

**CLAY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR SCHEDULED PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES**

December 16, 2020

Present: Keith Ward, Chereese Stewart, Daniel Vallencourt, Bruce Butler, and Amy Pope-Wells

Absent: Tom Hackney, Tiffany Howard, and Tina Clary

Staff: Josh Cockrell and April Scott (Legal Counsel)

Guests: JJ Harris, Wendell Chindra, Robert Jacobson, and David Shoquist

Call to Order: **Keith Ward** called the Clay County Development Authority ("CCDA") Public Meeting to order at 4:11 P.M.

Invocation: **Bruce Butler** provided the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Comments from the Public: None.

Treasurer's Report

Josh Cockrell presented the October and November financials. **Josh Cockrell** stated that expenses average around \$8,000 per month. **Josh Cockrell** stated that there was nothing substantial to discuss. There are approximately \$2M in the bank. **April Scott** asked about the grant cash flow. About \$850,000 will need to be held in reserve for upfront grant project costs.

Chamber Report

Wendell Chindra reported that the county has hired the Chamber to run the Commit2Clay program to promote safe COVID-19 practices. The Chamber has completed 940 business certifications so far. The Chamber Board of Directors has adopted the Florida Chamber of Commerce 2030 plan including the 6 pillars designated to move the Florida economy forward. The Chamber will focus on the Florida Prosperity Playbook. They will focus on childhood poverty. The Chamber is focusing on the 2024 election and putting on the Florida Institute of Leadership in 2021. Baptist has offered the Chamber space options in their new Fleming Island building (previously VyStar call center) next to the current hospital expansion project. There are up to 16 bankruptcies at the Orange Park Mall. There has been approximately a 30% decrease in foot traffic, however purchasing has remained steady. **Wendell Chindra** reported that businesses are reporting that they are struggling to find employees in the positions paying less than \$15/hour. **Wendell Chindra** reported that he would like to see a heat map of where employees are traveling from to go to Clay County jobs. **Chereese Stewart** stated that the public transportation in Clay County contains 3 route lines run by Jacksonville Transportation Authority. **Wendell Chindra** stated that public transportation needs to be efficient and stable.

EDC Report

JJ Harris passed out the November Economic Summary showing Clay County unemployment at 4.1%. There were 107 building permits in Clay County in November. The November Clay County median home sales price was \$244,000, up \$5,000. He stated that the real estate industry is very strong. **JJ Harris** reported that he, **Josh Cockrell, Keith Ward,** and **Van Royal** met to discuss the strategic site planning project. **JJ Harris** discussed the need to develop shovel ready inventory. Clay EDC is working on a 5-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan update. **JJ Harris** discussed a recent project and the project requirements. **Josh Cockrell** discussed the need to identify the 5 most promising sites in the county and then further identify the most prominent site of those and work diligently to develop the site. **JJ Harris** reiterated the necessity for site control and shovel ready development. The group discussed the needs of county site development. **JJ Harris** discussed the site selector advisory forum opportunity. **Josh Cockrell** discussed a desire to have the EDC, CCDA, and Chamber Board of Directors collaborate. **Bruce Butler** discussed support for the site selector advisory forum opportunity. **Wendell Chindra** discussed a desire to develop a digital GIS map of infrastructure. **Amy Pope-Wells** discussed appreciation for the economic development strategic plan. **Bruce Butler** motioned that CCDA approve a \$5,000 reimbursement to Clay EDC towards the site selector advisory forum opportunity. **Amy Pope-Wells** seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Old Business/New Business/ Board Comments

Orange Park Plaza Project - Robert Jacobson reported that he is working with multiple potential lending partners for the construction to perm. loan. **Robert Jacobson** discussed that they are primarily looking for a partner to take over the land lender position. **Robert Jacobson** discussed the current stage of the project. **Daniel Vallencourt** discussed that a potential challenge is that CCDA is a public Board and would not be able to make rapid business decisions as a lending partner. **Keith Ward** discussed concern with fronting \$750,000 with little recourse for incidentals. **Daniel Vallencourt** discussed his reservations with the project. **Keith Ward** discussed his concerns about not being listed on the land note in the second position. **Dave Shoquist** assured the group that the only thing that has changed is the request amount from \$500k to \$750k. The offer to list CCDA as the second lien holder on the property remains. **Daniel Vallencourt** discussed concerns with the timeline of the opportunity. **Robert Jacobson** stated that the land lender is preparing a term sheet and wants to be assured of CCDA's cooperation. **Robert Jacobson** stated that COVID has created delay in the lending process and lending terms. **Robert Jacobson** discussed the project hurdles. **Dave Shoquist** discussed the potential land lender, Plat Point, and project lenders. **Daniel Vallencourt** asked about the construction loan condition. **Dave Shoquist** stated that the construction loan environment in Florida is very positive. **Robert Jacobson** described the loan as a gap loan until construction. **Dave Shoquist** requested a secured promissory note from CCDA. **April Scott** discussed the breakdown of the \$3.5M project cost. The group discussed the opportunity and their reservations at large. **Daniel Vallencourt** motioned that CCDA will provide a promissory note to Provision Impact Ventures for \$750k under the conditions of: CCDA is shown the appraisal of the property showing a valuation over \$5M, that the primary lender loan is not to exceed \$2.7M, CCDA is listed as the second lien on the property, the loan terms shall not

exceed 18 months, the primary bank's loan is not to exceed 18 months, with APR of 10% fixed based on the length of the loan in days with a guaranteed return of 2% on the principal. **Amy Pope-Wells** seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. The Board called **David Shoquist** and **Robert Jacobson** to inform them of the approved motion. **Keith Ward** stated that **April Scott** will begin putting together the proper paperwork if **David Shoquist** and **Robert Jacobson** agree to the conditions. **April Scott** stated that the CCDA funds would be released once the primary loan is secured. **April Scott** will begin preparing the paperwork. **David Shoquist** and **Robert Jacobson** thanked CCDA for their partnership.

Chair's Report

Keith Ward discussed Board development. Tom Hackney has resigned. There are currently 3 vacancies. **Josh Cockrell** received the list of candidates from the Governor's office. Joelle Marquis, Carol Gardner, Jack Hayne, James (Jim) Horne, Steve Clark, Steve Burrera, Nicole Sanders, Travis Christianson, Steve Anderson, Stephen Nebrat, Judson Sapp, and John Ring were discussed. The Board discussed the potential candidates.

Treasurer's Report Approval (cont.)

Bruce Butler motioned approval. **Chereese Stewart** seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Secretary's Report

Daniel Vallencourt motioned approval. **Amy Pope-Wells** seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Executive Director's Report

Josh Cockrell stated that CCDA has \$850k in grant funding to utilize. **Josh Cockrell** stated that a January meeting is anticipated but could be canceled for lack of necessity. **Josh Cockrell** stated that the audit is forthcoming. **Bruce Butler** asked about meeting virtually for emergency meetings. Board members can still participate and vote virtually, but a quorum must be physically present for a vote to count. **Bruce Butler** suggested that a letter be sent to the state legislature requesting that virtual meeting attendance be counted. **Josh Cockrell** suggested that a collective letter from all the Boards in Clay County be drafted and sent.

Adjourned: 6:32 PM