



CRA Board A-GUIDE Workshop Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 15, 2021 – 2:00 p.m.

Arts Warehouse
Delray Beach, FL 33444

STAFF PRESENT:

Renee Jadusingh
Christine Tibbs
Nikki Temple

Tracy Waterlander
Kim Phan
Lori Hayward

Ivan Cabrera
Rob Massi
Alexina Jeannite

OTHERS PRESENT:

DJ Doody
Stephanie Immelman
Winnie Edwards
Charlene Farrington
Suzanne Haley
Katia Altamirano
Herman Stevens
Monica McLean

Evelyn Dobson
Gary P. Eliopoulos
Karen Ronald
Sharon Blake
Andrew Conners
Ronnie Dunayer
Phoebe Elder
Sharon Blake

Marjorie Waldo
Gerecia Jackson-Edmond
Kae Jonsons
Latoya Lawrence
Serena Spates
Sheila Townsend
Joyce DeMoose
Nancy Chanin

1. Call to Order

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

CRA Board Members Present: Chair Shirley Ervin Johnson, Vice Chair Adam Frankel, Deputy Vice Chair Angie Gray (at 2:55 p.m.), Commissioner Shelly Petrolia, and Commissioner Kelcey Cordell Brooks.

Absent: Commissioner Ryan Boylston

3. Approval of Agenda

None.

4. Discussion

a. A-Guide Applicant Presentations for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Executive Director Renee Jadusingh explained the process to be followed for the Workshop. She explained the review committee had reviewed the applications and provided their recommendations in the meeting backup materials.

CRA Grant Manager Alexina Jeannite introduced the A-GUIDE program (Achieving Goals Using Impact Driven Evaluation) and provided a brief history. She explained how the grants support the CRA goals and needs and discussed the process for application.

b. A-GUIDE Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Arts Garage

Ms. Jeannite outlined the request from Arts Garage for \$275,000 under the overall need area of Recreation and Cultural Facilities. She stated the request represented 20 percent of the organization's budget. Ms. Jeannite stated the review committee had given the Arts Garage an average funding score of 86 percent and recommended that the Board direct staff to include funding for the Arts Garage in the CRA's FY 2021-22 Budget in the amount of \$275,000.

Marjorie Waldo introduced the team from the Arts Garage and gave a *PowerPoint* presentation on the organization's programs and history. She discussed efforts to rise to the challenge of COVID-19 and continue sharing music with the community even through the closures. She spoke on giving back to the community, theater, and arts education.

Chair Johnson asked for clarification on next steps.

Ms. Jadusingh explained this was the opportunity for Board discussion on the application, and agreements would be brought back on August 31 for a vote.

Vice Chair Frankel complimented Ms. Waldo and her team for excelling. He stated the program had struggled until she came on board and thanked her for her creativity and approach.

Commissioner Petrolia echoed Vice Chair Frankel's comments and stated the team had done a wonderful job of pivoting when others were struggling. She noted the Arts Garage programming was not just about the arts, but about reaching out to the community.

Chair Johnson commented on the book series and stated she found it to be profound.

c. A-GUIDE Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Ms. Jeannite outlined the request from Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Inc. for \$40,000 under the overall need area of Business and Economic Development. Ms. Jeannite stated the review committee had given the Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Inc. an average funding score of 86 percent and recommended that the Board direct staff to include funding for the Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, Inc. in the CRA's FY 2021-22 Budget in the amount of \$40,000.

Stephanie Immelman, CEO of Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce, introduced Jacqueline Ramirez with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) of Florida.

Ms. Ramirez gave a *PowerPoint* presentation reviewing the mission and role of the SBDC, the funding structure, return on investment in the CRA District over the past five (5) years, current stages of client businesses in the CRA, and key service focuses for the coming year. She explained the return on investment was \$159 for every dollar provided. Ms. Ramirez attempted to share a video outlining how the program works in the community. Due to technical details, she agreed to submit the video to staff to share with the Board.

Ms. Ramirez discussed activity of the SBDC over the past year, noting a focus on assisting individual businesses with COVID-19 disaster relief. She stated the program has added 38 new clients and two (2) businesses starts so far in FY 2020-2021. She reviewed a list of webinars and broke down the verified impacts of the program on the CRA District.

Commissioner Casale asked for clarification on the cost of services from the SBDC.

Ms. Ramirez explained that all services of the SBDC are free of charge.

Chair Johnson stated the program was a hidden gem and noted she did not know what else they could do to let the community know about the SBDC services. She invited Ms. Immelman and Ms. Ramirez back to share the video at a future meeting.

d. A-GUIDE Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Delray Beach Community Land Trust (CLT)

Ms. Jeannite outlined the request from Delray Beach Community Land Trust (CLT) for \$282,460 under the overall need category of Affordable Housing. Ms. Jeannite stated the review committee had given the Delray Beach CLT an average funding score of 89 and recommended that the Board direct staff to include funding for the Delray Beach CLT in the CRA's FY 2021-22 Budget in the amount of \$282,460. She noted the request was 39 percent of the CLT's overall budget, while the A-GUIDE restricts grants to 25 percent, but the overage had been allowed in previous years. Ms. Jeannite stated a revised budget was possible, but the presenter would explain further.

Commissioner Casale asked for clarification on the parameters.

Ms. Jadusingh explained that a few years back, the CRA Board had determined that Affordable Housing initiatives could exceed the 25 percent restriction. She provided additional background, noting the CLT and Housing Authority each manage two (2) affordable housing communities for the CRA. Ms. Jadusingh stated those contracts are ending and will go out for a request for proposals (RFP), so the CLT was unable to include those contracts in their FY 2021-22 budget until they know whether the contracts are awarded to them again.

Commissioner Petrolia asked if the Board would know whether the contracts were awarded before making the final A-GUIDE decisions in August.

Christine Tibbs, CRA Assistant Director, responded that the RFP would be going out on Monday, July 19 and the anticipated due date was August 19. She stated by the August 31 CRA Board meeting the item should be on the agenda.

Gary P. Eliopoulos, President of the Board of Directors, introduced himself and presenter Gerecia Jackson-Edmond, Housing Manager. He stated their program may not be as glamorous as the theaters and the museums, but they are changing lives one (1) house at a time. He asserted that the mission of the CLT is to eliminate slum and blight and working with the CRA they have been fortunate to do so for many years. He discussed the Cory Jones Isle project.

Ms. Jackson-Edmond gave a *PowerPoint* presentation reviewing recent and future projects of the CLT. She discussed an overall snapshot of the program's plans for FY 2021-22 and explained that as Ms. Jadusingh had referenced, if the CLT is awarded the contract to continue managing the affordable housing units for the CRA, the A-GUIDE request would represent 21 percent of the CLT budget.

Vice Chair Frankel asked why the annual budget was down \$200,000.

Evelyn Dobson responded that the budget was down \$200,000 because of the CRA apartment management. She stated the management was not included in the budget because the contract ends in September, but they would be submitting for the RFP.

Chair Johnson commented on the CLT homes she had recently toured and stated she was blown away. She stated she champions the CLT concept because it is a special niche.

Commissioner Petrolia asked for clarification on the year-to-year budget of the CLT and the portion made up by the A-GUIDE.

Ms. Dobson explained that in FY 2020 the grant had been 30%, then in FY 2021 the CLT had adjusted their developer fees and asked for a grant of 25%.

e. A-GUIDE Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Delray Beach Historical Society

Ms. Jeannite outlined the request from Delray Beach Historical Society for \$75,000 under the overall need area of Recreation and Cultural Facilities. Ms. Jeannite stated the review committee had given the Delray Beach Historical Society an average evaluation score of 79 and recommended that the Board direct staff to include funding for the Delray Beach Historical Society in the CRA's FY 2021-22 Budget in the amount of \$40,000. She noted the grant represented 25 percent of the organization's budget.

Winnie Edwards, Executive Director of the Delray Beach Historical Society gave a *PowerPoint* presentation discussing the organization, which has been a part of the community for 60 years. She stated the CRA partnership went back about 14 years, starting with saving two (2) historic cottages and moving them to the Society's campus. Ms. Edwards discussed projects of the organization over the past year, noting that about 3,000 new items had been added to the archive during the pandemic. She shared details of ongoing projects, including oral histories, a writing contest, Delray Memories outdoor display, and history lectures.

Ms. Edwards shared plans for the coming year, including two (2) new exhibits and an educational lecture series. She stated the Educational Heritage Gardens would have their official opening, giving the community an outdoor classroom to learn about the area.

Commissioner Casale stated she was a member and someone who really enjoys what the Delray Beach Historical Society does. She spoke on a book written by Delray Beach's first black Councilmember that is a part of the archive and discussed the critical importance of the items included there. Commissioner Casale questioned the organization's small operating budget and stated maybe it needed to be bigger so that the 25 percent from the CRA could be a larger amount. She asked what the CRA could do to help with getting the archive digitized.

Ms. Edwards responded that it was a complicated project to get the 67,000 items in the archive digitized, and shared details of a professional archivist serving on staff for a year. She stated it was an area of pressure for the organization, as it was becoming increasingly difficult to find things. Ms. Edwards noted that she is the only full-time employee of the Delray Beach Historical Society, and they want to be able to afford a full-time archivist.

Commissioner Casale asked staff if the Board was allowed to discuss giving more than the 25 percent.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that was something the Board could discuss. She stated that the archiving is for the entire City and the CRA is 25 percent of the City, so it may be a combined effort with the City. She noted that the archiving could be a request separate from the A-GUIDE and reviewed a few of the questions that would need to be addressed.

Commissioner Casale stated that she thought it would be something the CRA would need to be mindful of contributing to until the archiving was complete, potentially a period of three (3) to five (5) years.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that could be looked at as a special project.

Chair Johnson stated they needed to talk about the issue at a future time.

Commissioner Petrolia asked if a line item for archiving could be considered. She stated she would be amenable. Commissioner Petrolia reviewed some of the recent efforts of the Historical Society and stated they were an incredible pivot. She congratulated the organization on taking the Delray Memories outdoor display down and redoing it when a storm was coming.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated that she loves everything the Historical Society does and commended them on working with the other nonprofits in the community. She suggested they might be able to share an archivist between organizations.

Chair Johnson added that she loves anyone who wants to preserve the community's history. She stated she was in favor of Commissioner Casale's suggestion and said she would like to know more about the segregation project.

Ms. Edwards responded that it was a big project and there were a lot of plans. She stated she would reach out.

f. A-GUIDE Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Delray Beach Public Library Association

Ms. Jeannite outlined the request from Delray Beach Public Library for \$443,000 under the overall need categories of Recreation and Cultural Facilities and Business and Economic Development. Ms. Jeannite stated the review committee had given the Delray Beach Public Library an average evaluation score of 88 and recommended that the Board direct staff to include funding for the Delray Beach Public Library in the CRA's FY 2021-22 Budget in the amount of \$443,000. She noted the request was for two (2) programs, the first to continue Sunday and Monday operations and the second for the technology training and innovation lab.

Karen Ronald, Executive Director of the Delray Beach Public Library gave a *PowerPoint* presentation. She discussed the past year's programs, noting that though the library was directed to be closed for COVID-19, they never stopped service. She discussed new resources for learning at home that were introduced during the pandemic, as well as daycare book baskets, story times, and memory kits.

Ms. Ronald addressed ways in which the library does community engagement and social outreach through a wide variety of partners. She discussed the benefit of having gotten rid of overdue fines and shared upcoming exhibits and programs. She showed a video featuring the Library on the Go golf cart.

Commissioner Casale stated she thought the Library on the Go program was innovative, and the way the library was addressing learning loss due to COVID-19 was appreciated. She asked for clarification on the cost to be open on Sundays and Mondays.

Ms. Ronald explained the library is open four (4) hours on Sunday and 11 hours on Monday, and costs include staffing, overhead, and programming.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated that she especially likes the way the library is taking their efforts to the streets. She noted the Making Music program was a best kept secret.

Chair Johnson asserted that libraries are the heart of the community.

g. A-GUIDE Funding Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022: Expanding & Preserving Our Cultural Heritage – Spady Museum

Ms. Jeannite outlined the request from Expanding and Preserving Our Cultural Heritage, commonly known as Spady Museum, for \$106,000 under the overall need category of Recreation and Cultural Facilities. Ms. Jeannite stated the review committee had given the Spady Museum an average evaluation score of 86 and recommended that the Board direct staff to include funding for the Spady Museum in the CRA's FY 2021-22 Budget in the amount of \$106,000. She noted the grant represented 25 percent of the organization's budget.

Charlene Farrington, Executive Director of the Spady Museum, introduced the staff and board members present and gave a *PowerPoint* presentation on the cultural programming, historical preservation, and education offered by the organization. She discussed efforts to redirect resources during COVID-19. Ms. Farrington shared details of the exhibit currently only display at the museum, "Strong Communities Emerging," and the visitor engagement aspect of the exhibit. She highlighted the Virginia Snyder archival collection and collaborations.

Ms. Farrington reviewed plays for FY 2021-22, including continuation of the step-on bus tours, a return of the MLK brunch, exhibitions of Black history and youth art, and hybrid gallery talks. She noted plans for a Juneteenth celebration. Ms. Farrington discussed the organization's budget and the grant ask.

Chair Johnson stated she did not know how Ms. Farrington and Sharon Blake do it with just the two (2) of them on staff. She suggested the Spady Museum needed to rethink its request from the CRA to expand. She noted the rotting wooden fence and said she would like to see something done.

Commissioner Casale thanked the Spady Museum team for preserving Delray Beach's cultural heritage.

Commissioner Petrolia congratulated them on 20 years.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray added that she was excited Spady Museum had partnered on the Juneteenth celebration. She stated she hoped more businesses could get involved in the future. Continuing, she commended the Spady Museum staff on going after grant funding. She encouraged Spady Museum to bring back their ask for expansion, noting she agreed that the campus needed it.

h. A-GUIDE Status Update Regarding Old School Square Center of the Arts, Inc.

Ms. Jeannite provided a brief update on Old School Square. She explained that under the FY 2020-2021 A-GUIDE agreement, the program had received only one (1) of its quarterly payments, with the second quarterly payment being withheld pending receipt of their audit report. She stated for FY 2021-22, Old School Square had submitted an application, but it was considered incomplete, and the committee had not scored it.

Ms. Jadusingh added that the missing audits were for FY 2018-19 and 2019-20. She shared the funding history for Old School Square which was part of last year's A-GUIDE workshop and stated that staff was concerned about an ongoing increase in funding despite assertions the request would go back down. Ms. Jadusingh stated that the Old School Square team was present to answer questions.

Commissioner Casale asked for clarification on what funds had been released in FY 2020-21.

Ms. Jadusingh stated that one (1) quarter of the funds had been released, and that was because the audits were due the previous year, but staff had worked with the organizations due to COVID-19. She noted staff had been received a letter from the Old School Square's audit firm stating the 2018-19 audit would be available by July 31, but they did not have a date for the 2019-20 audit. Ms. Jadusingh stated staff wanted to review the previous audits before approving a new funding request.

Chair Johnson asked why Old School Square was not presenting.

Ms. Jadusingh stated the application was considered incomplete because the CRA did not have the audits. She noted they were waiting to review the audits and then determine what to do from there.

Chair Johnson asked if anything else was required to make the application complete.

Ms. Jadusingh stated the audit reports were the only things pending at this time.

Chair Johnson stated she had invited the City Attorney's office to comment on the status of Old School Square but did not see them represented in the room. She asked if the Board wanted to hear from organization. She noted that there was information provided to the City Commission that she had wanted to have presented to the CRA Board.

Ms. Jadusingh clarified that the A-GUIDE provides grant funding to nonprofits who are in City properties and provide services that assist and further the CRA mission. She stated because the Old School Square organization is running that facility, they are able to apply for the grant. She noted the lease of the property was a separate issue.

Chair Johnson stated the Board receives information from different sources, and she was not clear if there was a legal issue.

Vice Chair Frankel asserted the workshop time was almost over and the application was incomplete, so Old School Square should be invited to next month's workshop.

Chair Johnson asked if it would be helpful to hear what was happening on the City side, as the CRA is acting on behalf of the City, as well. She stated the A-GUIDE should not be the only thing considered.

Ms. Jadusingh stated that if there were issues with the lease, that would flow over to the CRA. She explained that there was some intersection between the City's lease reporting requirements and the CRA's A-GUIDE.

Chair Johnson asserted that there was no clear line between the City and CRA, and there had never been a nonprofit in the program which had gotten to this point.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray clarified that Old School Square was not presenting at this time because they had not gotten their audit done in a timely manner. She asked if there had ever been other groups that did not meet the application requirements and had been denied funding, and whether the discussion was setting a precedent. She stated she was more interested in that conversation than in asking questions of the applicant. Deputy Vice Chair Gray stated that all of the applicants had gotten their completed applications in on time.

Chair Johnson added that the CRA had given the first quarter installment with the promise that the audit report was forthcoming, but now were being told again that it was just down the road without an explanation.

Ms. Jadusingh stated that was the reason staff had withheld the funding and were not reviewing the application for next year. She noted that whether or not the application was reviewed would be determined if and when the audits were received. She stated staff was recommending a hold.

Chair Johnson asked if the Board had authorized extending the deadline for the application.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that the applications were due on May 21.

Commissioner Casale clarified that staff had not asked for an extension at this point because they had not received a complete application, to include the audit reports. She noted there were two (2) different issues at hand, the past funding which was being withheld in light of the fact that they had not complied with the documentation requirements and future funding, which they were not being considered for at this time.

Ms. Jadusingh explained this discussion was meant as an update to inform the Board as to why Old School Square was not among the A-GUIDE presentations. She stated this was not an extension of any kind. She explained staff had advised that they would not be releasing second quarter funding or considering the FY 2021-22 application until the audit was submitted. Ms. Jadusingh stated that all of the other applicants would be approved on August 31, 2021, but because Old School Square did not have a completed application and had not made a presentation, they would not be on that list.

Commissioner Petrolia highlighted that the audit which would have been required for FY 2020-21 has not been submitted, and the audit for next year also had not been submitted, so there were two (2) years at issue.

Ms. Jadusingh stated staff had looked back, and the audits had come at different times – sometimes they came with the application, and sometimes it was a little bit after.

Commissioner Petrolia asked if any of the other nonprofits had this issue with not providing audits, or whether they were typically in the application packet.

Ms. Jadusingh responded that typically the audit for the prior year comes at the time of application and the current year comes later, depending on the organization's audit schedule. She noted that was also typical for other funders, and that at times the CRA has allowed for compilations from small organizations rather than full-blown audits every year.

Chair Johnson stated it looked as though this organization was not living up to the CRA's requirements, so the next question was to decide where they are going forward.

Ms. Jadusingh asserted that was a question for the future, as this was just an update. She reiterated that if and when the audits were received, staff would provide a further update and the Board could assess what they want to do. She noted at this point, staff had not reviewed the application to make a recommendation.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray asked that Old School Square be given two (2) or three (3) minutes to respond, since they were standing there. She stated she did not want to belabor the point but wanted to give an opportunity to explain why they were in this position.

Latoya Lawrence, Chief Financial Officer for Old School Square, explained they were in this position because they had hired a new auditing firm and during the process of COVID-19, that firm had staffing issues. She stated the organization had hired another firm because the previous could not meet their deadlines for not just this grant, but other applications. Ms. Lawrence stated they were promised the 2018-19 audit would be ready at the end of this month and the 2019-20 audit would be available in August. She apologized for the position they were in and asked forgiveness on behalf of Old School Square.

Commissioner Petrolia asked Ms. Lawrence to clarify what firm had reneged and what firm they were with now. Ms. Lawrence responded with the names and Commissioner Petrolia asked staff to follow up with the firm.

Ms. Lawrence stated the IRS Form 990 had been submitted, and she had provided that form in lieu of the outstanding audit.

Commissioner Petrolia asserted that the problem she was having was that it was two (2) years' worth of audits they were discussing and using COVID-19 as the excuse for more than 12 months was problematic. She stated she had an issue with that, as this was basic when applying for grant money.

Ms. Lawrence responded that she had gone back through past records and from her understanding, the current audit had been submitted after the fact, so there was only one (1) outstanding. She noted that the grant cycle had also been moved up this year.

Commissioner Petrolia asked staff if they had always allowed for this organization to be a full year behind in their audit when submitting.

Ms. Jadusingh stated it had varied over the years. She noted another reason staff had wanted to review this audit was because of the increased level of funding over and over again. She stated in past years, every time the Board had approved the increased funding, they had made clear the funding was supposed to be reduced in the future.

Ms. Jadusingh asserted the funding requests kept going up, so staff wanted to review the audit and see what was going on. She noted that all of the organizations had been able to complete their audits despite COVID-19.

Commissioner Petrolia stated that moving forward, she would require that staff look at what was going on. She noted not having those financials was troubling, and she did not think anyone should be allowed to not have those when submitting the application. Commissioner Petrolia added that the fact this was an ongoing issue meant it was time to do a deeper dive.

Chair Johnson stated it looks as though this organization does not like to play by the CRA's rules, and they had been generous in providing exceptions in the past. She said looking back,

it seemed perhaps it was not good to have given them the first quarter's funding. She asked who the previous auditor was.

Ms. Lawrence responded that was before her time but provided the name she believed had been the auditing firm for the 2017-18 audit. She stated the firm that had been hired during her tenure was the one (1) that was terminated because they could not meet the timeline.

Ms. Jadusingh stated there was a comment in the application that the organization was unable to complete the audit due to COVID-19 shutdown, so staff had reached out for further explanation. She provided additional clarification.

Ms. Lawrence explained further, noting the note was the explanation to the IRS as to why the Form 990 was late.

Deputy Vice Chair Gray expressed that Ms. Lawrence had not been in her position long enough to defend long term issues with the organization, but she had questions. She asked if staff could speak with the auditor and see what else they could find out.

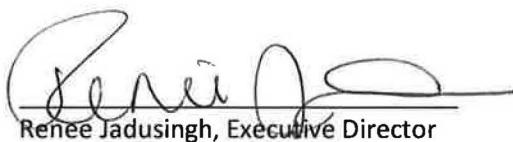
Ms. Jadusingh stated she could speak with all three (3) auditors.

Chair Johnson asserted that she was seeing a pattern and was concerned that these other wonderful nonprofits were closed during COVID-19 but were able to provide their paperwork and keep up with things. She stated she thought the Board needed a more satisfactory explanation as to what happened. Chair Johnson stated that when putting together what was happening on the City side with what the CRA side was seeing, she was not satisfied. She added that as good fiduciaries, they needed a better understanding.

Ms. Jadusingh stated that staff would reach out to the audit firms to try to help clarify, and if and when they received the audits, they could take a look and see if the grant was something the CRA wanted to consider for FY 2021-22 despite having missed the deadlines. She stated staff and the Board would need to assess next steps at that time.

5. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.



Renee Jadusingh, Executive Director



Shirley Ervin Johnson
Shirley Ervin Johnson, Board Chair