

Call to Order

Chair Bass-Prieto called the meeting to order at 5:55pm.

The Quincy Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting of the Regular Board met on Thursday, March 28, 2024, with the following present at roll call: Member Dr. Nash, Member Dr. Wood, and Member Sapp, Member Harris.

Also in attendance:

Manager Nixon, Attorney Brown, Admin Pam Tribue

An agenda was not provided as this meeting is to cover the items that were tabled during the March 26, 2024, regular meeting.

CRA Projects

Small Business Assistance Program

The board reviewed the draft provided. Discussion included the length of time a business must stay in business after receipt of grant.

Member Dr. Nash asked about a list of previous awardees. The manager will pull the information and provide it to the board.

Attorney Brown reminded the board of the discussion of whether to include funds received from COVID. It was agreed to not include COVID funding.

Motion by Member Harris to approve the small business assistance grant program for up to \$10,000 with changes noted in this meeting:

- Six months or 180 days in business.
- Must note previous awards did not include COVID funding.
- Utility and property taxes are current.

Seconded by Member Sapp. Discussion/clarification. Attorney Brown asked if they were making it mandatory for the full repayment motion or if it would be prorated (like it was for S. Adams). The board to let it remain full repayment of the grant, motion carries 5-0.

Audience member Regina Davis was allowed to address the board. Ms. Davis noted that the agendas do not include an opportunity for "Comments from the Audience" and asked the board when that would be allowed. Chair Bass-Prieto granted her the floor for comments. Ms. Davis distributed a handout and made the following statements:

Observations

1. The meetings are not noticed on the website or Facebook.
2. The agenda and minutes are not posted on the website.
3. Public comments is not an item on the agenda.

Procedural Questions for Attorney Brown

1. Asked if the funds leftover at the end of the fiscal year were designated for specific projects? It was not included in the resolution. Attorney Brown shared that it does not have to be reflected in the resolution but is reflected in the budget. Ms. Davis asked that she be provided the exact amount and which line item it was put in.

Procedural Questions for the Board

Advisory Board

1. Asked when the last meeting of the Advisory Board? Manager Nixon advised that the last meeting was last year and that all but one member has termed out. There was further discussion on the process to move forward on reactivating the board.
2. How were recommendations brought forward since there was not an Advisory Board? Per the manager recommendations on projects from the previous advisory board have been included in current projects. Attorney Brown further explained the ordinance(s) does indicate the board should get advice from the advisory board but does not prohibit them from creating projects on their own.

Approved Budget

1. She indicated a surplus of \$209,229.21 based on approved budget of \$1,033,366 and bank balance as of 2/29 of \$1,242,595. Asked when a line item would be identified for those surplus funds. Manager Nixon explained that the board has been focused on moving forward with previously approved projects and will entertain the additional funds shortly. The board will do an amendment to the budget to reflect where those funds will be allocated, and the only stipulation is it be done in a reasonable amount of time.
2. Question regarding "Regular Salary & Wages" line. Will the position be filled, or will the funds be reallocated?
3. Inquired about the Senior Energy Efficiency Program. Is this still being done or is it a part of the catalyst program? It was determined that there are two separate sources of funding, but the board may need to address the description shown on the budget. May need to be more generic and the board would work out the specifics as the project is addressed.
4. Virginia Street Property Acquisition. This is an agenda item that is not mentioned in current budget, inquired as to where the funds would be pulled from if approved. Suggested it be sold to a private investor and CRA facilitate a loan?
5. Demolition Assistance. This is an item on the current agenda but there is no indication as to what general ledger number it would be charged against.
6. Helig Meyers Loan Request. Ms. Davis asked why she has not received a response to her request for a loan, pointing out that other requests for grants are on the table but seemingly a loan is not being considered. The manager explained that bringing things before the board is a matter of scheduling and timing. The board has just completed the details for one of several projects previously agreed to and will consider other programs as time permits, including the possibility of a loan program.

Chair Bass-Prieto asked the attorney to check if there was a requirement to have "Citizens Comments" as a part of the agenda but did feel it was a good idea either way. She also asked that he look into how "Presentations" should be handled.

Ms. Davis feels the loan request should be considered a priority as it relates to one of the items listed under Catalyst Projects in the current budget. She mentioned that two items on the current agenda are not budgeted items, nor is there a program established for the requests and yet they are on the agenda.

Member Sapp asked if the two parties get together and discuss this item and how any issues that may exist can be addressed and resolved.

Attorney Brown will check to see what the procedure should be for allowing citizens comments and presentations.

Manager Nixon asked the board to pull Agenda Items C and D under CRA Projects.

CRA Manager position advertisement

The manager previously provided the job description and has not received any feedback/changes/additions from any members. Member Dr. Nash asked that this information be resent to her and the remainder of the board if needed. The manager then asked for an estimated timeline for completion. There was discussion on establishing a panel, how that panel will be determined, its size and the creation of a rubric for scoring. Member Dr. Wood suggested starting the process ASAP.

CRA Attorney Comments

Based on the comments today and things that have come up in the past, he reiterated his recommendation that the board should have programs to address projects, although this has happened in the past. This allows everyone to have a fair shot but does not limit the board or the manager from coming up with ideas. A budget is without doubt important, but amendments are allowed.

CRA Board Member Comments

Member Harris

- Agrees wholeheartedly with the need to establish programs and parameters.
- Is in full support of the request for demolition assistance (previously pulled by the manager). It is outside of his district but sees this as an opportunity to rid the neighborhood of an eyesore and create some housing.

Member Dr. Wood

- Agrees with having programs. The board is subject to getting many requests and feels this streamlines the progress. Citizens should also be made aware of this.
- Disappointed with pulling the Request for Demolition Assistance as this came up in her district meeting. This could definitely help to address the housing need. Is in full support of this and looks forward to getting rid of this eyesore.

Member Sapp

- Thanked Attorney Brown for keeping the board on task and within the established guidelines.
- Agreed with pushing programs.
- Regarding Helig Meyers, she agrees it is an eyesore and a sensory perception sore. Would be a good option for housing. Is hesitant about buying the property because of her concern of what may be under the building. Mentioned there are eyesores in District 2 and perhaps the board will have an opportunity to remove slum and blight wherever needed.

Comments from audience member

Tom Lewis - He is familiar with the development process, feels it is prudent to understand that proposals for housing come through on the regular. Asked if it would be prudent to extend the applicant a forgivable loan instead.

Member Dr. Nash

- As we approach another budget workshop season, we are reminded that our words are not very clear, and we need to say what we mean and mean what we say when we do our public budgets. Real important as well to get engagement from our citizens so they can understand.
- Thanks, Ms. Davis, for bringing this information for review and consideration.

Chair Bass-Prieto

- Wished all a Happy Easter.

- Supports allowing input from the public (comments & presentations). Based on the information brought up she feels there may be the need to further investigate.
- Would like the board to consider a loan program with extra funds.
- Feels the pink bldg. previously discussed is an eyesore, falls in line with removal of slum and blight. Prefers duplexes over the multi-story apartment complexes, more conducive to our communities.
- Supports allowing citizens to make recommendations to the board (via special presentations even if it's not doable the current year. Advantageous to them and us during budget season as well.

Manager Nixon will send out next meeting date and the information regarding the Advisory Board previous/current members.

Adjournment

Motion by Member Sapp to adjourn, seconded by Member Dr. Wood, motion carries 5-0.

Meeting adjourns at 7:11pm.