



FIFTY
WEST

OCOEE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Ocoee Commission Chambers
1 N. Bluford Avenue
Ocoee, Florida

March 4, 2025

MINUTES

5:00 PM

CRA REGULAR MEETING

• CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilsen called the Community Redevelopment Agency Board to order at 5:00 PM in the Commission Chambers of City Hall. **Recording Clerk Justice** called roll and declared a quorum present.

Roll Call: Chair Wilsen, Vice-Chair Kennedy, Member Johnson, Member Firstner, Member Oliver, and Member Koovakada (*arrived at 5:20 PM*).

Absent: Member June

Also Present: City Manager Shadrix, Assistant City Manager Rumer, Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless, Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca, City Attorney Geller, and Recording Clerk Justice

• PUBLIC COMMENTS

No speaker reservation forms were received.

• OLD BUSINESS - None

• NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes of the September 17, 2024, CRA Board Meeting

Member Firstner, seconded by Vice-Chair Kennedy, moved to approve the CRA Regular Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2024, as presented. Motion carried 5-0 with Member June and Member Koovakada absent.

2. Election of Officers

A memorandum was provided in the CRA packet which identified the Chair and Vice-Chair for the past seven fiscal years, including the current year. Brief discussion ensued.

Member Firstner, seconded by Member Johson, moved to nominate Vice-Chair Kennedy as CRA Board Chair. Motion carried 5-0 with Member June and Member Koovakada absent.

Brief discussion ensued regarding who had not previously served as Vice-Chair.

Member Johnson, seconded by Member Firstner, moved to nominate Member Koovakada as CRA Board Vice-Chair. Motion carried 5-0 with Member June and Member Koovakada absent.

Chair Wilsen offered the gavel to **Member Kennedy**. **Member Kennedy** advised that he would prefer **Chair Wilsen** to continue the meeting in her capacity as the current Chair.

3. December Makeup Meeting Date Selection

Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca advised that the CRA Board Meeting, originally scheduled for December 3, 2024, must be rescheduled. She recommended, based on staff input, that the meeting be held on Tuesday, August 5, 2025, at 5:00 PM. This scheduling would allow for a budget discussion in advance of its adoption at the September 16, 2025, meeting.

Chair Wilsen requested the Board check their calendars for availability on August 5, 2025. **Member Kennedy** inquired if this date falls on a Commission Meeting night. **Chair Wilsen** answered in the affirmative.

Consensus of the CRA Board was to reschedule the December 3, 2024, meeting to August 5, 2025, at 5:00 PM.

• MISCELLANEOUS

1. Final Increment Revenue and Payment Updates

Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca presented a comparison of the estimated and actual tax increment revenue received in 2024. The actual revenue figures were based on calculations provided by the Orange County Office of Management & Budget on November 13, 2024. Due to the higher-than-expected tax increment revenue, a larger rebate was owed to Orange County. To reconcile the difference, a budget transfer was completed, and the Finance Department issued and mailed the rebate check to Orange County in January. All deposits and payments have been made; there are no outstanding payments.

Chair Wilsen requested additional confirmation that no monies are currently owed to anyone to date. **Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca** provided confirmation. She further advised that a Resolution amending the CRA budget would be brought to the Board in June.

2. Annual Report Presentation

Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca presented the 2024 Annual Report, titled "Staying on Target." She provided a brief overview of key statistics and highlights, including accomplishments, awards, and new businesses within the CRA. She also informed the Board

that the Annual Report would be published to the CRA website by the end of March, and submitted to Orange County, in compliance with § 163.371, Florida Statutes.

3. Update on Redevelopment Plan

Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless commended Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca for her efforts with the Annual Report and on her accomplishments. She provided an update on the Finding of Necessity regarding the downtown area and the existing Fifty West Community Redevelopment Area and highlighted the Redevelopment Plan Update. She then introduced **Tom Kohler**, *GAI Community Solutions Group*, to present the draft report to the Board.

After providing a brief history of his efforts on the City's interlocal agreement with the county and the establishment of the CRA, **Mr. Kohler** complimented the CRA Board's and City Staff's diligence in keeping the Fifty West program on target. He also praised Redevelopment Program Manager Vaca for her outstanding performance when she took his course to obtain Florida Redevelopment Association certification.

Mr. Kohler presented an overview of the draft plan update, including:

- Redevelopment focus areas and pertinent goals and objectives
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) projections
- Conceptual Master Plan, including the addition of West Oaks Mall
- Capital Projects & Programming
- Next steps
- Proposed timeline

Member Koovakada arrived at 5:20 PM.

Vice-Chair Kennedy inquired about the affordable housing criteria. **Mr. Kohler** addressed his question. Discussion ensued regarding accessibility and affordability.

Vice-Chair Kennedy inquired about the \$1.8 million figure through 2031 for small business programs. **Mr. Kohler** addressed his question. Discussion ensued regarding the plan's flexibility.

Member Johnson expressed concerns about reallocating CRA funding for West Oaks Mall. **Mr. Kohler** responded, prompting a discussion on the City's past efforts to engage the mall's ownership group and the property's ongoing deterioration.

Member Firstner reiterated Mayor Johnson's concerns regarding West Oaks Mall. **Mr. Kohler** addressed his comments.

Member Oliver asked about stormwater drainage budgeting in relation to the CRA. **Mr. Kohler** deferred to City Staff. **Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless** responded to Member Oliver's question. **Mr. Kohler** displayed a map to demonstrate where the proposed stormwater projects have been identified, the number of which exceeds the proposed increment.

Vice-Chair Kennedy inquired about the identified stormwater projects being included within the 5-year or 10-year capital plan. **Mr. Kohler** addressed his question.

Chair Wilsen thanked Mr. Kohler for his presentation and explanation of the report. Discussion ensued.

4. Project Updates

Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless updated the Board with the following:

- Wellness Park Restroom
 - A contractor was selected, and a permit has been issued
 - Clearing and mobilization started this week
 - The project is estimated to be completed at the end of May

Chair Wilsen inquired about the destructibility of the restroom. **Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless** addressed her question.

Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless presented to the Board the Diamond Award that the Healthy West Orange Wellness Park received from the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council under the Health and Equity category.

Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless advised that the damage caused to Wellness Park due to Hurricane Milton is being addressed.

- Bluford Avenue Streetscape
 - Staff are currently reviewing the 90% construction plans for the CRA portion [Old Winter Garden Road to Geneva Street], and permitting with St. Johns Water Management District has begun
 - 60% construction documents for the City's Geneva Street to Delaware Street portion are expected soon
 - Staff hopes to put out for bid the CRA portion of the construction this summer

Member Johnson inquired about the 90% construction [CRA portion of the project] being behind schedule. **Development Services Director/CRA Administrator Corless** addressed his question.

• BOARD COMMENTS

Chair Wilsen congratulated Member Kennedy and Member Koovakada on being elected as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.

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• **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM

Attest:



Miranda Justice, Recording Clerk

APPROVED:



Chair