



# HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

## COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 21, 2024, 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.*

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

**ROLL CALL** – Quorum was established through roll call by Nichole Washington in the Town Clerks absence.

**PRESENT:** (7) Chair Wanda Randolph, Vice-Chair Donovan Williams, Director Tarus Mack, Director Rodney Daniels, Director Angie Gardner, Director Theo Washington, Director Ruthi Critton (arrived after roll call at 6:40pm)

**STAFF:** (3) Nichole Washington, **Acting Town Clerk in the Town Clerk's absence;** Greg Jackson, **Attorney;** Laurie Nossair, **CRA Financial Coordinator**

#### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

#### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – 0**

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

1. Presentation/Discussion of the CRA Audit Report for FY 2022-2023 by Carl, Riggs & Ingram. (Heather Mosier presented findings from the 2022-2023 audit through PowerPoint) The report provides overall findings within the audit itself. It was an unqualified opinion, which means there was nothing materially misstated that needed changes in the auditor's opinion on the financial statements. The government auditing report standard reports on financial statements. The CRA has a stand-alone audit because of the compliance requirements with the Florida Statute. If you have over \$100,000 in revenue or expenses, you must have an independent stand-alone audit. There are specific components within that audit and compliance with section 163.387 in Florida Statutes. One of the requirements is to submit a budget to the county within 10 days (was not met). There were two audit adjustments, one was to balance the due to and due from between the town and the CRA. Those have to equal between the two, there was an adjustment on both sides with the town and the CRA in order to get that balanced. The TIF payments and rebate amounts were not properly posted to the financial statements. The CRA management letter discloses any prior findings and any compliance issues. Prior findings were not corrected. These are the same findings for the last couple of years. There is a significant new accounting policy that was implemented in the current year which did not affect the CRA. It is on subscription based IT arrangements and does not apply to the CRA. The CRA primary accounting estimates are your useful life of capital assets. There were no disagreements with management and no consultations with other accountants. There were no difficulties encountered during the audit. Ms. Laurie, the CRA financial coordinator, is keeping the records.

2. Discussion of Collaboration with P.E.C. for Zora Neale Hurston Festival – (NY Nathiri, Executive Director for Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community (PEC) provided handouts: 2021 Memorandum of Understanding, Eatonville Renaissance, Email indicating festival signage costs, and 2024 Zora! Festival Season Official Guide. NY Nathiri spoke on collaboration. Under the previous administration when Michael Johnson

was executive director it was discussed about the desirability of compiling a memorandum of understanding. PEC has experience in working with nonprofits and governmental agencies. A draft of a memorandum of understanding was issued for review and accepted on both sides (copied provided). Page two identifies the strengths of Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community and the CRA. Ny Nathiri desired to discuss how to grow cultural heritage tourism as a year-round activity. Eatonville is sitting in a very good place in terms of the marketplace Cultural heritage. Tourism is a multibillion-dollar industry. How do we take steps in leveraging the brand that is Eatonville, the intellectual and creative property? Hoping to come back with a year-round development proposal if the board is interested. There is \$25,000 available for the docent's trainings and the stipends. When people participate in workshops and training, they are given a stipend in addition to supplies and the trainers are paid to do the training. The board discussed possible interest in the \$1405 promotional bag with printing, request is for Mrs. NY Nithiri to bring back proposal with options. Suggest submitted to the new Executive Director. The Executive Director is on the agenda, there is an amended agenda that was emailed, and copies have been provided.

#### **BOARD DECISIONS:**

3. Approval of Resolution 2024-40 the CRA FY2024 – 2025 Budget Amendment #1 - Chair Randolph motion to APPROVE Resolution 2024-40 the CRA FY2024 – 2025 Budget Amendment #1 (Preamble Read) Ms. Laura explained reason for budget amendment. CRA received approval for a historical grant for \$1 million. In the last fiscal year, we received \$250,000 and we spent \$5,000 on the architect. When preparing the budget for the current fiscal year, the whole million dollars was put down, which should not have. Should have put \$750,000, the amount that the CRA will be receiving in this current fiscal year. The amendment is to reduce the budget by \$250,000 in the revenues and \$5,000 in the expenditures; moved by Director Daniels; second by Director Mack; AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Comments: The \$5,000 was spent on the architect for the Club Eaton project.

**(NOTE: Chair request was made to switch items 4 and 5 on the agenda)**

4. Approval of the CRA FY 2024-2025 October Financial Statements (original item #5) Ms. Laura explained the monthly statement of revenue and expenditures for the month of October, having interest earnings of \$2,629.60 and total expenditures of \$3569.64. Spend \$1400 on the grant program (Paint, Plant and Pave) as well as regular operating expenses. CRA received approval for a historical grant for \$1 million. In the - Chair Randolph motion to APPROVE Approval of the CRA FY 2024-2025 October Financial Statements (Preamble Read); moved by Director Gardner; second by Director Daniels; AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.

5. Approval of Resolution CRA-R-2024-38 Confirming Michael Johnson as Executive Director for the TOECRA (original item #4) (Preamble Read) - Chair Randolph motion to APPROVE Resolution CRA-R-2024-38 Confirming Michael Johnson as Executive Director; moved by Director Mack; second by Vice Chair Williams with question; Question: Director Daniels inquired to legal about the appropriate time to put another motion on the floor, if it is a condition of the employment which has already been resolved, it would have to be a separate motion made after the approval is done; AYE: Vice-Chair Donovan Williams, Director Tarus Mack, Director Angie Gardner, Director Theo Washington, NAYE: Chair Wanda Randolph, Director Rodney Daniels, Director Ruthi Critton; MOTION PASSES. Comments: Legal recommend that the second motion in question be brought back as an agenda item; Director Gardner clarified her desired conditions previously mentioned at a previous CRA meeting, the first condition was specific to doing work under agreement outside of CRA directorship when it relates to doing business in the town (already in the policy), second condition was Main Street, believing in the work of Main Street and that funding was given for three years as part of the agreement during approval of Main Street, it seemed only right that the town would reap the benefits of a Main Street. This had no bearing on hiring the Executive Directive.

#### **OTHER BOARD ACTIONS (not on the original agenda)**

**Director Daniels motion to APPROVE** the return of over \$150,000 of funds to the town from Main Street; **moved** by Director Critton; **second** by Chair Randolph; **AYE: Chair Wanda Randolph, Director Rodney Daniels; Director Ruthi Critton; NAYE: Vice-Chair Donovan Williams, Director Tarus Mack, Director Angie Gardner, Director Theo Washington; MOTION FAILS. Comments:** Legal recommend that this motion be brought back as an agenda item; some board members expressed concerns that facts were not provided to support the motion; Director Daniels presented a check of \$25,000 that went to Eatonville Main Street, also presented the SunBiz showing that the Florida Community Corporation doing business as the Eatonville Mainstream where Donald Williams was the president, stated that funds were issued by the town and the CRA in three payments of \$25,000 from the town and two payments of what is believed to be \$30,000 from the CRA. Director Gardner stated when taking office as Mayor in March 2022 knew Main Street was to liven up the Main Street. Understanding that Founders Day was in August of the same year while being asked by the council what was being done for Founder's Day, with no staff, Executive Director Johnson was contacted and asked if Main Street would help with the Founders Day? The funding that is being requested was used for all the events and entertainment towards Founder's Day, an email was presented which indicates that the funds in question were spent on Founder's Day in 2022. Main Street had just started in 2020 and had not done any fundraising, the only money it had to use for Founder's Day would have been from the town and the CRA, all that is needed is the report.

**Director Mack motion to APPROVE** that Michael Johnson receives back pay from the last CRA meeting because he was confirmed at that meeting; **moved** by Director Washington; **second** by Director Mack; **MOTIONS WITHDRAWN by Director Mack and Director Washington. (No further action) Comments:** The last meeting was not a confirmation it was a selection, the HR Coordinator and legal confirmed the difference between the confirmation and the selection. There is a selection, an offer, an agreement, or an acceptance of the agreement of the employment. The confirmation is that all parties understand and agree to the terms of the employment. That meeting at Denton Johnson was to outline the terms of what would be presented to the candidate to be an employee. Director Mack request proof of the selection.

**Director Mack motion to APPROVE** a salary increase Executive Director (Michael Johnson) from \$75,000 to \$85,000; **moved** by Director Mack; **second** by Vice Chair Williams; **MOTION WITHDRAWN by Director Mack and Vice Chair Williams. (No further action) Comments:** Can not be done without a budget amendment; when the offer was accepted at \$75,000 If there was a counter, it should not have been accepted and should have asked for more money. This motion does not align with the budget.

## **BOARD REPORTS:**

**Attorney (Greg Jackson)** – No Report

**Town Clerk** - No Report – No Report

**Director Rodney Daniels** – Read a letter by Mr. Mosley (Former CRA Attorney) concerning the issue of the \$150,000, the letter disclosed Main Street non-affiliation with the CRA or the Town, the attorney in the letter stated the efforts to request all records associated with the claims, and the intent of the town.

**Director Ruthi Critton** – Provided clarity that she does support the objectives of Main Street. I have heard good things about other Main Streets in other cities, my passion was for clarity and confirmation, not in opposition to to Main Street, believe in democracy and in the privileges that we have as board members, believe in the responsibility that we have as board members, as a board member who respects the responsibility of this position, I represent more than myself and my household when I sit here, do represent neighbors, children, people with different ideologies and perspectives, underneath all the passion and the excitement and decorum, there is a passion to do something good for the town. I was not appointed by the taxing authority, but by the council and appreciate the opportunity, respect the personalities and the properties of this community and I do understand the weight of representing those voices and do not take it lightly that they come to me and express their concerns; as it relates to the Main Street funds, have seen what is going on in the community, have heard what is being said in the community, will not pretend to take a side, but support documentation over conversation every day

of the week, do not speak for anyone that is not a resident or constituent that is covered by this agency, do listen to residents and neighbors and take into consideration what they have to say, if there is a conversation needed and if an allegation is made bringing worth and merit that it should be looked into, have a responsibility as a board member and will not get on board with something or oppose something because one person said something or another, the town, residents, and appointed seat deserves my due diligence, we are in transition and going in another direction, we might not agree but we all share a common goal to get rid of slum and blight, look forward to working with you as the newly confirmed director, know that you have a partner up here, not opposition. We are supposed to work together which requires respect, decorum, listening, and working together.

**Director Angie Gardner** – Provided clarity to the Main Street agreement, it states the Florida Community Corporation doing business as written on there, legal documents had to be executed in order to have a Main Street, Main Street becomes independent after three years and able to do things that government funding not the CRA could not do with less restrictions, the truth is in agreement, the rhetoric is wrong and misleading.

**Director Tarus Mack** – Want to put to motions on the floor (**recorded above under other board actions**)  
Legal recommend that this motion be brought back as an agenda item

**Director Theo Washington** – No Report

**Vice Chair Donovan Williams** – we have a plan implemented since 1997, let us stick to the plan, work the plan, this town used to be self-sufficient, had our own fire truck and garbage truck, we had everything, let us work together and get back to that, everyone has to be community serving, not self-serving.

**Chair Wanda Randolph** – according to the bylaws, the chair of the board assumes the position for executive director in the absence of an executive director, had no idea that this was going to take this long, the HR designee worked so hard to try to make sure that things were going in the right direction. Attorney Jackson was always notified about what we need to do to get to the next step. There were some processes that had to be set up that were not established. We never in the history of this town had over 25 applications, the board wanted to be a part of the process, efforts was done to make sure you were a part of it, I would recommend to send out to an agency and the board make a decision based upon the recommendation of the agency, met with Mr. Johnson to over the programs and discussed ways to make improvements; reported out on accomplishment showing pictures, programs are already written, but some deficiencies in them, have made recommendations to Mr. Johnson, there is the facade program for the motel (the restaurant portion), this program requires three persons on an advisory board, the demolition program, resident is located on Washington Street, home needed to be demolished, resident received her reimbursement, the paint, paint and plant program that was completed on a home that needed to be painted, 4Roots vegetables, fruits and vegetables mobile produce takes place on 4th Wednesday of the month, about 40 people attended the vision session for Club Eaton, there are several pending applications for various programs, CRA plan sunset is in 2026, have bylaws pending, have the interlocal agreement, request consideration of compensation for the time spent as an executive director; Mr. Johnson can start on Monday.

**ADJOURNMENT** Chair Wanda Randolph Motions for Adjournment of Meeting (**Moved** by Chair Randolph; **Second** by Director Gardner; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 8:13 P.M.**)

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**APPROVED**

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**Veronica L King, Town Clerk**

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**Wanda Randolph, Chair**