as follows:

### *Grant Amount*

- *Project Investment up to \$350,000: 50% of Eligible Expenses, up to a maximum of \$50,000.*
- *Project Investment over \$350,000: 15% of Eligible Expenses, up to a maximum of \$300,000.*
  - *Bonus: Additional 5% Grant for Local Historic Preservation Designation (for a total of 20% of Eligible Expenses, up to a maximum of \$350,000)*

Board Member Jack Myers asked for clarification on the definition of investment, is it equal to the increase in taxable value?

Assistant City Manager Palmer answered yes, but the Property Appraiser may not recognize the full investment amount.

Board Member Myers asked what do we base the bonus on? Did we not used to do the bonus on the appraised incremental value or on the investment?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said we did it on the investment.

Board Member Dorothea Taylor Bogert asked for further clarification on the definition of investment.

Assistant City Manager Palmer answered it is capital improvements to a building or site.

Board Member Richard Hamann asked so not general maintenance?

Assistant City Manager Palmer answered yes, not for general maintenance - such as for just a façade or awning. It must be a major investment into the property.

She said staff recommends approval of the amended Redevelopment Grant.

Chair Harper asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

**Motion** by Keith Cowie, seconded by Dorothea Taylor Bogert, to approve the amended Redevelopment Grant.

Board Member Myers and Taylor Bogert expressed gratitude.

Upon vote, all ayes.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said to dovetail into this presentation before the next agenda item, she said she would like to complete a market study of the Downtown area, like a supply and demand study – to see what people are spending their money on in Auburndale, and what is leaking out of the community for what we do not have in the area. We can also do a similar study for out on the highway.

She said it would accomplish two things. First, we can amend the Redevelopment Grants. Right now, retail is excluded from the grants. But if we honed-in on specific types of retail, we could place them in the grant as a list of wants.

Board Member Myers asked if restaurants are considered retail?

Assistant City Manager Palmer answered no, it would be a separate category.

She said if we could create and define a list of those specific types of retail, it could benefit our grant program. It would also help us with our Civic Center redevelopment. If we open up that site to a developer and want to know what is put there – it would be nice to have that knowledge as we interview developers and ultimately decide what we want to do with the Civic Center site.

Board Member Taylor Bogert asked if staff needs permission or funding to do the study? What is it that staff is looking for?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said she is looking for direction from the Board.

Board Member Taylor Bogert said she thinks it is a great idea.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said we do have funding available to complete the study. It is just something we have never talked about and is a good direction to move in - and so it was something she wanted to get consensus from the Board.

Board Member Myers asked if the study would be like the Lakes District, where we hold public workshops to get input from citizens.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said the one proposal she has gotten to do the market study is more of a strategic plan, and they would involve business owners in the Downtown area. She said she would like to explore other means of doing the market study.

Board Member Myers said he would like to explore the customers, and how to sustain businesses. We should have input from citizens.

Board Member Taylor Bogert confirmed the idea to do strategic planning and bring in citizen perspectives. We need to see what would bring individuals into Downtown for an evening or afternoon.

Board Member Myers suggested asking what people would shop for in Downtown, instead of going to Winter Haven or Lakeland.

Board Member Taylor Bogert said we do it now before we start the move of the Civic Center, so we would be better prepared to bring in better development.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said she would explore some consultants and what services they provide and will report back to the Board.

Chair Harper asked if we need a motion?

Assistant City Manager Palmer answered no.

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### 3. CONSIDER PURCHASE OF PROPERTY – WRIGHT PROPERTY/POLK STREET

Assistant City Manager Palmer said during the January 2023 Community Redevelopment Agency meeting, the Community Redevelopment Agency provided direction to staff to make an offer to purchase the property on Polk Street that is next door to the City's tennis courts. The purchase of this property has been on the Community Redevelopment Agency's suggested project list for a number of years.

The proposed site is 1.23 acres. The proposed use of the property is for pickleball courts and a possible expansion of the tennis courts.

The contract price of the Purchase and Sale Agreement is \$390,000. The Agreement states that the Buyer is the City of Auburndale. Funding for the purchase would be provided by the Community Redevelopment Agency. All closing documents and deeds will be in the City of Auburndale's name. The Agreement for Sale and Purchase of Real Property was prepared by the City Attorney and reviewed by the City Manager's Office.

Staff recommends approval of the \$390,000 expenditure by the Community Redevelopment Agency to purchase the Wright Property on Polk Street.

Assistant City Manager Palmer presented a graphic depicting the site. When the property went on the market, it was for sale by owner. The Board requested staff make an offer. We have made several offers over the years, but were never able to come to an agreement on the sale price. We received an appraisal on the property which came in at \$360,000, which was much closer to the property owner's desired sales price – so we were able to meet at the \$390,000 purchase price. There are funds in the Community Redevelopment Agency's budget to purchase this. This would appear as a budget amendment in November.

Chair Harper asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

**Motion** by Jack Myers, seconded by Dorothea Taylor Bogert, to approve the \$390,000 expenditure by the Community Redevelopment Agency to purchase the Wright Property on Polk Street.

Board Member Myers said he realizes we are buying this over the appraised value. It has always been on the list. It has more value to the City than for somebody else to tear the homes down or rent them out. It brings a lot more value to the City. This will benefit the citizens for a long time to come. He was not here when the City bought the transmission shop. We overpaid for that and took a lot of grief, but everybody is okay with it now since it is part of the park. He thinks it is a good deal for everybody.

Board Member Hamann says he concurs.

Upon vote, all ayes.

Board Member Sterling asked to clarify future actions after purchase of the property.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said she recommends during a future Capital Improvement Plan, that we add it to the fifth year, and as funding becomes available, that we shift it up to closer years.

Board Member Myers asked if we must wait five years?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said we do not have to wait five years.

Board Member Myers asked can we not go ahead and prioritize this and get an engineer to see how many pickleball courts we can fit on the property?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said we have done a bit of designing on the property. Parks and Recreation Director Cody McGhee is good with that. He fit about eight pickleball courts and two tennis courts.

Board Member Myers asked if we have a need for extra tennis courts?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said there is a desire for some hard tennis courts to accommodate high school matches.

Board Member Taylor Bogert said we also talked about the possibility of making them convertible between tennis and pickleball.

Assistant City Manager said the estimate to construct is about \$550,000. Her recommendation would be to place it in the fifth year, and as funding becomes available we may be able to move it forward. We have a hefty Capital Improvement Plan which she will get into in the next agenda item.

Board Member Sterling said the previous tennis courts had maybe two more clay courts, with 10 to attract tournaments to come on board. I would not be in favor of hard courts, other than clay courts. Because the City of Auburndale has clay courts. Plant City had clay courts, and nobody played on the hard courts. It is easier for seniors. Winter Haven put in all clay courts. We need to put in at least two clay courts, that might attract some tournaments to the area. And put in pickleball courts. Does the pickleball group pay money to play at the gym?

Assistant City Manager Palmer answered no, they do not pay user fees.

Board Member Sterling asked are we going to charge anything for the courts Downtown?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said that is something to be explored. To address hard courts versus clay courts, we were thinking hard courts because the high school does not play on clay. It gives an opportunity for the younger crowd to practice and use it for tournaments.

Board Member Sterling asked if two courts is enough for the high school?

Assistant City Manager Palmer said that is something else to consider.

Board Member Myers said the School Board ought to pay for the hard courts.

Board Member Keith Cowie said he has seen the high school there playing.

Board Member Myers said they are saying this because their tournaments and matches are on hard courts.

Board Member Taylor Bogert said it is to be determined.

Assistant City Manager Palmer confirmed.

Chair Harper thanked Assistant City Manager Palmer.

#### **4. PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR FISCAL YEAR 23/24 & FISCAL YEAR 24/25**

Assistant City Manager Palmer said the proposed Fiscal Year 23/24 and Fiscal Year 24/25 Budgets being presented at this time reflect the previously approved Capital Improvement Plan projects in the first two years of the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

In addition to general operational expenses, the proposed Fiscal Year 23/24 Budget provides Community Redevelopment Agency funding for the following Capital Improvement Plan approved projects:

- \$2,500,000 for Civic Center Design-Build project (formerly Park Street Commercial)
- \$1,500,000 for Streetscape projects – Howard Street and Palmetto Street

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The Civic Center Design-Build project has budgeted \$3.5 million in reserves since 2021. \$1 million was budgeted in last Fiscal Year 22/23 for design work, and this \$2.5 million in Fiscal Year 23/24 represents the final expenditure from the Community Redevelopment Agency in designing and relocating the Civic Center from downtown to Lake Ariana Park. The two streetscape projects for Howard and Palmetto Street are currently in engineering and are being budgeted for construction in Fiscal Year 23/24.

In addition to general operational expenses, the proposed Fiscal Year 24/25 Budget provides Community Redevelopment Agency funding for the following Capital Improvement Plan approved projects:

- \$750,000 to Underground Electric Utilities around Lake Stella
- \$150,000 for the US Hwy 92 Commercial Corridor Plan
- \$500,000 for Main Street Streetscape Reserves

Every year, we have our list of suggested projects. We place those projects into the fifth year of the Capital Improvement Plan, and take the first two years of the Capital Improvement Plan and fund them. We are looking at Fiscal Year 24/25 as our budget for adoption.

Assistant City Manager Palmer summarized the current Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan approved by the Community Redevelopment Agency Board in February.

Board Member Myers asked if the street blower that is to be purchased includes a bagging feature?

Public Works Director John Dickson answered it blows it out into the street and the street sweeper gets it.

Assistant City Manager Palmer presented a table depicting the Fiscal Year 23/24 and Fiscal Year 24/25 Community Redevelopment Agency revenue.

She presented a table depicting the Fiscal Year 23/24 and Fiscal Year 24/25 Community Redevelopment Agency expenditures.

The proposed Fiscal Year 23/24 and Fiscal Year 24/25 Community Redevelopment Agency Budgets for expenses and revenues are balanced. In accordance with the Community Redevelopment Agency calendar, the proposed Community Redevelopment Agency Budgets will be presented for approval by the Community Redevelopment Agency Board at the May 15, 2023 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35:37 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Minutes are true and correct.



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Brandon Henry, City Clerk