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**Call to Order**

Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 5:06pm.

The Quincy Community Redevelopment Agency Regular Board met on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 with following present at roll call: Member Bass-Prieto, Member Canidate, Member Sapp, Member Dowdell

**Also in attendance:**

Manager Nixon, Attorney Brown, Advisory Board Chair Hannigon, Advisory Member Milton-Jackson, Consultant Marvin Tribue, Admin Pam Tribue

**Approval of Agenda**

*Motion by Member Sapp to approve the agenda as printed, seconded by Member Dowdell, motion carries 5-0.*

**Approval of Minutes**

*Motion by Member Bass-Prieto to approve the minutes as written of February 1, 2022 as written, seconded by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.* The minutes from the Advisory Board January 25 and February 22, 2022 meetings were provided for informational purposes only.

**Financial Report**

As of the January 31, 2022 statement there was a beginning balance of \$123,825.14. There were two deposits/credits of \$207,164.39, nine checks/debits \$30,896.21, service change for \$0.00, interest paid in the amount of \$10.33, leaving an ending balance of \$300,103.65. Manager Nixon provided details of checks/debits and advised the board of partial receipt of TIF dollars from the County and City (\$202,847.92/\$4,316.47 respectively). There was also payment of \$24,583.88 for the manager's salary for nine pay periods. Member Bass-Prieto expressed concern over the delay in the City pulling funds for the manager's salary, noting that the board pays \$20K accounting fee annually. Feels this is excessive. Member Canidate feels this is not in line with general accounting practices and fears what would happen if an unscheduled audit would occur. Feels the account should be balanced monthly. Member Dowdell asked if the manager has spoken with the auditor, out of concern that delays like this could impact the audit. He has not but was pleased with the CRA's audit from last year. *Motion by Member Bass-Prieto to accept the financial update, seconded by Member Dowdell, motion carries 5-0.* The statement for February is not available as of today.

**CRA Manager Updates**

Hometown Revitalization Grant Update-Compliance Consultant Position

CRA staff worked with the City Manager's office to secure the necessary authorizations to sign the grant agreement. DEO has confirmed receipt. Additionally staff worked with HR to advertised and accept responses for a grant compliance expert. Application review and interviews are expected to be complete by March 4<sup>th</sup>. To date two applications have been received. The anticipated salary for the part-time position will be \$30-50/hour. *Motion by Member Sapp to give the manager and the attorney permission to go into negotiations with Ms. Hamlet for grant compliance officer, seconded by Member Bass-Prieto, motion carries 5-0.*

Advisory Board Chair Hannigon asked for clarification as to whether this position would be contractual or an employee. It is the recommendation of Attorney Brown that this is an

independent contractor. There is a budget amount of \$100K for the 30 month grant, that can't be exceeded.

The manager will serve as the gate keeper for the grant and the compliance officer will ensure that we document everything according to the grant requirements, that we report according to the requirements. This position as well as the project manager will be overseen by the manger. Both will provide a detailed report of work done and the time invested in each. He does not expect it to take the full 30 months to complete.

There was also further discussion on incorporating this position as part of the position for the grant writer that the City is currently looking to fill.

#### Energy Efficiency Program

Staff has received the signed agreements from homeowners and contractors for the roof replacement project. Contractors working with each homeowner to schedule the work. Work should begin next week and estimated to be completed in six weeks. There are six homes split between two contractors. *Motion by Member Bass-Prieto to direct the manager to provide the board chair with the contracts for the energy efficiency program for signature, second by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.*

#### Home Repair Program Update

Staff has received approximately 20 applications. Contractors have been making home visits to determine repair needs and provide estimates. The process has been slow due to the of applications and the tremendous amount of repair needs. With the limited budget of \$125K the majority of the requests will not be fulfilled. The manager wants to take the estimates from the contractors and break them down by item fixed to see what could reasonably be fixed. The contractors are also running behind in getting estimates because they are so busy. Member Sapp asked if Mr. Tribue could assist and help the contractors by suggesting which homes/repairs could be removed to avoid wasting time? Mr. Tribue already provides this information with his assessments. There was on how future programs can be streamlined or more focused, this could narrow the scope. Member Bass-Prieto stated we need a dual purpose affordable housing and housing repair program, understanding that our limited funds will not be enough, so we need to look at grants and money outside to tackle this all. We need to seriously address the substandard housing stock in the City, utilizing Mr. Nixon's extensive knowledge. Member Sapp agrees and wants to address items that impact utility bills as well. Member Bass-Prieto advised the board that Ms. Ellis will be getting the keys to her house from Restore Florida on tomorrow.

Manager Nixon only has two quotes at this time and is asking to table this item. *Motion by Bass-Prieto to table this item, second by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.*

#### Small Business Assistance Request

Manager Nixon pointed out that many of Quincy's small business are still struggling post COVID-19 and this is compounded by the historic problems that plague small businesses in our community. Several inquiries have been made and four businesses have applied.

#### Discussion:

- Member Dowdell suggested checks & balances/already in place per the manager.
- Discussion about applicants getting several grants.
- Member Canidate suggests paying the first three applicants (Leola's Crab Shack, Reed & Hall Mortuary and Creative Learning Academy) and directing the attorney to look into the legality of issuing small business grant from the previous year's funding.
- There were questions/concerns regarding businesses who have received several grants. Member Bass-Prieto recalls this possibly being exclusionary to make this available to

other businesses. Attorney Brown suggested going back to the recording of the minutes to verify the intended wording regarding grants received in the past 60 months.

- Attorney Brown explained that for improvements to the building the land owner would have to agree with a lien; UCC1 (lien on equipment) can be done on equipment.
- No input from the advisory board, they are familiar with the program. The manager feels it's not necessary, as we don't do it for the energy efficiency program applicants as well.
- Chair Harris is all in favor of helping businesses especially ones that are new to the City but shares the concern that only certain businesses are applying. Suggested maybe reaching out to those businesses who have not applied.
- Member Dowdell wants to make sure we are provided proof of where grant dollars are spent.
- Manager Nixon suggested having some universal policy guidelines for programs.
- Member Bass-Prieto suggested looking at small business loans.
- There was also discussion on the situation with Don's Hair Pair. He was approved for \$7K the prior fiscal year which he declined because he was unable to come up with the additional funds needed for his roof replacement. The funds were carried forward but not designated for him. Attorney Brown will need to look into how the funds were carried forward and if they can still be used for Don's Hair Pair.

*Motion by Member Bass-Prieto to approve the first three applicants and table the fourth until additional information/clarification is gathered. Discussion ensued resulting in Member Bass-Prieto withdrawing her motion.*

*Motion by Member Bass-Prieto to table this item and the attorney do the research before any decision is made, seconded by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.*

#### Downtown Paint Program Request

A total of ten buildings were painted around the downtown square and was well received by business owners and the public. Staff has received a request to participate in the downtown paint program from Mr. Ed Hinson for his building at 22 East Washington Street. He has made significant improvements to the building to bring it up to current city building code and is asking that the CRA paint the building. The manager is in support of this given their recent purchase and improvement investment and noted that this would fall under the Small Business Assistance Grant as the paint program has closed. A quote from Superior Paint was provided. A discussion ensued regarding the quality of the work previously done by Superior. Chair Harris pointed out peeling/fading on the Padgett's building. Others pointed out similar issues with quality of work on other buildings. The manager explained one of the issues was paint quality due to a paint shortage and assured the board he is seeking a resolution with the contractor.

Advisory Board Chair Hannigon commented:

- Curious to know what was told to Mr. Gipson and encouraged the manager to solidify conversations with an email or in writing that creates a record.
- Suggested creating one mass email to disseminate information regarding grant programs as well.
- Regarding the list, #9, feels that the fact the board is requesting information on previous grants received implies that this will be considered when deciding who receives additional funding.
- Regarding the advisory board, she feels input from them regarding the applications for assistance is necessary. Further believes the board should be afforded the opportunity to review, be made aware of the same information the regular board receives. They will be able to share any thoughts, opinions they have, which is their purpose.

Manager Nixon commented:

- Noted that all programs have been reviewed/vetted by the board and attorney.
- Pointed out that in the past there seems to be a release of information prior to the overall release to the public which impacts certain decisions.

- Recommended coming up with a plan on how to disseminate information.

Member Bass-Prieto suggests adding a statement to all applications that once an application is received it is open to public records requests unless it falls under lawful restrictions.

Attorney Brown indicated that the advisory board should advise when making policy but when making a final decision about who is awarded the grant that is the purview of the regular board. When it comes to sending our information via emails, his only concern was if someone is not on the list. It is considered sufficient if you advertise in a local of general circulation, that way everyone has equal opportunity.

Member Sapp thanked the attorney for providing answers most times immediately and the manager for remaining calm and professional. Noted that since the CRA started making improvements downtown, including Adams Street and the paint project, she has seen other improvements/clean up from business owners. Although there has been significant improvements, she noticed that on the second story of the baby blue building the air conditioners are rusting out. Manager Nixon has reached out to the property owner encouraging them to address this issue.

Chair Harris pointed out that certain areas on the Padgett's building are peeling/fading. What's to know when the contractor will be getting around to addressing this. Also asked for an update on the Kim's building. The owners are trying to locate a muralist to take restore the mural.

Member Sapp referred to the emails and mentioned that if the website could be finished, this is would be a way to communicate with everyone on equal basis and not have to worry about emails. The manager mentioned that he and Pam Tribue have had discussions regarding the website and hope to address this by way of a new/user friendly site that is easier to maintain/update. We would also have to make sure the public knows to refer to that site. *Motion by member Bass-Prieto to table the discussion on downtown paint program request, seconded by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.*

#### American Rescue: Housing Programs and Temporary Housing for Flood Victims

Thanked the City Commission for its faith in the CRA for believing that the CRA is the correct entity to help coordinate the housing elements. With that, the City Commission has had several conversations on the American Rescue, the total budget was \$350K, \$50K was set aside for temporary housing, leaving around \$300K for some type of programming. Next step is for the CRA to establish a programmatic way to address the equitable distribution of those funds and the coordination of the program. The manager explained he is currently working with City staff and will be bringing something back in the near future. Wanted to make sure the CRA Board had a discussion on this not just the City Commission. Chair Harris stated he does not know what the plans are but feels the American Rescue Plan has taken on a different flavor. His take was a focus on utility bills and how to put some relief back into the homes of individual residences. He'd like to see a focus on household assistance but is open to other options. The manager recommended a joint meeting with the Advisory Board to discuss what this means and how the program can be implemented.

There was a discussion on what the actual intent of the Commission was, is the CRA manager only making recommendations on the \$50K or the entire \$350K.

Member Bass-Prieto pointed out there is another \$1.7M coming and hopes the board will take a long hard look at affordable housing and refurbishing houses.

### **CRA Attorney Comments**

- Confirmed his assignment is to look back at the minutes to determine what the intent was as it relates to the 60 month declaration of funds received and to look at the rules to see what happens if carry-over funds are not specific/earmarked.
- Stressed the importance of having a compliance officer because there are so many deadlines.

### **Board Member Comments**

**Member Bass-Prieto** – Affordable housing and when will temporary housing of \$50K be up and running. – The manager indicated he has a draft already done and is waiting to meet with the interim City Manager to get some input and then forward it to the attorney.

**Member Candidate** – Good meeting tonight.

**Member Dowdell** – None

**Member Sapp**

- Look into some ways that we can help our residents especially related to utility bills.
- Appreciates the meeting tonight it was a good meeting.

**Chair Harris** – Regarding the American Rescue Plan, have the information available for the joint meeting so we can look at the possibilities; he will do additional research on what other entities are doing. We need to provide some relief.

**Advisory Chair Hannigon**

- Reminded the board of the previously scheduled joint meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Suggested speaking to property owners on the front end of small business grants. Perhaps having a document that the property owner has to sign off on agreeing to and acknowledging what the stipulations are for the program, for their renters to apply for our programs.
- Regarding confidentiality, maybe to counter that and to maybe take away some bias in the boards decision making, perhaps applicants can be assigned a unique ID number instead of using names when reviewing applications.
- Suggested tapping into the Chamber of Commerce to serve as more of an effectual partner to help our local business owners

Chair Harris stated that the CRA tries to do a lot with the little resources that we have, maybe we should get in the business of partnering. Reaching out, finding different organizations and say we want to partner, give them our budget, let them know what we're trying to do. We may be surprised who will partner with us to help serve our CRA District. Let's look at the local, state and national level to get partners to assist in what we're trying to do. Let's start with the local chamber.

*Motion to adjourn by Member Bass-Prieto, seconded by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.*

**Meeting adjourns at 7:34pm.**