

City of DeBary
Regular Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday
October 16, 2003
6:00 PM

Florence K. Little Town Hall
12 Colomba Road DeBary, Florida 32713

MINUTES

1. Call to Order - Chair Carol Lawrence

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Carol Lawrence, Tom Donohoe, Tracy Good, Donald Kitner, and Betty Gigantino

Absent: Jane Wright, Dick Tosh, and Don Woodruff.

Also Present: Assistant City Manager Maryann Courson, Vice Mayor George Coleman, and Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Linda White.

3. Approval of Minutes

June 7, 2003 Special Meeting

June 26, 2003 Meeting

Minutes were approved as presented.

4. Request for Disbursement of Opportunity Fund Obligation

Florida Public Utilities - No. 2 of 3

Heard at a later time. Chair Lawrence noted that Florida Public Utilities was requesting the second of three installments from the Opportunity Fund in the amount of \$14,666.67 and City Staff had reviewed and recommended payment. It was discussed that the Agreement with the City had been met and exceeded; and that 57 people were currently employed and additional staff were being added.

Chair Lawrence entertained a motion. Motion was made and seconded to approve the payment of \$14,666.67 to Florida Public Utilities. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Discussion: GAI September Status Report - Finding of Necessity for CRA

The report was discussed prior to Item 4 of the Agenda and that data was being gathered by GAI. There was discussion of the concerns expressed by property owners at the meeting regarding Eminent Domain proceedings; that taking of property was not the intent of the study; that there had been very few instances of Eminent Domain being evoked by a CRA in the entire State of Florida; and that it would only be a last resort. It was noted that the

communication from the consultant's economist at the workshop had not made matters as clear as would have been desirable for those attending; that all of the benefits available through a CRA were not explained fully; that the terms "Slum and Blight" were not made clear; that the term was applied to some areas due to small lot sizes which is detrimental to development and was not based on the appearance of the area; that if an area were found to be blighted, it would allow application for funds and grants to improve infrastructure and enhance the area; and that the discussion of bonds was not made clear and implied inaccurately that the City would be involved in long- term debt.

There was further discussion that the study was to research a vehicle to achieve the vision for DeBary; that a mailing to area businesses and property owners offering clarification of the facts might be helpful; that the County Council would have to approve any tax increment financing (TIF) and it would be unlikely that a 95% collection figure would be allowed; that if the CRA were founded, new development would provide funds through TIF for anything above and beyond the property value benchmark that might be set; that the benefits would be long term; that the Economic Development Advisory Committee would be a more effective body; and that there were always questions and concerns when change was being considered. Chair Lawrence noted that there should be discussion of setting a date for the next business round table; that the current Members of the Committee would be sitting through the end of January; and that the next CRA workshop would probably be in January regarding the communication at the first workshop, that City Manager Diamond would have probably contacted Doug Kelly of GAI to express concerns on the manner in which the information was presented to the public; that Chair Lawrence would follow up with the City Manager; and that there would probably be a written memo available to the Committee.

It was further discussed that the economist had placed too much emphasis on redevelopment options not necessarily appropriate to DeBary; that much of what was discussed was presented to build the credibility and experience of the firm and it was not clear to those attending that those redevelopment options might not be applicable to DeBary; that many of the acronyms used in the report needed to be defined; that MPO was the Metropolitan Planning Organization which handled transportation issues within the County and had a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC); and that CDGB was the Community Development Block Grants and FDEP referred to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

There was discussion that it needed to be communicated to GAI that DeBary needed to be treated uniquely; that City Manager Diamond was meeting with Doug Kelly of GAI and that Committee concerns could be communicated through Mr. Diamond; that a meeting could be held with the EDAC prior to the next Workshop to preview the presentation; and that City Manager Diamond could be asked to provide a Memo to the EDAC and the City Council regarding his meeting with Doug Kelly of GAI.

6. Discussion: Strategic Plan Priorities

Betty Gigantino discussed that she had been meeting with people to review the City's website; that links were not adequate; that there would be some modifications to the site; that there

was a private website already created by a local business owner with 95% of the business owners in DeBary listed on the site; and that it was being negotiated to link to that site.

Chair Lawrence discussed that she had provided a priorities list for the Committee Members to review and prepare for discussion of the priorities at the next meeting; that one item of the Strategic Plan was the support of the town center project; that the project was on hold until the completion of the CRA Study; and that Progress Energy had tentatively agreed to a meeting on November 20, 2003.

It was discussed that the Business Roundtable should be discussed; that a December or January date could be selected and topics of discussion should be considered; that December would have to be an early date; that if held in January it could be tied into the GAI report; and that perhaps the Business Roundtable should be held after the GAI presentation to discuss what the initial findings of the study were. It was also discussed that the importance of Grant funds should be considered to improve infrastructure in the City and that Grant funds might be more difficult to obtain in the future due to the current economic climate.

It was discussed that the date for the GAI report might be available by the November meeting in order to determine a firmer date for a Business Roundtable and that the meeting should be held prior to the expiration of the terms of the Committee Members.

7. Other Business

There was discussion of the expiration of the amortization period for the replacement of signage in the City to meet the Land Development Code; that the new Planner for the City would be able to work on that; and that written notification had gone out in 1999.

It was also discussed that there were some concerns with the new Gateway Standards; that the footprints of two-story buildings might not be feasible on the lot sizes available for development in the City; that the area required for parking and stormwater retention would make it difficult to meet the Gateway Standards; that perhaps the matter should be revisited; that reduced parking would encourage pedestrian traffic; and that the Land Development Code would dictate the amount of required parking. It was also noted that the CRA might help to address lot sizes that would more readily allow appropriate development; that the concept of two-story buildings was to provide residential space on the second stories; that developers might be reluctant to provide residential space as it would be less lucrative than commercial rents; that the residential component would encourage pedestrian traffic for businesses; and that another issue on many lots was that parking would not be feasible at the rear of the lot as required by the Standards. Vice Mayor Coleman noted that the Gateway Standards had taken several years to develop and that some businesses had objections due to having standardized building plans that they might not be willing to redesign. It was discussed that there were also concerns where the cost of development was not supported by the rental income that would be realized. It was noted that the Gateway Standards were available on the Website; that any requests for Waiver from the Gateway Standards had to be presented formally at a City Council Meeting.

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Linda White updated the Committee on the meeting with the County Council on the feasibility of a site for the West Volusia Business Conference Center on Veterans Memorial Parkway; that the parcel was owned by the County; that the County had given permission for an engineer to review the site; that Grant funds would be sought; that the site was originally slated for Parks and Recreation use; that it was considered to design the Center as a park-style layout; and that the project would require partnership between the three cities, DBCC, the Chamber, and the County. It was also discussed that once a site was located, ECHO Funds would be sought and DBCC would pursue matching educational grant funds; that it had been advised that projects involving multiple partners usually received more favorable consideration for grants; that the County would not likely sell the property on Veterans Memorial Parkway for development purposes; and that there appeared to be support and a need for the concept of a Center of that type.

8. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

**APPROVED November 20, 2003
CITY OF DeBARY
Economic Development Advisory Committee**

Carol Lawrence, Chair