



HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PUBLIC HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 26, 2025, at 6:30 PM

Town Hall (Council Chambers) – 307 E. Kennedy Blvd

SPECIAL NOTICE: These meeting minutes are presented in an abbreviated format intended as a public record discussion of stated meeting according to the Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine law. Meetings are opened to the public, noticed within reasonable advance notice, and transcribed into minutes for public record. ***Audio Recording are available through the Town's website on the Board Agenda Page.*

CALL TO ORDER – Vice Chair Washington called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Quorum was established through roll call by Town Clerk.

PRESENT: (7) Director Donovan Williams, Director Ruthi Critton, Director Tarus Mack, Director Wanda Randolph, Director Rodney Daniels (Left early due to emergency), Vice Chair Theo Washington, Chair Angie Gardner (arrived after roll call)

STAFF: (4) Michael Johnson, **CRA Executive Director**; Veronica King, **Town Clerk**; Greg Jackson, **Attorney**; Fletcher Boone, **EPD Lieutenant**

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Vice Chair Washington led the invocation through a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

PRESENTATIONS:

Orange County CDBG Grant 370 E. Kennedy Blvd (Eatonville Works Project) – **Executive Director Michael Johnson** updated the board on the plans for the CRA building and grant, did a level-1 environmental assessment, because the property used to be a fire station, had to do a level-2, until we return to level-2 assessment, we will not receive any money, will send to the board once the reports are received. Executive Director Michael Johnson shared a PowerPoint presentation on the construction plans. **Comments:** Vice Chair Washington inquired about the time capsule, would like to plan a special day to move it; Mr. Johnson – There are plans to make a monument, so the time capsule is preserved. Director Ruthi Critton had questions about the historic significance of the site. Mr. Johnson – The building will maintain the historical look, but it is not considered historical. Director Randolph – Even though the building is not part of the historic preservation, it still has historic value, did have some reservations about the name of the building. Who made the decision to name the building “Eatonville Works”? Mr. Johnson – It was in the grant, which was approved by the board. Director Randolph would like the name to reflect the historical significance. Mr. Johnson will go back to Orange County and see if they could change the name of the building. Director Randolph – The architect design is very upscale in comparison to what we already have, concerned about the design, do not see anything in the design of the building that shows its history. Mr. Johnson will look into it. Director Randolph – Is there a need for an incubator? Vice Chair Washington – The building can be renovated even though it is historic. Director Critton – If we do not think there is a need for the work force, then I do not know what is important to the community, it does fall in line with our objectives and goals. Director Randolph – Should we as council members approve this on the behalf of the town or CRA?, who will be paying for the building after the grant. Mr. Johnson said the building is for the CRA, not the town, and operational functions will be paid through the CRA's budget. Mr. Johnson answered questions on handicap and street parking by stating that the Florida building code is built into the plan. Director Mack – The CRA has always taken care of things in terms of lights

and water. The CRA is about redevelopment and bringing things to life. This is something we already knew was coming [in terms of planning]. We should move forward and get everything approved so we can start this construction. Director Williams – I love the façade; we should not stop the progress of this building. Chair Gardner – This is just an update to the building. Prior to this being a CRA submission, this was a town submission that did not get accepted. Mr. Johnson – did a ITB invitation to bid for general contractors, only three contractors responded, this project would be submitted to them to bid on the projects. Director Daniels – requested for the attorney to look into the parking procedures of Orange County,

Second Public Hearing CRA Plan Update – Executive Director Michael Johnson updated the board on the changes made to the plan based on board discussions, had an informal meeting at the Denton Johnson Center, and the first public hearing, did not get a big turnout, did reach out to the public, they know we are trying to update the CRA plan. We added community land trust to the mission statement [per the request of the attorney] and made changes to the project team [added Katrina Gibson and Tara Salmieri], also added a community policing component to the plan. The CRA plan is basically the 2015 plan that never went through the process, but staff reviewed it and made changes. **Council Comments:** Director Critton – Requested to get a copy of the finding of necessity, inquired as to if this is a separate plan from the town's master plan? how does the legislation's recent changes [on nonprofits] impact our plan? (Legislation has not been successful) Mr. Johnson for events and promotions, “if it is in your plan, then you can do it [legally]”, from a capital standpoint that is in the town's capital improvement plan, it has to be out of the town's capital improvement plan for three years, can get around the term marketing when used as education about the CRA district, cannot give to nonprofits. Vice Chair Washington – Which plan will this eliminate? 2015? Mr. Johnson said it will eliminate the 1997 plan. Director Critton – What are the best practices for updating the plan? Mr. Johnson – As you accomplish tasks, you should update. At a minimum it should be updated every 5 years.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: Mrs. Regina Johnson addressed the Board on disability, living conditions, and concerns, Mayor Gardner provided a number for the Legal Aid Society, they might be able to help

CONSENT AGENDA:

Chair Gardner motions to APPROVE Consent Agenda approving CRA Meeting Minutes for 5/20/2025, 5/29/25; **moved** by Director Critton; **seconded** by Director Mack; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Small Business Façade Improvement Program (Administration) – Executive Director Michael Johnson thought it was important that the board discuss the Small Business Façade Improvement Program, had concerns about the background check. Who is doing it and paying? Also, the facade program is required to go through a review committee, would ask that the board consider suspending all programming until we can get it in line with what the plan says. Mr. Johnson does not understand some aspects of the plan because there is no clarity [in the plan]. Director Randolph – I support the business facade plan for the community. After reading the policies and procedures, this seems to be complicated to me. Randolph suggests doing a workshop to see how it works visually, did review the persons on the review committee, would like to know the qualifications of the committee members. Mr. Johnson – The committee will screen all the applicants and make their recommendations. The plan talks about the amortization of the loan, but it never talks about how the Clerk interacts with making sure there is a lien recording, this is reason for request to suspend programs, need to look at it and get in order. Now, we have three new applicants, and I want to give them their due process. Director Randolph – I was thinking we should have on review committee, a finance person or realtor, which can help to advise on decision making. Mr. Johnson – I am recommending someone to the board, but you all can pick whoever you want. Chair Gardner – [To Mr. Johnson] Are you asking us to table this? Mr. Johnson confirms. Director Mack believes the council should go with Mr. Johnson's recommendation. Mr. Johnson – I talked to the chair, about when we create programs we should not run multiple programs at the same time. Director Critton – When this was started, I thought it was a good idea, in favor of tabling this. The fee is non-refundable, but the application is not

guaranteed, was hoping we could compare and contrast the program that was in place before we adopted this facade program. Mr. Johnson – want to do is create a new program without the limitations. Chair Gardner – I think we should charge a fee at the end for administration purposes. Mr. Johnson – We are planning another outreach program. We just need to motivate our citizens to come out and take advantage of our resources, there are other resources, more focused on projects now than anything else.

Larry Hopkins Public Comments at the May 20, 2025, OCBCC Meeting (Administration) – Chair Gardner - went to the Tourism Development meeting and was asked if I knew of concerns about the Eatonville CRA, would like to show the video of the actual clip from the meeting to further discuss. Mr. Johnson played the OCBCC May 20th meeting, specifically the public comments section. **(After the video, discussion resumed)** Mr. Johnson – This is an indictment on all of us. To blindsides the council and the board, he declined to come explain what he is talking about. We have been very transparent and baffled from where this came from, everything that is done is in line with the state. Attorney Greg Jackson – This is the strongest I have seen this board in the 14 years I have been here. If there is something that I feel needs to be brought to the board's attention, I will make it known, Mr. Johnson and I work closely together, talk about 3-4 times a week to discuss what is going on with the board. The comment that was made, "there is something in the water that is not clean with the CRA in Eatonville," is absolutely false. Director Mack – what I have watched is disappointing, hoping that the person could come in and explain himself. Director Randolph – Could we send him a letter inviting him to address his concerns with the board? Mr. Johnson - reached out by phone and text, and he declined to come. Chair Gardner – In 2022, the main thing I had to do was regain trust from the county, if the board does not approve the policy, we will implement it in the procedure, and then the money was released from the county, thought we had been doing well also, caught me off guard.

BOARD DECISIONS:

Chair Gardner motions to APPROVE Resolution CRA-2025-24 approving the 2025 CRA Plan Update; **moved** by Director Mack; **seconded** by Director Randolph; **AYE: MOTION PASSES 6/0 (Note: Director Daniels left the meeting early)**. Preamble read by town clerk.

Chair Gardner motions to TABLE Resolution CRA-2025-25 approving appointments to Small Business Façade Improvement Committee; **moved** by Director Randolph; **seconded** by Director Mack; **AYE: MOTION PASSES 6/0**.

STAFF REPORTS:

Executive Director (Michael Johnson) – We are trying to do board training in July. We brought a floral arrangement for Paula Bradshaw for her son's wake. We are opening a parking space near the Mayor's spot for board members to park.

Town Clerk (Veronica King) – Provided a copy of the financial disclosure requirements. The deadline is coming up. This is a reminder, I have already sent an email. If you do not meet the deadline, they do have a grace period but there is a fee that will be assessed. It is for appointed [financial disclosure], elected, and selected staff.

Attorney (Greg Jackson) – heard me and Mr. Johnson say you cannot give money to non-profit [organizations], but there is a caveat to that. You can work with non-profits, just as long as it is in your plan.

BOARD REPORTS:

Director Donovan Williams – No report.

Director Ruthi Critton – Thanks to the CRA for pitching a tent and exposing some of our programs to Eatonville and Central Florida at the Juneteenth event.

Director Tarus Mack – Thanks to everyone for coming out and being engaged in the CRA business. Since the time I have been sitting here, this is the strongest we have been. Thanks to the staff. Condolences to the Bradshaw

family. This weekend we had Vice Chairman Washington’s event, it was great. I am looking forward to the revitalization of the CRA building.

Director Wanda Randolph – Condolences to the Bradshaw family. The recent event this weekend, were CRA funds used? (Mr. Johnson said there has been a community outreach effort to help fund the event; the CRA have spent funds for the entertainment.)

Vice Chair Theo Washington – Condolences to the Bradshaw family. Thanks to the CRA. Come out to the event this weekend and enjoy yourself. If I see the man who made those public comments about the CRA (he was a former employee), I will confront him respectfully.

Chair Angie Gardner – No report.

(Note: Director Daniels had no report and left early.)

ADJOURNMENT Chair Gardner **MOTIONS** for Adjournment of Meeting **MOVED** by Director Randolph; **SECOND** by Vice Chair Washington; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 8:21 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

APPROVED

Veronica L King, Town Clerk

Angie Gardner, Chair