

**City of Palm Bay, Florida**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting 2025-01**

Held on Wednesday, the 15 day of January 2025, at City Hall Council Chambers, 120 Malabar Road SE, Palm Bay, Florida.

This meeting was properly noticed pursuant to law; the minutes are on file in the Housing and Community Development Division Office, City Hall Annex, Palm Bay, Florida.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Thibert at approximately 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Rebecca Thibert	Present
<b>VICE-CHAIRPERSON:</b>	Dawn Bittar	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Alfred Agarie	Absent
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Jamie Hirzel	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Kenny Johnson	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Henry Morin	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Dr. Deborah Livingston	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Randall Olszewski	Present
<b>MEMBER:</b>	Shenielle Walker	Present
<b>BOARD ATTORNEY:</b>	Rodney Edwards	Present

**STAFF MEMBERS:**

Clinton Hatcher, Community & Economic Development Director; Ibis Berardi, Assistant Director of Community & Economic Development; Denise Carter, Housing Administrator; Elena Sarazua, Senior Housing Specialist; Tania Ramos, Principal Planner of Land Development Division; Carmen Journey, Board Secretary.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES:**

**1. Regular Meeting 2024-10; October 16, 2024**

As the minutes were not included in the agenda packet, the Board concurred to continue the item to the February 19, 2025, regular meeting. No vote was taken on the continuance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS: (Non-agenda items only)**

There were no public comments.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**1. Final Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Priorities**

Ms. Berardi provided a summary of House Bill 1339, adopted during the 2020 Florida Legislative Session. Annually, each AHAC must review their local government's established policies and procedures, ordinances, land development regulations and comprehensive plan and recommend specific actions or initiatives to encourage or facilitate affordable housing, while protecting the ability of property to appreciate. The State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) AHAC priorities were reviewed by the Board on May 15, 2024, and the following summarizes the Board's recommendations to amend certain affordable housing incentives:

There was discussion by the Board of amending the AHAC priorities incentive, to add to *Incentive 1 – the processing of approvals of development orders or permits for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects, as provided for in Chapter 163.3177(6)(f)3, Florida Statutes.*

The City had an expedited permitting process for affordable housing projects that required City funding, and for the expedited permitting to be considered for privately funded affordable housing projects. This amendment had been added to the AHAC priorities Incentive 1. The report was due to Florida Housing Finance Corporation on December 31, 2024. The report was provided to the board members reflecting revisions recently made to the Land Development Code. The Board was required to vote on the incentive strategies, and to solicit public comment on the AHAC report as it was being considered for adoption.

Motion by Mr. Morin, seconded by Dr. Livingston, to adopt the incentive strategies on the AHAC report. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Substantial Amendment to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

Ms. Carter provided a summary of the amendments which would reallocate leftover funds from completed projects and two (2) cancelled projects, allocate funds to projects that currently needed additional funding, and create a housing rehabilitation specialist position.

Ms. Carter highlighted the changes of the substantial amendments:

***AMENDMENT NO. 1 – FUNDING REDUCTION***

**Activity Name:** Plan Year (PY) 2024 Palm Bay Aquatic Center

**Original CDBG Funding Amount:** \$50,710

**Description:** Palm Bay Aquatic Center (420 Community College Parkway SE, Palm Bay, Florida 32909. The project scope included removal and replacement of \$1.8 million BTU commercial pool heater, circulation/treatment pumps, and pool chemistry controller system.

**Proposed Changes and Reasons for Changes:** This project was not eligible as it did not meet the eligibility guidelines specified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which required that at least 51% of the project's beneficiaries be low- to moderate-income individuals.

**Project Status:** Cancelled and reduced to \$0.

**Reallocation Amount:** \$50,710 would be transferred to the Liberty Park Improvements project.

***AMENDMENT NO. 2 – FUNDING INCREASE***

**Activity Name:** PY 2024 Liberty Park Improvements

**Original CDBG Funding Amount:** \$100,361

**Description:** The scope of project included removal and replacement of 700 linear feet of backstop fabric on softball fields; removal of the clay on two (2) fields and replacing with industry-standard clay to a depth of five inches (5"); replacement of basketball court lights with energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures.

**Proposed Changes and Reason for Changes:** Last year, this project was recommended for funding and more improvements were needed in this park that were ready to start. This amendment addressed the improvements and helped meet HUD expenditure goals.

**Project Status:** Budgeted.

**Reallocation Amount:** Transfer \$50,710 from (Cancelled) Palm Bay Aquatic Center project to Liberty Park Improvements project. The park originally was funded at \$83,480 an additional \$50,710 would be added for a new total of \$134,190.

***AMENDMENT NO. 3 – ACTIVITY NAME CHANGE***

**Original CDBG Activity Name:** PY 2024 Riviera Park Improvements

**Revised CDBG Activity Name:** PY 2024 Ken Greene Memorial Park Improvements  
Riviera Park was officially renamed to Ken Greene Memorial Park in June 2024.

**Description:** The scope of this project included the removal and replacement of the existing tennis/pickleball courts including sub-base, associated equipment, and a fence enclosure.

**Proposed Changes and Reason for Changes:** This project was originally submitted to HUD as Riviera Park Improvements but was recently changed to Ken Greene Memorial Park Improvements. The scope of work, budget and park location did not change.

#### ***AMENDMENT NO. 4 – PROJECT CHANGE***

**Original Activity Name:** PY 2024 Public Works Construction of Sidewalks (east end of San Filippo Boulevard, from Wichita Boulevard to Eldron Boulevard)

**Original CDBG Funding Amount:** \$270,266

**Description:** The scope of this project included construction of an 8-foot sidewalk along the east side of San Filippo Boulevard, from Wichita Boulevard to Eldron Boulevard.

**Proposed Changes and Reasons for Changes:** This project was being cancelled as engineering and design was not complete. Implementation of this project would help the City meet expenditure goals required annually by HUD for the CDBG Program.

**Project Status:** Budgeted

**Reallocation Amount:** Transfer \$270,266 from (Cancelled) San Filippo Boulevard, from Wichita Boulevard to Eldron Boulevard, and reallocate the funds to the Wichita Boulevard Sidewalk project (San Filippo Boulevard to Babcock Street).

#### ***AMENDMENT NO.5 - NEW ACTIVITY***

**Activity Name:** CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Specialist

**Funding Amount:** \$52,607.65

**Funding Source:** PY 2022 and 2023 leftover funds from completed projects

**Description:** Position duties included inspection of properties and preparation of cost estimates; prepare plans and specifications for construction, rehabilitation, and work/repairs; prepare documents for bid invitations and coordinate distribution of bid packages to qualified contractors; review bids/project cost proposals and advise on the most cost effective/beneficial rehabilitation package; assist with the coordination of construction schedules with contractors and homeowners; monitor/inspect construction and rehabilitation projects for compliance with workmanship standards, specifications, adherence to Code, property rehabilitation standards, contract conditions, and progress payment disbursement; approve progress and final payment requests; provide project updates to homeowners and explain the different phases of construction and project timelines; assist in resolving conflicts between homeowner and contractor; provide information regarding the Housing Rehabilitation Program and other relevant information to the public; other duties as may be assigned to this job description.

Ms. Carter explained the City should meet an expenditure goal every year, pursuant to HUD. Expenditures this year were estimated at \$776,737.

Mr. Johnson asked if this new activity would be after this year and the salary source. Ms. Carter confirmed same and advised that there would be no impact to the General Fund.

Ms. Thibert commented on Amendment No. 1 – Palm Bay Aquatic Center. She asked when this project was originally approved. There was discussion as to whether it was initially eligible and was in the low to moderate income. Ms. Carter responded in the affirmative and said staff had been looking at the service areas and the City's Comprehensive Plan to assess the classification for parks.

Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Olszewski, to approve the Substantial Amendments for the PY 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 CDBG Action Plans and submit the amendments to City Council and HUD for approval. Motion carried unanimously.

## **2. Nonprofit Grant Proposal presentations for program year 2025-2026 for the CDBG & HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)**

Ten (10) Agencies attended the meeting. Each agency was given the opportunity to provide an overview of their organization and proposal, with a three (3) minute time limit.

### **A. Angel Bridging Gaps**

Jackie Yearby, representative, spoke about the agency's mission, its background and services provided. The agency served approximately thirty (30) young adults with disabilities between the ages of 22 to 64. The agency provided services three (3) days per week at community spaces. The agency was trying to create job trainings and opportunities to serve this population and was seeking funding for its ABGworks Enrichment Program. The funding request amount was for approximately \$35,000.

### **B. Community of Hope**

Drew Warren, representative, spoke about the organization's experience in providing affordable housing in Brevard County and had served over 400 households last year. The agency recently purchased a building with the intent of creating the Gale Center for Hope to house not only the agency's offices but a thrift store. The requested funding in the amount of \$294,705 would be used for three (3), one-bedroom affordable housing units for seniors. The units would not be a transitional facility unit. Mr. Warren responded to questions posed by board members.

C. Aging Matters of Brevard

Tom Kammerdener, Chief Executive Officer, spoke about the agency's mission and the services provided to seniors in Brevard County. Services focused on nutrition, the Meals on Wheels program, and seniors at lunch in Palm Bay. The agency was currently serving 250 clients in Palm Bay, with a wait list of 115 clients. The agency was requesting \$27,900 to feed 58 clients at \$3.95 per meal, for a total of 7,063 meals.

D. City of Palm Bay Recreation Department

Daniel Waite, Acting Recreation Director, explained the Summer Camp Scholarships Program. The City had two (2) centers that ran summer camps which averaged 133 students per camp last summer. The program offered reduced pricing or discounts to students. The department was requesting ninety (90) scholarships per week. Mr. Waite responded to questions posed by board members. He hoped this funding request would be able to be a reimbursement and could be reinvested into the activities to do with the kids as well.

E. City of Palm Bay Public Works Department

Tania Holder, Grants Manager, presented the sidewalk project proposal for San Filippo Drive. The proposal as to construct an 8-foot sidewalk along the east side of San Filippo Drive, from Wichita Boulevard to Eldron Boulevard, approximately 0.65 miles in length. The total project cost was approximately \$700,000; \$300,000 in CDBG funding was requested. Construction would commence in October 2025 with an expected completion date of April 2026.

Ms. Thibert asked if this project was the same sidewalk project that was removed in the amendment earlier in the agenda. Ms. Carter confirmed same. Christine Sullivan, Assistant Public Works Director, explained that there was a misunderstanding last year and staff did not realize the sidewalk had to be designed before September of this year, but it was now in process.

F. Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation

Sean Odle, representative, spoke about the organization's programs and services provided. The requested funding of \$30,000 would provide 3,000 trips to Palm Bay residents, the seniors Safe Ride Program, food delivery and doctor's visits. The agency had the largest mobile pantry in Brevard County, with owned vehicles as well as leased vehicles from Space Coast Area Transit (SCAT) to provide the transportation service. Mr.

Odle responded to questions posed by board members. Mr. Morin commented that the \$10.00 trip cost was inexpensive. Mr. Odle agreed and said the costs were offset by other grants and by State funding through the Department of Transportation (DOT).

G. City of Palm Bay Parks and Facilities Department

Josh Hudak, Division Manager, provided a general overview of the previous successfully completed projects and presented the following six (6) project requests for funding by priority:

1. *Victoria Playground and Sunshade.* \$210,000 was being requested to replace the playground structure, swing set, fall surface and border. The City would leverage \$23,292 in-house labor. Staff would also remove and dispose of the structure
2. *Veterans Park Pavilions, Fencing and Lights.* Funding was requested to install two (2) pavilions. The project was shovel ready and staff would utilize a contractor from a continual contractual construction service agreement. Funding would also be used to replace the low-profile wood fencing and to upgrade the tennis lights to LED lights. The total for this project was \$89,639, with leverage of \$51,644 for material and labor costs.
3. *Liberty Park Dugouts.* The scope was to replace eight (8) dugouts at the softball fields with the requested amount of \$156,800. current dugouts had exceeded life expectancy. The project would utilize 100% in-house labor.
4. *Driskell Memorial Park Restrooms and Doors.* Funding in the amount of \$37,000 was requested for this project. The project would entail replacing restroom doors and frames that were past their useful life; and to install floor and ceramic wall tile utilizing 100% in-house labor
5. *Goode Park floating dock and Captain's House.* Funding requested in the amount of \$183,064 to remove and replace the decking, bump rails and hardware of the floating docks; and to replace the windows at the Captain's House with new efficient hurricane rated windows, install new hardboard, replace exhaust fans and vents, install handicap rails, and paint the interior and exterior. 100% in-house labor would be utilized. The City would leverage \$250,673 in labor and design costs.

6. *The Lagoon House Boardwalk and Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) replacement.* The department would replace one 7.5 ton HVAC unit and the existing 210 feet of boardwalk. 100% in-house labor would be used. The total requested for this project was \$53,142, with the department leveraging \$15,538 in labor.

At the request of the Board, Mr. Hudak provided updates on other projects and responded to questions posed by board members.

Ms. Thibert commented that the sunshades were eligible for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) funding from Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). She said that small level grants were \$50,000 maximum and did not require matching funds. Ms. Thibert encouraged staff to pursue those funds to help with the sunshades project.

#### H. South Brevard Women's Center

Becky Lemstrom, Director and Grants Administrator, spoke about the organization and the program services offered to victims of domestic violence and the rape crisis center for Brevard county. The funding request of \$34,675 would be used to provide the transitional housing for victims of domestic violence service. Clients would have a safe and stable home, comprehensive suite of services from case management, financial literacy, and credit repair. The Transitional Housing Program was up to 24 months long. The Center would also offer financial assistance with childcare, transportation, career and education expenses.

#### I. Melbourne Police Athletic League (PAL)

Marthenia Jones, Program Director, spoke about the agency's mission and benefits of the youth mentoring program service offered in Palm Bay. The mentoring program had received many requests from the local schools such as Stone Middle School and Palm Bay Elementary School. Currently, the agency had ten (10) mentors in those schools, overseeing approximately twenty-seven (27) youth. The funding request of \$23,800 would be used to mentor twenty-eight (28) youth.

Ms. Thibert asked the agency had to increase its level of service to receive funding next year. Ms. Carter confirmed same and said that the agency met the requirement. Ms. Jones responded to questions posed by board members.



J. Conklin Davis Center for the Visually Impaired, Inc.

Vada Jackson, Program Director, and Eric Porter, Steps Manager, presented the Agency's mission and services provided. The Agency was seeking funding in the amount of \$35,000 for supportive services for blind and visually impaired residents of Palm Bay. Services included creating suitable living environments by providing clients with a dedicated curriculum and support system that focused on vocational training and employment, independent living skills, technology training, children's services, and a variety of additional community services including group activities, adjustment to blindness counseling, and more.

Ms. Thibert asked about the funding procedures, such as scoring. Ms. Carter answered that staff sent an email of the updated calendar (included in the meeting agenda packet) to the agencies that had applied for funding; then staff scheduled a public meeting for funding recommendations for CDBG and HOME which was held in the Dawn Reid Community Room, Building A, at the City Hall on January 29, 2025. Staff's recommendations would be presented to the Board at its next meeting to be held on February 19, 2025. Prior to the Board meeting, board members would receive a booklet with the staff's summaries and information on the proposals, along with staff's recommendations. The Board would take action and the Board's recommendations would be considered by City Council as a public hearing of the preliminary approval of projects/activities to be included in the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 CDBG and HOME programs on April 3, 2025.

**OTHER BOARD BUSINESS:**

**1. Informational: Staff Report**

Ms. Carter noted that for Item 2, New Business, staff provided the Board a report that would be helpful with making funding recommendations.

Ms. Carter explained that SHIP had a current waitlist of 235 applicants, and it closed on January 1, 2025.

Mr. Johnson said that Melbourne PAL was funded \$22,950 and, as of two (2) weeks ago, had expended \$5,100. Ms. Carter explained that grant started in October 2024 and PAL was one of the highest spenders.

Ms. Thibert asked about Club Esteem as no one was on the sign in sheet. It was confirmed that there was no representation from Club Esteem.

**2. FY 2025-2026 CDBG Planning Process and Action Plan schedule updated**

Ms. Thibert encouraged board members to review the schedule of the Important Citizen Participation Dates, the CDAB meetings calendar and respond to e-mails or telephone calls from staff to ensure quorum requirements were met for the meeting, especially as there were tight deadlines.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

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Rebecca Thibert, CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

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Carmen Journey, BOARD SECRETARY