1. **REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES -February 22, 2012 (Regular Meeting) (ATTACHMENT - #1)**

Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment Agency Regular Meeting

City of Riviera Beach Council Chambers

2nd Floor, Municipal Complex

600 West Blue Heron Boulevard

Riviera Beach, Florida

Monday, February 22, 2012

6:39 p.m. to 8:34 p.m.

APPEARANCES:

Chairperson Judy Davis

Vice Chair Billie Brooks

Commissioner Shelby Lowe

Commissioner Dawn Pardo

Commissioner Cedrick Thomas

Attorney Michael Haygood

CRA Executive Director Tony Brown

CRA Administrative Director Darlene Hatcher

(At 6:39 p.m. Vice Chair Brooks called the meeting to order. The following were present: Vice Chair Billie Brooks, Commissioner Dawn Pardo, Commissioner Shelby Lowe. Also present: Executive Director Tony Brown and Attorney Michael Haygood.)

(Moment of silence, followed by the pledge of allegiance.)

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Any there any additions or deletions?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: No, there are not.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Adoption of the agenda. May I have a motion, please?

COMMISSIONER LOWE: So moved.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Second.

(The vote was unanimous and motion carried.)

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Consent agenda. Would any of you like to have any items removed for discussion?

Can we have a motion then to --

COMMISSIONER LOWE: Move consent.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Second.

(The vote was unanimous and motion carried.)

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Regular business. Clean and Safe initiative report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: At our December meeting you asked the CRA to look at the resources we have deployed in our redevelopment area, and particularly in our trouble spots, after an incident on Singer Island, and other incidents, particularly

shootings and other matters in our neighborhood. You wanted to see if we could have a more robust program and a better enhanced relationship with the Riviera Beach Police Department. You requested that I provide this report to you in January. We requested an additional amount of time in that we brought in a consultant who talked to members of our community, over 20 individuals, to hear and understand their concerns about safety, to hear their perceptions regarding safety, but to more importantly act as a facilitator between the CRA and the Riviera Beach Police Department as we had each developed strategic ideas for our safety program. This is our joint report and presentation to you regarding our recommendations. If our recommendations are largely accepted, then at our next meeting we will bring to you budget amendments to reflect the recommendations that we have in this report.

The recommendation that the chief and I are making, with support from the city manager, is that we are recommending that we sunset the old Clean and Safe Program. That program, through an interlocal agreement, is one in which we pay for primarily two police officers, and other miscellaneous things, to provide enhanced safety in our CRA area. We believe that we can enhance our partnership through a more innovative program.

We think we could invest more heavily in crime fighting prevention technology, invest in community policing techniques. With these community policing techniques, we have a

recommendation of the geographies that we would target: Obviously neighborhood hot spots, the Broadway corridor, the Blue Heron corridor, the Ocean Mall, and the Municipal Marina. And overall our recommendation is to improve community involvement.

In terms of Clean and Safe investment in crime prevention technology, the police department has done a very detailed analysis of the types of technology they would like to invest within the city. There is a map and a plan to pretty much create a technological network throughout our city to utilize the latest technology: Surveillance cameras, auto license plate readers, ShotSpotter, which we would put into our neighborhoods. Crime reports and analysis to look at the part one, part two types crime; that not only talks about the types of crimes but when those crimes are committed, the time of day and the types of crime. Then the police department has what they consider their Real Time SKY1 Center.

Our recommendation to the board is that we would take a lead investment in the police department's investment in technology. We would recommend that we reallocate out of our BB&T loan proceeds about $250,000. We will need to get the bank's approval, but we think that with it being largely equipment that will be made available for the public benefit, we don't see any opposition to that.

We know there are businesses and condo associations and

others who would like to participate, and that we identify perhaps having a fund raising goal of about $50,000. And we know there are significant grant funds available in pursuit of things like homeland security, given our Port, the proximity of the Port and our city, and other areas that is important in relation to homeland security; and other significant grant programs that even the consultant in her report, Ms. Miller, highlighted in your background material.

By reallocating the funds from our BB&T loan proceeds, we had a contingency line item that we held over, so this would not affect the bundle of goods that you have previously approved; so this allocation would for the most part be budget neutral.

In terms of community policing techniques, this is perhaps where we're making the most significant reallocation of our program strategy. We would recommend that of the two police officers that we fund, that one of those positions would be reallocated to allow us to hire a full-time public safety administrator.

In working with the police department, we would draft new job descriptions for any police officers assigned to and paid for by the CRA, to be a lot more specific in their duties and responsibilities.

One of the things that was of issue and concern is how might we help the city and the police department deploy officers when there are special events, during holidays. As we examine

the crime reports where there are hot spots and the police department intends to do sting operations, we would establish what we call an overtime, an extra duty budget, to allow the police department to do targeted deployment. And we are proposing that we create and manage a Community Ambassadors Program.

This is presently our Clean and Safe budget, it's $353,000. 101,000 was carried over from last year of unspent money. This is the budget that for the most part we would reallocate, hire the full-time safety administrator. The primary responsibility of this position would be grant writing. We would create a public safety committee, and have enhanced community involvement. This person could attend the various civic meetings, and address the issue of safety, and share police reports. The police reporting would be an important component of this position, to look at crime in our neighbors, in our CRA, and to work with the police department to address those hot spots. And then most importantly this position would also manage the Community Ambassador Program.

What is the Community Ambassador Program? You're looking at pictures of University City District in Philadelphia, that many people in community development point to as having a very active community presence. These can be volunteers or it can be paid staff that are primarily focused in Clean and Safe. Their uniforms make them easily identifiable, hats, T-Shirts. They

can be on bikes, Segues. They will escort individuals to their cars at night. During the day they would have primarily litter patrol; they would pick up trash; if there are receptacles that are in our public streets that are full, they could call and have those emptied. In fact there probably needs to be an investment in public receptacles where we don't have many along Broadway and Blue Heron. They would be a resource to tourists, in providing direction and escorting them at night to their cars. This is particularly an issue at Ocean Mall; because of environmental concerns, the lighting at night is dark. So providing an escort or having the ability to provide an escort would perhaps enhance our whole customer service and orientation towards safety.

We would plan to allocate a budget for this year, that we would propose to increase over time, and to have a very visible presence along Blue Heron, the Broadway corridor, Ocean Mall, and the marina.

The next item you asked us to address, particularly as it related to Singer Island and the earlier proposal in negotiations between the city and Catalfumo, was a police substation. We are recommending that we negotiate with OMRD, Catalfumo, in negotiating a substation. We think the substation would not only provide stop for the police department but could also be the home base of our ambassador program and provide other community service benefits.

We have submitted written requests to OMRD, asking that they would provide for us the space in kind. The last and the final building is yet to be constructed, but even presently the vacancy rate is about 40 percent. We were successful in negotiating in kind space for our Clean and Safe officers in the former Bank of America building, and so we have shared that lease agreement with Catalfumo, requesting the same. In that this space is shell space, that the interior tenant improvements have yet to be built, we would propose that the CRA pay for the tenant build out of that space.

Again, we would pursue this as being budget neutral. In talking with the city manager, we would reallocate up to $100,000 out of the nearly $800,000 that we have in reserve for city services that were provided to the CRA by the city. And the CRA would cover the annual occupancy expenses like utilities and other matters.

The chief and I talked about private security and more security for the Ocean Mall. And it is our recommendation that private security, or whether or not the property manager would want to pay for off duty police officers, but that the lease terms do provide for the property manager to set up security as a common area maintenance expense. And by doing that, that the cost of security would then be paid for by the tenants. And so it is our recommendation that if this board felt that there needed to be more of a security presence, whether it's public or

private security, we would suggest that the responsibility of the property manager, and under the terms of the lease, could be paid for as a common area maintenance expense, which is typical for commercial properties. That is the sum total of our recommendations, and I'll take questions at this time.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Let's first go to public comments. Gerald Ward.

MR. WARD: Gerald Ward, 31 West 20th. Somehow hiring another employee of CRA, called a public safety administrator, strikes me as lack of cooperation between police and the CRA. I really think you need to start asking some hard questions. From the standpoint of governmental structure, I just see more conflicts generated at the administrative level between two departments. And we haven't done well with this business of having the city fund through funds of the CRA, being funded by the CRA, so there needs to be discussion on this before you go forward with a new position.

In the interim, I didn't understand how the current officers would pick up the public administration duties and then continue their current law enforcement duties.

The rent-a-cop side, I think you need to have discussions with the tenants of the various entities, the city marina and the Ocean Mall, before you start to implement this. In other areas you do find that private hired folks can be useful. The marina has not had a good relationship with the advent of armed

officers; they seem to be using it as a second job.

I would also suggest that the OMRD problem with a police substation needs to be more of a contract administration. It will really surprise me if the four agreements adopted in December 2006 totally eliminated that responsibility. But I can tell you the Ocean Mall is not being well utilized, the square footages. And the same contract administration should be implored to say why do we have a dump in the southwest corner. That is just obnoxious; and it creates the types of problems that you see when things aren't looking prim and pictorially good. So somebody needs to follow up and say why would we have a dump in the corner of the Ocean Mall.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: That's it for comments on item 6. I open it up now to my colleagues' comments.

MS. LEONARD: Excuse me. I turned in a card.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Why don't you just come up. I don't see the card. I had it for public comment but not --

MS. LEONARD: Warrie Leonard, Riviera Beach, Florida. When you go back to BB&T and ask for that 200 and some thousand dollars just for the area of the CRA, ask for $400,000. If they're going to renegotiate it, include the total city.

I don't think we need two police departments. It should go under the chief, one police department.

Don't forget about the total city, because the total city is paying for all of this; so if you're going to go back and

renegotiate, make sure you think about the total city. We want to be safe also.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Mr. Brown, you were talking about the cameras. Can you tell me who is going to monitor the cameras?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: The monitoring will be done by the Riviera Beach Police Department. They have done an extensive analysis of both the need, the type of equipment, and how we would interface with the existing technology, so the recommendation is really based on their proposal.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Are we proposing cameras at the Ocean Mall; or along the Blue Heron corridor, heading west?

CHIEF WILLIAMS: Clarence Williams, police chief. We're proposing cameras at the Ocean Mall. This would include the marina and the corridors, Broadway and Blue Heron.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: We would have cameras on Blue Heron, by the Ocean Mall?

CHIEF WILLIAMS: The proposal for the number of cameras would include a deployment on Blue Heron and within the Ocean Mall, yes.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: And the police department would monitor those cameras like they do the rest of the cameras around the city?

CHIEF WILLIAMS: Yes. What we're proposing is that the cameras become part of our current system; they will be linked with our real time information center, and they will be

monitored and controlled as our current deployment of cameras are.

One of the other things that we are thinking about doing is creating possibly smaller sub units of those deployments, so that the servers and the support apparatus could be maintained say at the police substation on the Ocean Mall.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: With regard to the public safety administrator, Mr. Brown, you had made a comment about the duties of this person; and this person would update the civic organizations and the neighborhoods about what's going on with the policing. One thing I want to make clear, especially to Singer Island, that has these civic associations, what we're talking about here is just for the CRA district. Now if we implement the police substation, then we will have our police department over there. And the police department is really responsible for the neighborhoods, everything north of the Ocean Mall. So it's all well and good if we do move forward with this public safety administrator, but that person would just be talking about the safety inside the CRA district. And we're still relying on our police officers to really update the neighborhoods, because those are the guys who are driving through the neighborhoods and helping out with the crime issues on the island.

This public safety administrator, have you spoken with the city to see if we could have someone in the police department do

the job?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: This is the conversation I've had obviously with Chief Williams and how we define the current use of the two CRA officers. And I think that that conversation will continue. If we can hire from within, and utilize an existing position, we would be more than open to doing that.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: I would rather go through that, instead of going out and hiring another person and really creating more government. I think that's what this is doing, is creating more government. If we can work something out with the police department, I know I would feel better about it. No one knows our city better than our police officers and the chief. And I think they understand the needs of the CRA, because they're doing it right now; but they also understand the needs of the neighborhoods. And right now I'm talking about Singer Island. If we move forward with the substation, like I said earlier, you're going to have the Riviera Beach police in there also, right? Just like we did when we had the police substation for years, before they demolished it.

CHIEF WILLIAMS: If the CRA director feels he needs an additional body to spearhead those efforts, managing the ambassadors, scheduling, all the administrative responsibilities that are going to be part of that, if we add fleet to that, that's going to be additional administrative responsibilities that will be added to that process. Can we get there currently

using the two CRA officers the way they're deployed? I don't believe that we can.

So if we're going to utilize the existing folks, then we're going to have to redefine what their responsibilities are and who is going to then absorb the administrative responsibilities for those persons, and how is that cost handled.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: So the discussion is continuing?

CHIEF WILLIAMS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Have we thought about possibly just using outside security throughout the CRA? We talk about having guys on segues or golf carts, and also the ambassador program. Are we going to be paying these people or --

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: The recommendation would be to do a combination of volunteers and paid staff, focusing on paid. We see the ambassadors as not necessarily a private security force, but they're goodwill employees that are picking up trash; they are not armed officers, but they may have police radios, that if they see crime or some suspicious behavior they can contact the police department directly.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: So they become employees?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Then we need to look at the cost; because if they become employees, now we're talking about health benefits. And I guess if they're with the CRA they're not union employees, correct? So that's something we need to think about

too.

I think it would be prudent for us also to look at the cost of outside security. In addition to the officers that we have, with the outside security it could be more cost effective.

Otherwise, I think it's great; and I like the fact that you guys are working together and trying to bring a great program. We have more businesses coming in and we have more people buying into Riviera Beach, because they see what's going on. We need to make sure everyone is secure.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Commissioner Lowe? Any questions or comments?

COMMISSIONER LOWE: No. But I would say this isn't new science that we're talking about; several communities have implemented such strategies. And hopefully we can look at perhaps West Palm Beach and Delray, and use that resource and set this up. I think we are definitely moving in the right direction in terms of providing a secure environment for our Ocean Mall and the entire CRA. The Ambassador Program is a really helpful program, and I think it would serve the community well.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: I met with Mr. Brown, and I was convinced that this is a program that could really work for us. We want our citizens to feel like they're safe. I believe that all of the parties, Chief, and Mr. Brown, you all have met and you have pretty much agreed on this. Or Chief, do you think

there is some tweaking here that we need to hear from you on?

CHIEF WILLIAMS: Conceptually we're there. And the devil is always in the details. But your direction to he and I was clear; and I think we're moving in that direction. And I think what we agreed on conceptually are positions that we can both live with. And certainly where resource issues and funding, where that comes into play, we'll be seeking to work that through the appropriate mechanisms.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Mr. Brown, you stated that right now this is cost neutral for our current 2011. As we go forward to the next year, are we going to need to look at more funding?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: Yes, particularly if you authorize us to fund a pretty ambitious Ambassador Program, that we would probably need to double the budget.

One of the things we did this past summer, utilizing BRIC as our contractor, we hosted a meeting with all the realtors and major property owners, and we invited every realtor that had a for sale and lease sign in our city, and we asked the question why aren't you moving real estate. Aside from the economics issue, they universally felt that even when they have tenants, and they walk around and they look at the blight and the city's reputation, that we are perceived as being unsafe. One of the biggest impediments to our whole economic development isn't our ability to do new construction, it's really addressing the perception of, are we a clean city, are we seen as an

economically vibrant city; and folks who do lease space and want to work at night, that they can walk across the street.

The Bank of America building is empty. Lockheed Martin used to occupy over half the building. They moved their employees to West Palm; mainly because they were afraid at night to walk across the street to the main campus. We have to fix that. If we don't, we will not succeed.

COMMISSIONER LOWE: How soon can we have these ambassadors deployed? Is it going to be this year or --

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: Given the direction we have, we will do the budget amendment at our next meeting. With that there are a couple ways we can introduce the ambassador program. The more costly way is you can bring in a contractor, they can bring in their own crew, they can be manpower ready. That would be very expensive. The other one is we can build our own program; that would be without the overhead and the margin of a contractor doing it, and that would be more time consuming. So between the two, we will present to you what we think the cost will be in both scenarios. So if you feel that time is of the essence, then we can look at how other CRAs are utilizing contract help to bring a program in place more immediately.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Mr. Brown, in the recommendation here, item 6, the tenants, owners of the Ocean Mall and marina should pay for private security as a common maintenance expense or the city should allocate a portion of its revenue from the

Enterprise Fund. With regards to the Ocean Mall, I know the business owners over there, they pay a fairly high rent right now to Catalfumo, and I think that's something that maybe Catalfumo should be providing to the businesses. I would think if you're a business owner over there, you expect to have security. And for us to turn around and tell them that they're going to be charged for security, I don't think that's right. Catalfumo has the lease over there, and he should be providing security. So if anything, we should be getting something from him.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: On this matter I conferred with the city attorney and we reviewed the Catalfumo lease. And what the lease does, it does allow Catalfumo to charge for security, as well as landscaping, parking, and other things. And I'm paraphrasing the exact language in the lease agreement. Now whether Catalfumo pays that or whether or not in their lease agreement they can do a pass through, that they can pass that cost on to their commercial tenants -- it is common in commercial property that the cost to maintain landscaping and other things are done outside of the lease term, and is done as a pass through based on the amount of square footage that the business occupies.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: Do we know if they are being charged right now?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: We do not.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Any other comments? Item number 7.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: Less than a year ago the board directed us, CRA staff, to come forward immediately with a redevelopment plan for Riviera Beach Heights. Riviera Beach Heights is the neighborhood in our southwest corner. It is one of our largest neighborhoods in our CRA, and represents one of the oldest portions of the city. And many of our residents have said that the whole basis for which the CRA was formed was to do redevelopment in the Riviera Beach Heights area. So today we're presenting to you our plan for Riviera Beach Heights, that is the result of two community forums that have addressed the concerns in the neighborhood, as well as some research from our consultants, Song and Associates and LDC, who were on point in putting together our plan.

You probably look at this title page and say, well, what do blankets and a quilt have to do with economic development. As we look at Riviera Beach Heights, we see opportunity and we also see problems. And the opportunity has been based on disparate actions by the county, by the state, and others, who have put forth economic development plans to some extent at the expense of our neighborhood. We think that we can take those pieces, those patches, and quilt them together, stitch that economic opportunity together, for what we hope is the betterment of our neighborhood.

Song and Associates, in doing their research, found a

resident in Riviera Beach Heights, Lela Lewis, who was highlighted on the website for her quilt making. And for us, what we're presenting to you today is sort of symbolic of what we think the opportunities and what the action plan needs to be for the CRA as it relates to the Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood, that hopefully, effectively we can create unit from disconnected patches.

What we heard from our residents is that they wanted security, crime watch; that they wanted to take back their parks. One of the residents, when we were sitting in her neighborhood, talked about the fact that her grand kids cannot go down to the park because it's been taken over by drug dealers, and that that is unacceptable.

Our business community wanted a distinction and neighborhood unity with the trucks that come down State Road 710; and in many cases that they stop before the Port is open, that it creates disturbances in the neighborhood, and so they wanted traffic calming, community gardens. Hopefully we listened well and we are presenting to you the plan that will allow us to execute on our community's concerns.

Not everyone knows particularly where Riviera Beach Heights is. So I think it's important if we can get on the same page as we look at the demographics of the area and the economic conditions. The first disclaimer, the CRA does not encompass all of Riviera Beach Heights; we encompass a portion of it. The

portion that we do encompass is largely residing in two census tracts, 1404 and 1403. When you look at the census tract, and this is census data, 50 percent of the families earn less than 24,000; so 50 percent earn more, 50 percent earn less. What is intriguing about this neighborhood, and when I talk about the community being surrounded by industrial uses, between our industrial park, between the Port of Palm Beach, there are 5,000 jobs that surround this neighborhood; but yet this neighborhood has an unemployment rate that is one and a half to three times higher than the national average. A community surrounded by 5,000 jobs is one of our highest unemployed census tracts within our CRA. The persons living below poverty at 32 percent and 40 percent at the census tract is 3 to 4 times higher than the countywide average. And the rate of home ownership at 43 percent and 27 percent is substantially below the countywide average.

To be more specific where this community is located, it is between Australian Avenue and Old Dixie Highway, between 10th Street and 6th Street.

When we did our community forum we used the term hodgepodge, which by definition means unrelated parts. And we apologized to members of the community, that it wasn't meant to be disrespectful to the community. But as I'm going to explain, the things that we talk about, these disconnected parts, is that one aspect of this community is that it's surrounded by

industrial land uses. And a lot of times we talk about the economic development strength of our city being that it does have a strong industrial base.

A major role in expansion, State Road 710, MLK, is set to split the connections of the community. It will divide the community into two parts.

When you go down some of the streets, aside from MLK, when you drive down 10th Street, 7th Street, 6th Street, you find immaculate homes, you find significant pride of home ownership. But next door to an immaculate maintained home could be a duplex, a four-plex. And the whole zoning aspect of what has happened to this neighborhood makes that a hodgepodge. Single family detached home ownership, mixed with affordable rental and absentee landowners that have not maintained the quality of their property to the extent of their owner occupied neighbor.

This community has also been impacted by the economic conditions, high vacancy and foreclosure rates; old and aging infrastructure from deferred maintenance from our city, as well as from the lack of investments from the CRA.

The community is perhaps one of our most active group of residents, in that we feel that the community resources are not effectively leveraged, that the community has told us repeatedly that they desire a safe and pedestrian friendly community, and that the resident needs and the economic opportunities are not integrated. The fact that this community is surrounded by 5,000

jobs and has the highest unemployment rate in our city relates to this fact that the economic opportunities and the needs of our residents are not integrated.

We presented our vision statement to the community. There were no proposed modifications. We shared that Riviera Beach is a safe, beautiful, family friendly, walkable community, where the residents and our businesses and the neighborhood flourish. How do we get there? Because today those opportunities are not stitched. The Port is an economic engine, but its borders are unattractive. Our goal would be that the Port's transition into our neighborhoods should mitigate those adverse impacts.

Old Dixie Highway is a major street, but it's economic impact is not leveraged. The goal that we have there is that we could create or sustain a vital neighborhood business district.

State Road 710. The Port of Palm Beach is our nation's top 20 ports for containers. The trucks that can go from the Port of Palm Beach on the east coast to the Port on the west coast travel State Road 710. It is the state's vision to connect the west coast to the east coast. So this road expansion will leave our neighborhood divided. With that division, we have to think about how we create a dramatically new community where the neighborhood is connected, where those linkages are bold and visible.

Our city is growing into a dynamic waterfront city, but our streetscape is unwelcoming and the environment is believed to be

unsafe.

So as we move into our goals, we're here to say that the city and the CRA are not the only players. And in fact when you think of Riviera Beach Heights as being in the center of this quilt, that the two major players having the biggest impact is the state and the Port of Palm Beach in the road improvements. As a city our size, that though the state and the county may view the Port and our industrial base as an economic engine, that we have discovered that when the county and its community development priority has not named not only this neighborhood in our city but not any neighborhood in our city as a redevelopment priority area, we said that we need to fix that.

All federal money, because our city is less than a 50,000 population, all the federal money from HUD goes through the county. And the county has set redevelopment priority areas, the Glades, other areas throughout the county, but not one neighborhood in Riviera Beach Heights. And we met with Commissioner Taylor, and she pledged her support to try to help fix that.

So our goals, recognizing that the Port is an international trading hub and its transition into the neighborhood shall be dramatically appealing, we're recommending a budget of over a million three; half of which will come from the CRA, in terms of burying the underground utilities and designing a landscape buffer. But with your direction, we're asking if you will give

us permission to visit with the Port and ask them to step up their investment, whether directly or through the attraction of grants, to make a half million dollar investment to ensure that their transition into our neighborhoods are appealing.

This is what the residents, or if you're a business owner at MLK and Old Dixie -- we did a bus tour, and went to one of the beauty salons, and the owner talked about this is what she and her customers sitting in her chairs have to look at. This is not symbolic of a vibrant community.

We believe that this is. So our urban design concept and our conversation with the Port is to do the things around their edges so that the investment in our neighborhood and the transition in our neighborhood is appealing and it illustrates the economic vitality.

Our second goal: That the area businesses shall thrive and provide convenient access to goods and services for residents. You can see that highlighted on the western edge of Old Dixie Highway appears to be one of the traditional business districts. It is not distinct. Our proposal is to provide grants to businesses and improve businesses access to capital through the creation or the investment of a micro loan fund, whether we create one ourselves or you direct us to invest in any of the local funds. This would represent an investment of nearly a million two. The business incentives and the micro loan fund representing about a million bucks. And the neighborhood signs

and gateway signs to give a sense of arrival, to provide a distinct neighborhood setting.

This is standing on the Port's property looking west at MLK and Old Dixie. J and W Grocery Store. You can see the condition of this neighborhood. Working with the business owners and the way finding signs and other things to tell the trucks that you are in a neighborhood business district, slow down, respect our area. And create that sense of arrival so that cars that are passing by, where today they may zoom and not stop, that they become intrigued and stop and support our businesses.

Looking at another corner, on the other corner -- and coincidentally this property is owned by one individual who has pledged to invest heavily and to stay in the neighborhood, to work with that business owner and to help them achieve their dream to create jobs and provide additional goods and services to the neighborhood.

There's another slide that I will talk about the vision that our consultants created in trying to link the industrial aspects of the Port and our industrial park in a way that the signage and the monuments are somewhat symbolic of the cranes and the trains that you might see at the Port, but done in a way that is distinct for the neighborhood.

The next one is invest in a dramatic new neighborhood; that we recognize that the road investments by the state, by the

federal government, wherever that money is coming from, requires us to come up with a new urban community design; that we propose to create a sense of arrival; that sense of arrival will allow us to calm traffic and create safer streets; and that we'll do things to try to enhance pedestrian access and walkability. This is another major investment that we established as a high priority, the bulk of dollars being spent in 2013; and the money being invested in the city streets, Avenue I, J and L. MLK is a state road. Australian is a state road. Old Dixie Highway is a state road. So we would leverage our investment on the city's roads.

This rendering reflects the proposed green space that FDOT would propose to invest.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Go back to page 20, please.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: This is the current condition of the street. You're going to probably hear from the community, and I know a number of residents here, that were at our community forum, were concerned about the impact of their property at Australian and State Road 710, and what DOT had proposed to do in impacting them on eminent domain, whether it's a full take or partial take, and they'll talk about that. But what we directed our consultants to do is to understand what the FDOT design would do to the neighborhood and how we could leverage it for the benefit of our community in order to achieve their goals.

The trees and the green space on the south side of the street sort of represent what DOT is looking to make. If we want to upgrade the street lights and the foliage, that would be an incremental investment that we would make. Again, the signage that says welcome to Riviera Beach Heights. And as I said, the monument was sort of reflective that when you look at the Port and the cranes, it ties in the industrial surrounding to the neighborhood. Now if you're a big truck, you're coming into an area, and you were doing 50 or 60 miles per hour, working with FDOT to slow it down, they know that you are now in a residential area and slow down.

MR. CLEARY: Mark Cleary, with Song & Associates. The trees that were shown on the south side do have enhancements. FDOT has offered to work with us, and they'll put their basic funding in; but if we want to improve what they're doing, the lighting, etc., and have a higher quality, they're willing to work with us.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: This is a conceptual design. You'll hear shortly of our process of how we would work further with the community to ensure that the design, the way finding signage and the color scheme, reflect a broader consensus; but this is sort of the ideas of what's been presented to date.

(Commissioner Thomas is now on the dais.)

Looking at MLK, and looking south at Avenue I, this is the city streets, and this is the current condition. You see vacant

land here because this is where -- I think this property is owned by FDOT, and where they would propose to expand the road and put their green space buffer. Our consultants would recommend that we invest in the transition in the neighborhood and carry that theme, carry that beautification into the interior part of our community.

This is our industrial park. This is a right-of-way; it was supposed to be a street, and for whatever reason the city just stopped. But it dead ends at this wall, which is the line from our industrial park area. And the consultants have looked at it and said, well, we can do something unique to that, we can create little pocket parks, and do it in a way that enhances safety and doesn't become another dead end for unsavory activities.

The other idea, if you look at these types of streets where they just dead end and don't create any type of distinct terminus, is recognize the heroes from the community, those that have made major contributions that the residents would like to honor, or family members that they would like to honor. So these are ideas of what we can do as these streets sort of dead end and the rights-of-way have just stopped and there is no plan to continue those streets.

Again, this was a right-of-way. I guess it was intended to be a street, but it's not. So this is the condition of that right-of-way. And so our discussion would be to invest as a

walkable linear park that would beautify it and enhance the connection of the kids as they go into the neighborhood. Again I want to say as a disclaimer, as we talk about these park concepts, the community wanted to make sure that the foliage and the things that we do, that we have a focus as an enhanced safety and that the investment in green spaces don't have unintended consequences.

MR. GRANBERRY: Randall Granberry, Land Developments Consortium. It also provides an opportunity where the children walking to West Rivera Elementary School don't have to proceed out to Australian Avenue to get to the school. We thought this would be a great feature so the children that's from internally in the neighborhood can access the school without having to walk out onto a major arterial road.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: When we say hodgepodge, it was the vision for arterial connections and the street to go, and for whatever reason it stopped, and stopping meant that what do we do now if the community or the city doesn't desire to reconnect the street, should it just look plain? And we think that we can do better than that for this neighborhood.

Invest in a dramatic new neighborhood. CRA investments shall enhance a safe, beautiful and family friendly community. We need to invest in the neighborhood. We need to help increase home ownership. As I said, it's two, three times lower than the countywide average.

There is a need for quality affordable rental housing. So we need to invest and improve the quality of rental housing.

You may know that this is worded different. We used to say aggressive code enforcement. What we've come to find out, aggressive code enforcement puts liens on the properties, and that these liens grow if the property owner hasn't corrected their infraction. And so it's not so much whether or not the code enforcement officers are putting liens, it's what we can do to help the property owner resolve those liens; or if they have no intention of doing it, then what can we do aggressively to get control of the property; working with the community for the property owners that are absent, that are not maintaining the same quality as the home owners that love this community and have invested heavily in their property, is that we plan to work closely with them to let them know that their neighbor who doesn't have the same affinity and affection is an unwelcome neighbor.

This one is where our partnership with the county is significantly important. Neighborhoods like Riviera Beach, across the country, neighborhoods like Riviera Beach in Palm Beach County, have been given tens of millions of dollars to help stabilize the neighborhood, from HUD, Neighborhood Stabilization Fund. In our meeting with the county we've talked about getting grant resources matched with our funding to acquire the vacant and abandoned properties, to help stabilize

the neighborhood. Once we get a scale of properties, we can then attract property owners and developers who can come in and construct new properties or do in-fill housing and allow individuals to buy and fix up some of the vacant and abandoned homes that we feel are architecturally sound and can be renovated.

Our consultants have looked at all the types of neighborhood investments in the neighborhood between Australian and Old Dixie in our CRA and have put together a pretty ambitious tool kit for us to use that would be infrastructure investments and allow us to provide incentives to property owners. Not all investments should be made into the real estate, but knowing that we'll have to invest in programs, this one is a slide to deal with the types of things we can do to enhance safety. We need to also do things to help create work force development programs so our residents can take advantage of the 5,000 jobs that surround their neighborhood.

As we proposed to you that we needed a different conduit than just the redevelopment agency, we asked for your support and you approved the formation of the Riviera Beach Community Development Corporation. The CRA has proposed to provide the staffing and program support for this entity; and that working through the CDC, the plan that we presented today with your direction is the plan that the CDC and Board in working with the community would refine and implement the community reinvestment

plan. The budget for it we think is nominal. You've allowed us to hire a community development officer which will manage this resource, and our annual program budget of about 150,000 would be the initial budget set. And as the community and the residents came up with other program ideas, we can see that investment grow.

As a government entity we were not eligible for foundation dollars and grant funds, and the CDC would allow us to do that. We told you that we wanted the Community Development Corporation to be certified as a Community Housing Development Organization, a CHDO, which meant that under Federal guidelines that they wanted community accountability, so that the board could appoint no more than a third of their members. And as we recommended, that 13 members be appointed and elected, solely at their discretion, by community based organizations.

The next slide is just a quick budget recap. This is a 25 million dollar plan. We are looking at making an investment over the next five years. We've identified our funding sources between current TIF revenue, our BB&T proceeds where you have allocated 2.7 million for the neighborhood, and the big assumption is how the CDC will attract grant money and private investment to implement the neighborhood plan. We have broken it down by each of our goal statements, so you can see the total dollar amount and how the dollars would be invested over time. The assumption that the Port would make a contribution, or would

be a conduit for a contribution for that landscape, the transition into our neighborhoods from the Port's boundaries. Patch work number two, the neighborhood business district is a million two investment, the bulk of which we propose to make in the next two years. And the dollars going into our business incentive program and providing a micro loan fund so that these small businesses will have enhanced access to capital, in an effort to populate the space that we hope in working with the property owner that we can make distinctive. The big investment, the dramatic new neighborhood is a huge investment, and it is aspirational but it reflects the partnership that we need to create with the county to attract the money that we know that the president has made available throughout his administration; and that unfortunately where the county has secured well in excess of 25 million dollars for two rounds, that our community and this community has not been a participant nor is eligible to participate in the monies that the county has gotten to date.

And as you implored me and my staff, you have said it is time for us to stop talking. You wanted action. You wanted action immediately. We think that we understand the needs of the community; we've gotten their direction. We know it's not a perfect plan. We know there are other concerns that the community has as it relates to areas outside of your control that are being impacted upon us largely by the state, and its

importance to be able to save jobs in order to export goods to the Caribbean.

So our plan isn't meant to fight the Port; it's meant to recognize that the Port is an economic engine for our region. It does place some demands that as an economic engine, to respect our edges, to make an investment in the beautification of our city. And that together with your businesses, we'll work with our residents to create the work force development program so that we can tackle the high unemployment rate in that neighborhood that is unfathomable when you consider that that neighborhood is surrounded by 5,000 jobs.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: We have one card. Mr. Ward.

MR. WARD: Gerald Ward, 31 West 20th Street. If you look at pages 18, 19, and 20, which sort of defines the project and then culminates with the 15 million dollars, let's really throw some money at things; but much of it is signage, gateway signage, 60,000 in 2012, 80,000 in 2013, 80,000 in 2016. Those are all things that have been in the previous plans. We're two and a half years from the last plan that you approved, where you could have had work going on by Christmas of that particular year. It seems like you come in and say, oh, we have this great new plan, but you never turn around and issue the construction contract. The last plan didn't even require some construction contracts; it said let's give everybody an identity sign for every house and every business in the Riviera Beach Heights,

something that could have been done quickly. We're now years since, nothing's been done. I really don't see some sidewalks here, some signage. There is no real emphasis on making the neighborhood accessible. But you are the ones that have not beat up on staff to see to it that there's bricks and mortar being accomplished every time you have approved a plan. It takes years. We have had 300 to 500 thousand dollars over the past four years for Riviera Beach Heights, and we haven't spent any of it on bricks and mortar. People get frustrated.

And the Old Dixie/Martin Luther King intersection is the only reason that you guys exist. That was the area that needed slum and blight clearance. The rest of the city could redevelop with responsible CDEC operations because people like the waterfront. Instead we just bootstrapped it up and created a bigger bureaucracy, 858 acres.

Now at the last meeting or two you have been talking about making it bigger. We haven't been able to focus on any redevelopment of any small area. And you need to get smaller, rather than bigger; but you need to also do some bricks and mortar.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Comments.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: How many residents participated in this most recent charrette? Did we have a good turnout?

MR. EVANS: At the community meeting, the October one, we had about 16; similar to the follow-up meeting we just had.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: The plan that you submitted today is a more comprehensive plan than we had in the past. The plan from the past really focused on landscaping. I remember the previous plan, it seemed like the fight unfortunately was about fruit trees. It wasn't about signage. It wasn't about bringing the community together.

Thank you so much for addressing the Port. Last week this council put the Port on notice that we're not tolerating it anymore. The Port is always coming to the city asking for things; and when we go to the Port, they just turn a deaf ear. It's just unconscionable. That is the oldest neighborhood in Riviera Beach. If they want to head west to Old Dixie, they're looking at the Port; that looks like a junkyard; and we've allowed that for years. So, Mr. Brown, kudos to you for putting money in the budget to landscape the Port. And we as a board, because the Port is going to be coming back to us for land use changes, we need to hold their feet to the fire and they need to contribute to this too. So I think the plan is great. I really hope that the residents who participated in it and who live in the community like it, support it. And I think now we need to move forward.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: I agree. And I hope that the residents will be a little patient with the process. We're trying to do it right. You deserve the best, not this hodgepodge. We have an executive director that I think we can believe in what he's

doing and what he's planning for. You can count on it.

COMMISSIONER LOWE: I just want to make sure that when we do talk to FDOT, that we impress on them that at least 710 and Old Dixie, we make them complete streets. And that area needs to be walkable; as well as introduce other modes of transportation, bike lanes and all that stuff. I don't know if we have to adopt some type of legislation, but we can look into that. I think West Palm Beach has some legislation on that, if we could start looking into that. Because I think FDOT needs to step up a little bit more in terms of making that corridor safe and aesthetically pleasing. We've bent over backwards for FDOT.

And the situation with the Port, I mean it's always looked like that. And they need to be responsible. You talked about how much we've yielded to the Port. I mean they've gotten everything they wanted, from the skypass to -- and we're left with the residual problems. I guess we were being good neighbors. And we didn't get that in return. But we do have the opportunity to correct some of this.

On the northern portion, is it 10th Street? We only have, as far as east-west corridors, we only have 710. And the only one that will reach U.S. 1 will be Blue Heron or Silver Beach. But I think if we can look at 10th Street and make it like another east-west; not do anything elaborate, but another east-west corridor, so that we can move traffic. Most of the big traffic will be along 710. And if we can get traffic going

east and west to drain over to either Old Dixie or Australian, we won't have big traffic problems in that area.

I'm excited. This is one of the oldest areas in the neighborhood and it needs a lot of work. And the sooner we get started, I think the residents will be happy about that and I will too. So thank you.

COMMISSIONER THOMAS: Mr. Ward, I heard you say that we are not beating up on staff enough about bricks and mortar. However, we are. I know I am, if nobody else is. But I think everybody is. That is what we want, something coming out of the ground. I think that the CRA has made great strides in trying to get us there.

The next step that he has with this CHDO, I want to see it actively moving more. I think everybody has submitted the proper names. I'd like to see that formed and come to some type of resolve so that we can start to see this money expended. I'm not very happy seeing a lot of soft costs; I'm ready to see some shovels in the ground. So we will be working with that.

For FDOT, these are state agencies, these are agencies that are controlled by individuals that you elect to office; and it's time that we come together and make sure that they understand what we need. You have your state representatives, your state senators, your congressmen, all of these individuals have a duty to serve us as well as they do their other neighborhoods and their other cities. And the same way that you call us when you

have an issue, you should make the phone calls to these individuals and try to get some relief there. We're pushing, we're trying to work with them to get some resolutions here, but we need you all to be as aggressive and as vigilant as you can, call their offices, call their offices. We need you to help us in Tallahassee as well. We can put pressure on FDOT to do the right thing in our city but we have to do it as a whole, we need you involved in this process.

COMMISSIONER LOWE: I was also surprised, out of all of the community meetings, that no one mentioned along MLK the possibility of having an MLK memorial, since it is MLK Boulevard. If the planners are listening, and designers, if you would keep that in mind and take advantage of that distinction, because it is a minority city; and here is an opportunity to seize the moment and really make the highway live up to its name. I think if that hadn't been suggested I would like to offer that suggestion at this time.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Let the minutes reflect that the chair has arrived.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: In our last community forum there were two questions that were basically repeated over and over, that we didn't have an answer to; and I promised the public that at this meeting we would get an answer. The questions really needed to be answered by FDOT, and dealt with the road and the impact to the cemetery and the impact to

Australian. I'm going to ask our director of planning to tell me what response we got from FDOT. I'm concerned that we have asked FDOT to give us their answers in writing and to date they declined to do so. They are creating public relations issues for us. We're trying to get answers so that we can tell the community what FDOT's impact will be.

One question we asked specifically, does the expansion of State Road 710 impact the historical cemetery. What answer did we get?

MR. EVANS: FDOT said that they have a very, very partial taking that they had proposed, and they are revising their plan to try and eliminate it, so they don't believe there will be any impacts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: That's verbal.

We had heard that either the state or the county was expanding Australian from 45th to at least State Road 710. Commissioner Taylor clarified that the county is not expanding any road. Similarly we posed the question to FDOT, will you explain the impact to Australian at State Road 710; and further explain what properties you would intend to acquire, or through eminent domain do a take or a partial take. Scott, what answer did we get?

MR. EVANS: They have not responded yet.

CHAIR DAVIS: Just to update you on what Commissioner Taylor has said to me, she's been in contact with FDOT and has

asked them to address the residents' concerns. She does not want any properties to be taken. But she wants to give them time to finalize everything. She had asked if we could have a meeting, after they show her what they plan to do, as it relates to the cemetery. What I have been told is that the boundary of the cemetery is somewhat overlapping onto the county's right-of-way. But still, I think she has asked them to not bother that at all. We are awaiting some final report from them. So she is working on it. She's keeping me informed of where we are with that. I'll share whatever information I get with the board and with you.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Mr. Brown, we talk about grants, do we have a grant writer or are we looking at a grant writer or an agency that specializes in grant writing?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: When we are made aware of particular grant opportunities, we've been able to recruit folks like BRIC and Paul White, who is our interim community development officer, so we find the resources to respond to a particular grant. We do not have an official grant writer. My staff and I have given a lot of thought as to how we might do that. We know there are various opportunities that come, HUD, U.S. Department of Treasury, Transportation, that require not just a grant writer but a grant writer that's familiar with certain types of programs, that know how to respond. To date it hasn't been an impediment. We were told most recently, for

instance, that we wrote a grant to get funding for Bicentennial Park and it was rated number one. But the governor moved the money and didn't fund the beautification parks program. So in this case C3TS wrote the grant on our behalf; and we would have had good news, but unfortunately the program was not funded.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: Just for consideration, the Chair and I were at a grant writing workshop. There were persons there representing agencies who specialize in grant writing and know about every grant that's out there. Since we do have these monies, the money that we had allocated by the city, maybe we could find good use by just hiring a grant writer, and letting that person or that agency go for it, get as many grants as we can. Getting good use out of the money.

I think Ms. Davis can concur with me that these were people who had proven track records; and cities where they're confirming that they hired them and they had been excellent in getting grants for them. So I think we should consider that.

CHAIR DAVIS: Also, if it's on a federal level, Alcaide & Fay are lobbyists, they have a grant writer on staff; but they will not write the grant for us, but they will critique it and prepare it for the federal level.

COMMISSIONER PARDO: It all comes down to hiring competent people. We brought John Sprague on two years ago. He's been able to secure close to 10 million dollars for us.

CHAIR DAVIS: Any other comments? Now we're going to

public comments. David Rolling.

MR. ROLLING: David Rolling, 1201 West 1st Street. First, Mr. Brown, I want to say I appreciate you coming to the forum that we had a couple weeks back. I also want to state that the conceptual designs are very attractive, but of course they're supposed to be attractive. I want the board to know you have many members of the Riviera Beach Heights community who are actually afraid. They're senior citizens. They have voiced concerns at multiple community meetings; some of which I think at least a couple of the city council persons may have attended; where they feel that they are being unfairly treated and targeted because of the position that they're in. I'm appealing to you as their elected officials, I know you say that Australian Avenue is beyond your purview, but as their elected officials you are the voice of the city, I'm appealing to you to speak up, to let whoever needs to know that people such as Mr. and Mrs. Tune, who live on Australian Avenue, who have received a notice of eminent domain, these people are afraid of losing their home. They've been in that house for decades. They are senior citizens; they want to live out the rest of their days in peace. And I'm appealing to you as their elected officials to speak up for your constituents. Thank you.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: We've taken the fight even to Tallahassee. We really are concerned about what is going on with FDOT, we are.

CHAIR DAVIS: Absolutely. As I said, I've been in touch with Commissioner Taylor; that is a county road; and I'm just waiting for her to finalize whatever it is with FDOT and we will bring you the results of that as soon as possible. I know she is asking that they do no taking whatsoever.

Bonnie Larson.

MS. LARSON: Bonnie Larson. You talked last about Riviera Beach Heights. Mr. Brown was saying that we want people to slow down in that area, to respect our neighborhoods, and to let them know that that's our community. I'm going to ask the same thing again for Broadway. We're going to increase the speed to 45 miles an hour. We want the same things for Broadway as you're asking for here; let people slow down, see our businesses, and frequent those businesses. If you're going 45 miles an hour you're not going to see it, with those 20-foot medians. You've got to go five blocks around to make a U-turn to go to those businesses; it's not going to happen. So I'd like to ask the same thing for Broadway as for Riviera Beach Heights.

We talked about pocket parks tonight. And people in that area were saying they were afraid to go to parks because of the crime, etc. And I'm proposing that a pocket park would be the same thing, because it's only on one little lot. If you want to put in grass and make it a nice walk-through for the kids, that's fine. But the minute you put in seating, you know what kind of people are going to be meeting there. It's not a big

enough park to do anything constructive in; it will just be a meeting place. I think that would be a deterrent rather than a help to that area.

Mr. Brown talked about why properties are not selling in Riviera Beach, because we are perceived as being unsafe, not clean, and not economically vibrant. That is absolutely correct. Mr. Brown, I challenged you at a previous meeting to be the CRA director who cleans up the city. Please, you call the code enforcement and say, why are you letting that property deteriorate to that magnitude. Why do we have slum landlords in our city? Why are they allowed to live there? Those of us who are trying to take care of our properties, we're right next door to someone who doesn't care. They never have to clean up their properties, nothing ever happens to them. We get letters from code enforcement, but they don't seem to. That snowman is still in the window. The crumpled blue tarp is still in the window. We've got two roofs caving in, within a half mile of the CRA office. There's a lot of things that we can do. The Schooner Inn, we had a five million dollar lien on that property, we let that go for some reason. That property is looking worse every day, right on Broadway.

The CRA has a block now, it's where the Sea Chest used to be, we told the Sea Chest to move because you want to make that a model block. When are we going to start working on that model block? Right now it's just a bunch of dirt and weeds. It's

been torn down for some time now.

Ms. Pardo, you're quite right, Catalfumo should provide the security for the Ocean Mall, that's his responsibility. He's got the lease on all those properties.

CHAIR DAVIS: Your three minutes are up.

John Clayton.

MR. CLAYTON: John Clayton. I live at 1809 Avenue E in Riviera Beach. The chief touched on some of the suggestions I was going to make for my immediate street. I heard someone say that other parts of the city have gotten a back seat, like the waterfront or even Singer Island, but I would say Avenue E to a large degree has gotten a back seat as far as redevelopment goes; because if you look at that street, from Blue Heron and go south to the Port, the surface of the moon is smoother than that street. It hasn't been paved since at least maybe the mid '60s to early '70s, before I was born.

And the chief had already suggested implementing gun shot detection devices, which believe it or not my neighborhood doesn't even have, and it's one of the more dangerous ones.

Speaking of hodgepodge, my immediate neighborhood is kind of like that because we have a mixture of homesteaded land owners like myself -- I grew up there; I own it now -- and we also have rental communities and absentee landlords who don't think the rules apply to them.

We have problems like that, as well as convenience stores,

we have at least three convenience stores that are a major hub for crime, because drug dealers like to do their transactions there. That's one of the major things that does need to be addressed.

I don't know if there is a way of incentivizing homesteaded land owners to live there. That's just an idea I'm putting out there.

Maybe we need to encourage some of these convenience stores to go to other locations, or whatever, or at least keep their areas clean.

And the police department has done a remarkable job of cleaning up Avenue E. It was real bad in the mid '90s. In the mid '90s you didn't even think about going outside your door. But now if I want to walk to the CRA offices, I walk to the CRA offices. I'm not messed with when I work out in my yard.

Every now and then, periodically, at least maybe two or three times a day, the police do go by the convenience store that's on the north side of my house, to run people off, because I can hear them on the bullhorn. I just want to commend the chief; he's doing a fantastic job. All we need now are the gun shot detection devices on that street, and I think that will go a long way to making that area more beautiful.

CHAIR DAVIS: Gerald Ward. And then Bessie Brown.

MR. WARD: Gerald Ward, 31 West 20th Street. At 5:00 you had this special meeting, with little notice, to give away to

the Port State Road 710's connector project. And I brought you four pages which documented the fact that this is really a 1996 DOT project which has languished. And if we don't get it, you probably have signed the death knell for any marina district project for transportation failures.

You also have emphasized what I was pleased that Tony brought up a few minutes ago, that you don't get any written documentation. We have a good history in the past of beating up on the Port, the DOT, to make them define the needs for Riviera Beach. We've given them lots of guidance in relation to what the Port should be doing. DOT is a lower level government, so is Palm Beach County, Ms. Chairman; Australian is within the City of Riviera Beach; so waiting until something is finalized with the county is just saying that we have to climb another mountain that we don't need to climb. Because Riviera Beach is in charge of Australian because it's within this town. Just because we have the county with construction responsibility and operational responsibility of some of it doesn't mean that we lay down and forget about it until they come back with a finalized project. That's why we have so many difficult problems.

MPO, with State Road 710 connector, in July you were quoted in the minutes as saying you didn't even know about the State Road 710 connector. What I've been told by the head of the MPO is that CDEC reported again that we didn't need that and the

Port could go forward. Now I know that didn't come to any planning and zoning board meeting. In fact the planning and zoning board was canceled the last four meetings, even though we have serious issues that need to be heard by code in this town.

Consent item number 5 on this same agenda is a great example of no evaluation of many pages of procurement code, and yet there's not one explanation of one sentence in that code. You need it in writing. Tony just got through saying the big problem is we don't have anything in writing from lower level government DOT.

CHAIR DAVIS: Bessie, come on up, please.

MS. BROWN: Bessie Brown. I wanted to come in and ask you all to consider the citizens in Riviera Beach Heights and all of the action that's going on on Australian. It's time for the CRA to stand up to the citizens when they ask a question, we should have the answers. We should not wait until the last minute for somebody else to make a decision and we do nothing.

I was here for two workshops when DOT was going for MLK. Those people came in here, citizens, they had received letters; and they acted just like they didn't know what was going on; and people were afraid for their property. And our council didn't even push them. We want you to do this. So the council needs to, when the citizens are asking for help, our council should give them that help; not sit back and wait until the final decisions are made. If you make a fuss now, then they'll know

we want something different in the final analysis.

We can't get anything in writing because we don't request anything in writing. You request in writing and you ask for a response by a certain time. I think that is something that needs to be done from this council, from the CRA, whoever is involved in it, because the citizens deserve that.

CHAIR DAVIS: That's the end of public comments. Report of the executive director.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: I ask my colleague, Toccarra Thomas, to come up and give highlights of our marina day event. We had over 600 participants who participated. We're going to do a quick picture show, and Ms. Thomas is going to give highlights. I want to thank her for her hard work and effort. She put together a planning committee that included Lydia Frank, Andy Flack, Dr. Gary Barrette, Richard Brochu, who is the executive director of the Florida Fishing Academy. And I don't know if you saw the NBC Nightly News, but the program was featured on the national news a couple of days ago. Darlene Hatcher, Mike Tarlitz, Ed Kunuty, and Marian Dozier, all were part of the planning committee. Between our sponsors, we raised nearly $18,000 in cash and in kind services.

MS. THOMAS: Toccarra Thomas. This program was put on as part of our Community Boating Program and it was the official launch of our program. We had between four and five hundred attendees. This is just a little slide show of some of the

events. We had kayaking, Peanut Island shuttles, and tours of the Kennedy bunker, which was hands down the favorite. There was a lot of people waiting for each of the shuttles. Face painting, free food, a steel band, a touch tank, the grant check presentation, rock climbing wall, different family fun activities. We had food for everyone. There was a marine children's art contest.

And the purpose of the program basically, in addition to being part of the Community Boating Program, was to give people an opportunity to enroll their children in the Community Boating Program. We had over 22 people sign up at the event. And we had 17 families sign up at a previous event.

We also had 40 adult volunteers and probably over 40 youth volunteers that came from the Sea Scouts. Mr. Brochu rounded up a couple of kids that he knows. Those are some of the kids from the Maritime Academy.

It was a great day. Everybody had fun. People just can't stop talking about it.

I think you all for letting us have this event.

Special thanks to all of our sponsors. We had a little bit over $18,000. Thanks to our sponsors, we were able to provide this event completely free to all the attendees.

CHAIR DAVIS: I want to say kudos to Mr. Lowe; he pushed this for the last two years or so, maybe longer. I'm so glad that it finally was brought here. It was a great event.

I also have to give a shout out to the Parks and Rec department, because they worked all night long. We had Jazz After Dark that Friday night, and they just kept on working all night long to level off the beach area and get the park all cleaned up. So many thanks to them also.

COMMISSIONER LOWE: It kind of feels uncomfortable taking ownership of something like this, because it's a group thing and it took a lot of staff time and a lot of support to get this event off the ground; but it was worth every bit of the effort. It was worth the years of keeping this issue in the forefront, especially when I saw those kids on the water in the kayaks; and then hear the story about so many kids have never had the opportunity to be involved in an activity like that. Some of our residents hadn't had the privilege to visit Peanut Island, and they were visiting the island for the first time, and enjoying that natural beauty of this area. But I felt if we were going to fully invest in a marine community, that the best place to start would be with our kids. If we ensure that they learned what we were doing in the city and learned about the industry, that long-term we have more buy in from our community, and they would be able to take advantage of some of the opportunities that exist in our marina industry.

Mr. Brown mentioned earlier about the 5,000 jobs in that area that sort of just walk out of the city every day, and that's just in that one particular sector. The marine industry

has been very good to Riviera Beach, and we have to be a part of it, because it's not going anywhere. If we start at the bottom and instill these things in our kids, hopefully 20 years from now they'll be boat captains or divers or salespeople, they'll get integrated into the industry. It was a very moving and touching experience for me.

I want to thank you personally, Toccarra, for all your help in organizing this event. And I want to plead to the community to demand more, make sure this program continues to exist, because it's good for the city and it's good for the community.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: I just want to say it was a really great event; and I'm so proud just to see Mr. Lowe's face. It teaches you something else, Mr. Lowe, that every plan has a season, everything has a season, and this was the right season; this was the season for your vision, for your idea, and look how beautiful it evolved. You even made national news.

I must give special recognition to Mr. Cross, you were just everywhere. He's at the clean-ups, he's here, he's there.

CHAIR DAVIS: And he just recently volunteered for the Citizens on Patrol.

COMMISSIONER THOMAS: I did attend the event. I think it was a well-attended affair. I saw an old basketball coach of mine and we talked about it a great deal; and it was just fun to be able to talk to somebody who had been in the area so long; and he said he was excited about going over on the tour to

Peanut Island. It was also fun to see the students at the Maritime Academy actually working that particular boat, going over to Peanut Island. And we just want to make sure that our community knows that this city has invested a lot in trying to make programs like this happen. Along with the program that Councilman Lowe has spearheaded here with this particular marina day, you can also go to the school and learn how to be a boat captain and learn about the water. You can start it at 9th grade and take it all the way through.

I just want to say that it's all tying in together. You have a lot of these major companies, like the Rybovich and the Viking and all of these large employers that are right here in our city. So that we can take advantage of some of these 5,000 jobs that surround us, that we don't get a chance to participate in. We need to definitely take advantage of this.

I think you did a wonderful job, Toccarra, along with Ms. Hatcher. And I guess, Mr. Brown, you get some credit by default.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BROWN: I did very little.

COMMISSIONER THOMAS: And Scott. This was a wonderful program. Don't look for this to be the end; we look for this just to be the start.

CHAIR DAVIS: I know several adults who have lived here all of their lives and who have never been to Peanut Island. So that needs to change. Come on to the marina, get on the ferry

and check it out. It's beautiful over there.

Any other comments?

MS. THOMAS: Peanut Island was so successful we had to extend the run an extra 30 minutes to try and give everybody a chance. So next time we'll definitely make it the feature presentation and make sure everybody will be able to get a chance to go over there.

CHAIR DAVIS: Discussion by the board?

COMMISSIONER PARDO: I would just like to mention that a new business opened in the CRA, we had a ribbon cutting two weeks ago, a new hair salon. She's in between the florist and Dolce Vita. If anyone is looking to get their hair done or their nails, in the city, she's right across from the mall; you know where the gas station is and then there is a little strip mall, she's in there, Elegant Salon.

COMMISSIONER THOMAS: We're still working on our Night of Elegance coming up March 3rd, we want you to go ahead and finalize your plans for that, please send back your RSVP cards. The Port does need to know everyone who is coming. Please come out. This event, I believe, is going to be great. If you have any questions, call us at 845-3443.

CHAIR DAVIS: Motion for adjournment.

VICE CHAIR BROOKS: So moved.

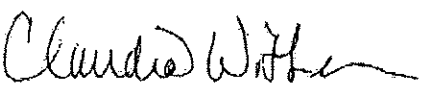
(Proceedings concluded at 8:34 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

THE STATE OF FLORIDA)
)
COUNTY OF PALM BEACH)

I, Claudia Price Witters, Registered Professional Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did report the foregoing proceedings at the time and place herein stated, and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of my stenotype notes taken during said proceedings.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 5th day of March, 2012.



CLAUDIA PRICE WITTERS
Registered Professional Reporter

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 P.M. The minutes were approved by the Board of Commissioners on _____.

_____
Judy L. Davis, Chairperson

_____
Executive Director Tony Brown

/cw
Florida Court Reporting