

**WEST TAMPA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

April 25, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.
Hillsborough Education Foundation
2306 North Howard Avenue
Tampa, FL 33607

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees

Committee Members: Carlos Ramirez, Chair; Joe Robinson, Vice-Chair; Heem Baisden; Delphine Jones; Sandy Sanchez; Janice Williams; Michael Braccia; Jeanette LaRussa Fenton; Bobby Wilson

Absent: Shemeka Archer-Grundy; Walter Smith II; Tina Young

Staff: Jesus Niño; Andrea Roshaven; Capt. David Fernandez; Robin Nigh; Molly Biebel

- I. Meeting Called to Order
Mr. Ramirez opened the meeting of the West Tampa Community Advisory Committee at 5:36 p.m.
- II. Opening Comments & Roll Call
Ms. Roshaven completed the roll call and indicated a quorum was present. Mr. Ramirez excused all committee members not in attendance.
- III. Public Comment
 - Desmond Boone
 - Michael Randolph (virtual)
- IV. Community Policing Update
Capt. Fernandez provided information on a recent TPD drug operation using a confidential informant near Salcines and Rey parks that resulted in seven arrests and provided an update on last month's CRA-area crime statistics for police grids 114, 123, 124, 138, 139, 154 and 155.

Presentations & Ceremonies

- V. Soul Walk and Rome Yard Art
Robin Nigh, Art Programs Manager, provided an overview of the Soul Walk heritage trail project and distributed the first run of Soul Walk brochures. She explained the initial locations were assets previously identified and cataloged under various City, County, and public agencies, and is just a starting point for the evolving project. Ms. Nigh stated the project is for everyone and there will be opportunities for public input and engagement.
 - Multiple CAC members expressed their disappointment with the public engagement effort so far, especially the lack of coordination with the Arts & Cultural Preservation Subcommittee.
 - Mr. Robinson and Mr. Ramirez clarified the previous CAC motion included a specific request for Ms. Nigh to tell the West Tampa CAC how they will be included in the Soul Walk project.
 - Ms. Nigh said they need stories, photos, etc. from the community but provided no detailed schedule of project milestones or future engagement activities. Due to staffing resources and other projects, she said she doesn't expect meetings to start until into the summer. She said a project outreach event is being planned in June.

- Mr. Wilson expressed the desire to include the unique cultural diversity in West Tampa. Ms. Nigh said that is planned.
- Mr. Robinson made a motion that the Arts and Cultural Preservation Subcommittee work on finding historical assets for inclusion in the segment of Soul Walk within the West Tampa CRA boundary and make written recommendations to the CAC. Seconded by Ms. Fenton. Motion passed unanimously.
- Mr. Niño discussed a staff-level idea that will be brought to a future subcommittee to consider a consultant to help the Arts and Cultural Preservation Subcommittee identify and implement CRA-funded arts projects.

Peter Van Warner, Related Group, provided an update on the Rome Yard project, including an announcement that the development will rebuild the Yellow Jackets ball field as at least one new youth multi-functional sports field on the northern parcel of the site. He discussed the opportunities for arts in the section of Soul Walk that will go through the development. Mr. Van Warner also mentioned a playground planned for West River development and stated the Publix will be breaking ground around the New Year.

VI. Youth Engagement/Mayor's Youth Corp.

Molly Biebel, Youth Development Coordinator, provided a PowerPoint presentation and brochures on the Mayor's Youth Corp and Mayor's Youth Leadership Council. The application period for the next 40-student cohort will open after Labor Day. Ms. Biebel encouraged the CAC members to get involved in the program and share information about youth opportunities with their contacts.

VII. Brownfields Grant Outreach

Michelle Urbina, Shani Bryant, and Nick Morales with Vistra Communications introduced themselves and gave a verbal explanation of the outreach work they are doing for the Solid Waste Department's contractor, Stantec, on brownfield remediation projects funded through EPA grants to the City.

- Mr. Robinson made a motion for the CAC to consider utilizing Vistra Communications for outreach related to the Freedom Park brownfield remediation. Seconded by Mr. Wilson. Motion passed unanimously, with Ms. Fenton absent.

Action Items

VIII. Approval of March 28, 2023 CAC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Robinson made a motion to approve the March 28, 2023 CAC meeting minutes. Seconded by Mr. Wilson. Motion passed unanimously, with Ms. Fenton absent.

- Mr. Robinson reminded staff that an item in the minutes regarding the appointment of subcommittee vice chairs at the next meeting, is not on the current agenda. Mr. Niño said staff will add the topic to the May CAC meeting agenda.

Old Business

IX. Down Payment Assistance Program

Mr. Niño updated the committee that staff is reaching out to additional lenders to request more sample mortgage scenarios for the proposed down payment assistance program criteria. Housing was only able to provide sample scenarios from Bank of America, which creates a conflict of interest for the Housing Subcommittee Chair Mr. Wilson. The intent of the scenarios is to ensure the program guidelines would be favorable to potential participants securing funding for mortgages. A draft program flyer with proposed criteria was provided to CAC members for awareness.

- Mr. Robinson made a motion to move forward with the West Tampa Down Payment Assistance Program using the drafted guidelines provided by the Housing Subcommittee. Seconded by Mr. Baisden. Passed unanimously, with Ms. Fenton absent.

- Mr. Robinson stated that he was supportive of moving the program forward even though there was a directive of no new CRA programs because this program would support the 30% allocation for affordable housing.

Reports

X. Staff Report

- Mr. Niño will email committee members the written bullet point staff report.
- Ms. Roshaven provided a written grants update handout.

XI. General Discussion & CAC Subcommittees - Reports

- On behalf of Ms. Fenton, Mr. Niño reminded everyone that the next evening was the Economic Development Subcommittee meeting.
- Mr. Niño reminded everyone of the Unity & Cultural Festival on May 7 and encouraged members to complete the volunteer survey sent by Ms. Parks.
 - Mr. Braccia suggested considering including private music schools and programs for entertainment next year, instead of just public schools.
- Mr. Ramirez let everyone know about the special Infrastructure Subcommittee meeting for the West Tampa Parking Study on May 4. He encouraged community involvement in this meeting and requested the meeting information be sent to the larger West Tampa email list.
- Mr. Wilson inquired on when the housing grant recipient signage will be ready to use. Mr. Niño said the sign has been designed but needs to be printed. Ms. Roshaven indicated they expected the signs to be ready sometime after the May 7 special event.
- Mr. Niño updated members about a June 1 outreach event being planned at MLK Center for the Residential Exterior Improvement grant.
- Ms. Sanchez asked for an update on the status of the N. Blvd bridge and interstate underpass lighting projects, which Ms. Nigh had indicated would be Mobility projects.
- Mr. Ramirez asked, for transparency and follow-up, that he or the subcommittee chair be copied in on emails from staff to department heads who are responsible for requests made by the CAC and subcommittees.
- Mr. Robinson provided an update on the April 17 Public Safety Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Niño shared that Captain Blasioli said he would attend the next Public Safety Subcommittee.
- Ms. Williams spoke about a homeowner who received a “good neighbor notice” 30 days after the actual hearing.
- Ms. Jones spoke about the School Board hearing on May 9 about Just Elementary School.

XII. Announcements

XIII. Adjournment

The meeting lost a quorum at 7:48 p.m. and was adjourned.