

**Ybor CRA/YCDC Inc. Board and Community Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Notes**  
 April 25, 2023, at 4 p.m.

| <b>Attendees</b>        |                          | <b>City Staff</b>  |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Steve Barbas, Chair     | Liz Welch, Vice Chair    | Courtney Orr       | Captain Alex Thiel       |
| Rich Simmons, Secretary | Chip Williams, Treasurer | Corine Linebrink   | Dario Perez              |
| Fran Costantino         | Larissa Baia (phone)     | Brenda Thrower     | Offc. Jasmine House      |
| David Bailey            | Claire Fenlon May        | Malcolm Clark      | Jeralyn Lavender         |
| Walter Pinillos         | Michael Murphy           | Darrius Stallworth | Offc. Dariel PerezMartin |
| Marcia Austin           | Tee Ann Bailey           | Be Parks           |                          |
| Damon Shiver            | Joshua Frank             | <b>Guests</b>      |                          |
| Chris Wojtowicz         | Casey Gonzmart           | Sean Coniglio      | Clayton Ratledge         |
| Armando Edmiston        | Ken Jones                | Max Alvarez        | Jason Stewart            |
| Arnold Trueba           | Meredith Berwick         |                    |                          |
|                         | Brittney Barrie          |                    |                          |
|                         |                          |                    |                          |

**Excused**

Chris Vela  
 Cristal Lastra

**Unexcused**

Aislinn Stone

Steve Barbas, YCDC Chair, called the April 25, 2023, **YCDC Board of Directors’ Meeting** to order at 4 p.m. as an in-person/call-in meeting. Roundtable introductions were made.

**Public Comment:** None

**YCDC Minutes of March 28, 2023:** The minutes were offered for review by Rich Simmons. Barbas asked for comments on the minutes. ***There was a motion (Welch/Murphy) to approve the March 28, 2023, YCDC minutes. Vote unanimously approved.***

**YCDC Inc. Treasurer’s Report for March 2023:** Chip Williams provided the Treasurer’s report for the month of March and a report was included in the packet. Barbas asked the Board if there were any comments or corrections. Hearing none he entertained a motion to approve. ***There was a motion (Simmons/Edmiston) to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Vote unanimously approved.***

**Walk of Fame New Paver Contractor (Erik’s Granite Lettering) Cost Increase –** Barbas stated that we had difficulty securing a contractor for our paver program. However, we received a reference recently for Erik’s Granite Lettering Company. They have the equipment, expertise, and availability to take on our program at a cost of \$100 per paver, a slight increase from \$75. There was a discussion about raising the paver cost from \$150 to \$175 too. ***There was a motion (Wojtowicz/Williams) to hire Erik’s Granite Lettering at \$100 per paver and raise the sales cost per paver to \$175. Vote unanimously approved.***

**Support Staff Pay Increase** – Joyce Lucas has been serving as the support staff for the YCDC Inc. and administers the Paver Program along with other office support duties. Currently, we pay her less than \$15 per hour and she works about 5 hours per week. ***There was a motion (Wojtowicz/Murphy) to increase Joyce Lucas’s hourly pay by \$1 per hour. Vote was unanimously approved.***

**Special Services District Initiative Update** – Vice-chair Liz Welch updated the Board on the progress of the Special Services District (SSD) and shared the SSD map, updated services, flow chart, timeline, and proposed launch budget in the packet. She stressed that the proposal is a draft, subject to modifications and that the deadline is January 2024 to have everything completed. She also explained the map and proposed boundaries. She reported that the committee held a Zoom call with the attorney and lobbyist to talk through the SSD process and ask questions. Simmons was impressed with the team and said they seemed very experienced and had worked on a local project, Water Street. Barbas said the two things that stood out for him were 1) the projected budget which we will talk about later and 2) the team with Kutak Rock (consultant) and Sterns and Weaver (attorney) who expressed concerns about this proposal because of the political climate in Tallahassee due to Reedy Creek (Disney World) situation. He said they recommended meeting with City Council to get a letter of non-contention, so they don’t oppose it. After approval, they will help us reach out to the districts for support. Welch mentioned her concern about holding SSD meetings and Sunshine Law. She was advised by the attorney that it doesn’t apply since the SSD district is not established yet. Welch reported on the budget and referenced a meeting she had with Ybor stakeholders to garner their support of the SSD. She asked for the stakeholder’s support through a loan that would be paid back. They agreed to support the effort contingent on a favorable meeting with legislator Senator McClure after May 5. Fran Costantino asked about the stakeholders. Welch replied the following stakeholders were present: Darryl Shaw, Frank Capitano, Drew Newman, Damon Shiver, Casey Gonzmart, Joe Capitano Jr., Andy Scaglione, and Booky Buchman. Additionally, Alan Kahana, Joe Capitano Sr., and Ken Jones were invited too. There was a discussion about “why now” when the CRA doesn’t sunset until 2034 and the plan was to get it established so the two organizations can work parallel with one another and gain traction over time. It was a good productive meeting, and they were supportive. There were also comments about the boundaries, particularly the eastern one going to 39th Street. Frank thinks the boundaries should be broader and then adjust down later. Welch also reported that she toured the district with Block by Block to survey the area proposed by the SSD, which is larger than the CRA boundaries. Barbas asked Welch what actions she needs today to continue forward. Welch said she would like Board support to pursue 501c6 non-profit designation but does not have budget/timeline projection yet. She will know more after May 5 and can bring that information back to Board. With that, there was no motion requested at this time.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

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The Ybor CRA Community Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. as an in-person/call-in meeting by Barbas.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**Ybor CAC Minutes of March 2023:** The minutes were offered for review by Simmons. Barbas asked for comments on the minutes. ***There was a motion (Welch/Murphy) to approve the March 28, 2023, YCDC minutes. Vote unanimously approved.***

**TPD District 3 Stats Grids 128 and 129 Update** – Captain Alex Thiel addressed the CAC and presented the crime stats that were handed out to the committee. The biggest concern continues to be larceny which is up. Cell phone theft is still a predominant crime in the district, particularly in the club, and difficult to solve. Theil

updated the CAC on TPD staffing changes. Officer Victor Vazquez has been transferred out of the Homeless Liaison Officer position. Our new Homeless Liaison Officer that will continue working with Jasmine House will be Officer Dariel Perez-Martin who is here today. For the Ybor TPD liaison position, Officer Brandon Cain has been out on extended leave and will continue to be for some time. Therefore, Officer Jimmy Wilcher, will take over as the Ybor liaison and his contact information has been shared with Ybor staff. He is knowledgeable about Ybor City and coming from working the evening shift. Barbas asked what information is included in the packet cause some crimes are not included.

**TPD Homeless Liaison Updates:** Officer House reported on feedings taking place on 16<sup>th</sup> Street and talked with Pastor Tim. He claims his intent was not to feed the homeless but visitors and do a good deed. He is no longer conducting the free food. She also mentioned Tampa Hope just opened their homeless cottages with a ribbon cutting ceremony. They are addressing camping of individuals in the district and can help lead them to services. Costantino asked about the gentleman that camps out under the intestate between 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. Officer House will get more information and follow up.

**CRA Communications Update:** Be Parks introduced herself as the CRA Communications and Project Coordinator for Tampa CRA “agency.” She wanted to share updates since there is a lot of department changes going on and here to inform the Board about what that change looks like. In February, the CRA Board approved the new logo, Tampa CRA. It’s a nice logo that took about six months to create after meeting with the City Council members to get their input. This logo will be used across all CRAs and intended to unify the department and promote the Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency. Individual logos will no longer be utilized moving forward and the eight CRA districts will fall underneath this logo. The department is being unified and relocated to a central office, so we are working together. She said she has social media active now and promoting those accounts which includes Ybor City. The only two CRA’s that have logos are Ybor City and East Tampa so those will be replaced. We are moving forward to branding as Tampa CRA. Wojtowicz said he has worked with marketers a lot and is concerned that if everything is branded Tampa CRA, how does anyone know about Ybor City. How are you going to differentiate among CRAs? It seems that it’s generic and Ybor City gets lost. Parks mentioned the Marketing RFP that will address the branding and promotion for all eight CRAs. This is the first time Tampa CRA has done this so it’s a new approach. We are going to have Tampa CRA as the logo and underneath it the district will be identified. We will make sure we push out information under the brand with the specific district which will include press releases, community events, newsletters, etc. Parks said she hears the same concerns from all the districts about losing their identity. She said the type of communications sent out will be the same, but the look and feel will be different. A question was asked about who wanted this change and who asked for this? Parks said the Tampa CRA Board (i.e., City Council) asked for a Tampa CRA brand and they approved it. There was a question about when the new Tampa City Council gets sworn in and will this change. She said no it is already approved and being implemented. Barbas asked about what happens to the existing brand and Ybor crest logo on our letterhead and in the office? Parks said that will be gone. However, she has heard the conversations about establishing an Ybor City Special Services District (SSD) so the Ybor crest logo and brand could continue under that effort. Welch clarified that the Ybor crest brand and logo could be assigned to the YCDC Inc. and used for the new SSD and Parks agreed. Parks reported on her second item which was the Marketing RFP to engage marketing services for the Tampa CRA. This will be a mega RFP and will include services for the entire Tampa CRA and its districts. The RFP will require a marketing firm to give equal attention to all eight districts. The schedule to release the RFP is June 2023 so responses can be received this summer and a new company can be on board by this Fall.

Welch asked the transition of the marketing brand and the need to have enough time to make the transition passed 9/30/23. She spoke with Nicole Travis about the request to allow for the one-year extension with HCP Associates so we can make a smooth transition and allow time to get SSD established. She is concerned that the switch will be flipped on September 30, and we have no service contractor in place. Parks did not have a chance to speak to Ms. Travis but will do so and propose a transition period.

Williams commented about the statement that all districts are the same and equally represented but they are not. Ybor has invested a ton of time and money in their marketing program and it's worked great. Now, he is concerned that all their hard work is being taken away. Parks understands the frustration. She was asked to create a unified CRA brand and the Marketing RFP Scope of Services will have each district laid out and with their services. She is visiting each of the CRAs with this presentation.

Shiver asked how is Ybor going to be a priority? He said Ybor has struggled over the years and needs more help because it's a small, historic, and culturally significant with density constraints. Ybor is not the same as the other CRAs and has been treated as a stepchild to downtown and Channel District. Parks appreciated his comments and personally spends lots of time in Ybor City and appreciates the historic district. She will consider his comments in the scope of work for the Marketing RFP.

Bailey commented that this feels like a solution that is looking for a problem and Ybor is not a problem. It's been a successful district and now it's being diluted which makes no sense. The last thing you want to do with a successful marketing program is to pull the plug and this sounds like what is happening here. I think it's great the Tampa CRA is gaining an identity and being more representative but basically you are taking a successful marketing program in one CRA and diluting it. Parks replied that the intent is not to dilute and pull the plug on anything but to promote the Tampa CRA brand and its eight districts. Each district will be promoted equally and be included on social media platforms. The goal is to be more efficient and provide better services to all CRA districts. Staff will be working more collaboratively and applications for services will be standardized. However, CRAs may have different programs depending on the needs of their community. She says the changes planned are intended to strengthen the department and services and provide an opportunity for staff to work across CRAs to share skill sets and support redevelopment. Bailey agrees on policies and programs but not on branding and marketing. Sean Coniglio, HCP Associates introduced himself and said he has had the opportunity to work with Ms. Parks over the last few months and feels this change is needed to help better clarify the role of Tampa CRA. He attended the FRA conference and learned from CRAs across the state on what CRAs should be doing and what they cannot do. He said starting to establish an SSD is really the right path for Ybor. Barbas asked if he disagrees with what David Bailey said a few moments ago and he said no. He added that CRAs have changed in their ability to fund certain activities that they have been doing over the years that an SSD can fund. Tampa is changing and even Ybor events numbers are down because there are more options for people. Ybor needs to change and evolve too. Simmons commented that Ybor has a lot of passion, and the community is worried about their identity. He recognized that this process began a few years back with Florida Legislative changes that restricted our spending on certain activities (i.e., special events funding). Today, it's just coming to a forefront after a delay with the pandemic. With the Ybor budget discussion coming up along with this discussion, we have a strong argument for the establishment of an SSD so we can continue to support arts and entertainment activities in our historic district. CRA's are being forced to comply with these restrictive changes and he sees an opportunity to keep our brand with the new SSD. The reality is that this office will be gone, and staff will be

relocated. Be Parks thanked the CAC and provided her contact information for future questions - cell 813-460-3782 and email [be.parks@tampagov.net](mailto:be.parks@tampagov.net).

**Ybor YES! Team Stats:** Clayton Ratledge, Block By Block Regional Manager, introduced Jason Stewart, new Ybor manager. Stewart introduced himself and shared his background. He is a Tampa native who was in the military for 10 years and returned to Tampa to join UPS, managing Tampa Airport operations.

**Ybor CAC Chairman's Report:** Barbas reported on the following:

- **7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Archway Lights Project Ribbon Cutting** - This event took place on April 19, 2023, at 11 a.m. in front of 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Welch said it was great and well attended.
- **Public Safety and District Operations Co-chair Position Available** – Bailey said no update today.

**Manager's Report:** Courtney Orr

- **7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bricking Cost Feasibility Study CRA Presentation** – Orr recapped the consultant presentation from Christine Fanchi with WSP to CRA Board. The presentation was very informative and well received. There was a favorable discussion with no discussion about funding. There was talk about creating a fundraiser and branding Tampa bricks, but CRA Board member Carlson said the bricks could be stolen like in St. Augustine. All were supportive and excited about the project.
- **FY24 Budget Final Draft** - The final draft budget was provided again to the CAC for their review and approval. All subcommittees and executive board have reviewed the budget and approved it to date. She mentioned a few minor adjustments but essentially, the budget is the same. ***There was a motion (Welch/Wojtowicz) to approve the draft FY24 budget as presented. Vote was unanimously.***
- **Centennial Park Reimagined Master Plan Update** - Six firms responded to the Request for Qualification, and all will be interviewed on May 11 by the City's CCNA Committee.
- **Ybor City CAC Housing Workshop** – A workshop will take place on Tuesday, June 13 at 2:30 p.m., at Seminole Garden Center (5800 N. Central Ave.) The purpose of the meetings is to talk specifically about the programming of the 30% affordable housing funds. Barrie asked if there will be programs presented and Parks said examples will be shared. Barbas said that the CACs have not been consulted on any of these changes.

### **Committee Reports:**

- Economic Growth, Housing and Mobility Committee – Chairs: Josh Frank & Liz Welch
  - *Next Meeting: May 9 at 3:30 p.m.*
- Community Preservation and Sustainability Committee – Chairs: Chris Wojtowicz & Michael Murphy
  - *Next Meeting: May 16 at 3:30 p.m.*
- Public Safety and District Operations Committee – Chair: David Bailey
  - *Next Meeting: May 18 at 3:30 p.m.*
    - a. West Tampa CRA Unity and Cultural Festival – May 7, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Meeting Adjourned at 5:30 p.m.**

**Next Ybor CAC/YCDC Monthly Meetings Tuesday, May 23, 2023, at 4 p.m.**