



# HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

## COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 05, 2024, at 5:30 PM

**Denton Johnson Center (Changed Location) – 400 Ruffel St. Eatonville, FL 32751**

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** These meeting minutes are presented in an abbreviated format intended as a public record discussion of stated meetings according to the Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine law. Meetings are opened to the public, noticed within reasonable advance notice, and transcribed into minutes for public record. *\*\*Audio Recording are available through the Town's website on the Board Agenda Page.*

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**CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Wanda Randolph called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

#### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Randolph led the invocation through a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

**ROLL CALL** – Quorum was established through roll call by Town Clerk (Took place after the Pledge of Allegiance)

**PRESENT:** (7) Chair Wanda Randolph, Vice-Chair Donovan Williams, Director Tarus Mack, Director Rodney Daniels, Director Theo Washington, Director Ruthi Critton, Director Angie Gardner

**STAFF:** (3) Veronica King, **Town Clerk**; Greg Jackson, **Attorney**; Corporal Boone, **Police Department**

#### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION: (3)**

**Todd Jenkins** – Inquired about the hiring of Mr. Johnson (The employment terms and condition have to be established and presented as an offer, confirmation by the board has to take place), expressed concerns that it should not take two weeks to get hired (start working).

**Cathy Mills** – Inquired as to why the citizens of Eatonville were not informed about President Bill Clinton visiting the Town of Eatonville, asked if the citizens matter, was an opportunity for the citizens to see what this town is about

**Angela Johnson** – at the last meeting with the voting, ranking, and selecting of applicants for the CRA Executive Director, it appeared to be concerns about wanting to have specific conditions of employment, encourages to the board to think about the terms as to whether or not legally the terms should have been outlined prior to the offer (Legal: No offer pending and may be going through human resources). A letter was read from citizens of 1887 expressing disappointment that tonight's meeting date was not adjusted for the election of the President of the United States, which raises questions about the council's priorities, concerns about the special meeting called for the CRA the employment of the former Executive Director who has had a history of terminations from the town. This situation warrants scrutiny, especially in the light of our previous discussions about the Eatonville mainstream and significant funds in the amount of \$150,000 unaccounted for, the expiration of a three year commitment does not negate the obligation to these funds, a detailed account is needed of where the funds were and how they were used to benefit the town, informed the board of the under the table management made by Mr. Johnson receiving \$35,000 and \$16,800 for services related to the grant for the Old Heroes Nightclub (Club Eaton) for the \$100 million grant, this arrangement was not officially acknowledged by the town or the CRA, encouraged the board to take a look into these matters because there will be continued discussions and concerns, hoping the outline of terms of employment will protect the town.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION:**

Discussion of CRA Bylaws Amendments – Director Gardner asked for a special meeting (discussions had to be done in the sunshine law) to address the concerns of hiring the Executive Director, making it hard for them to want to stay or to terminate them for no justifiable reason, want to add extend the bylaws in section 3.4 (hiring of the executive director) adding language to protect the Executive Director position, desire to add to the section that talks about termination shall be by majority plus one, which would be a supermajority, unless the causes are confirmed by both the town and CRA attorneys; Director Williams and Director Mack suggest a supermajority vote for changing the bylaws as a whole to protect the integrity of the CRA; Director Daniels stated that the history of the town has governed by a majority vote, the need to protect someone with a supermajority vote is not good or necessary; Director Critton felt that a supermajority undermines the integrity of the majority vote, if a super majority is the direction that the board want to go in, it should be universal, if a supermajority is used for termination, then it should be used for the hiring of the position, the issue is not with the majority but with mindset and the attitude of the board members, if the board does what it supposed to do by setting the expectations of the executive director, and the executive director meets and exceed those expectations, they should be left to do their job, personal issues that transpired in the past contributing to a lack of professionalism should not dictate how the board moves forward, whether a supermajority or a majority, if the board members conduct themselves appropriately these issues can be circumvented. (Legal opinion: a supermajority means the majority vote of the board plus one additional vote that would be needed to pass, concerning a supermajority vote for a single position, there are actually two positions that are appointed by vote from this this board, if a supermajority vote is done for one position it has to be considered for the other position, the CRA is an independent entity, if the town attorney is asked to look at things, that would be allowing the town to make a decision for this board through the town attorney, this is a caution in regards to the CRA being an independent board); supermajority vote requires five votes (four votes plus one), a majority vote requires four votes; the supermajority vote is needed to avoid removing executive director because of personal reasons or problems with this particular person. Director Critton suggests a workshop so all voices can be heard and all should be on the same page with understanding to ensure that any action is justifiable. Director Mack stated the need to address the item on the agenda (the supermajority votes and the executive director's salary) and address the entire bylaws at another time. Director Daniels suggest moving forward with s supermajority vote on every decision, the supermajority is not in the bylaws, agree with having a workshop, for the bylaws, for the records, there is \$165,000 unaccounted dollars from the town placed in a 501c3 nonprofit owned by the former executive director; Director Gardner request for the attorney to add the supermajority vote into section 3.4 on the last strikeout draft of bylaws and consolidate all drafts into one document to bring back to the meeting in November (third Thursday). Legal clarified this item is an evaluation of the bylaws and has nothing to do with the decision about employment.

## **BOARD DECISION:**

### **Decision on A Proposed Employment Offer for the Executive Director for the Community Development**

**Agency** - Director asked that the board give direction to the HR director on what to offer as far as salary and any other conditions, the position has not been confirmed until it is brought to a CRA meeting by way of resolution, Director Gardner vote was contingent upon stipulations regarding contractual agreements when work is being done inside the town (already in the town's policy) and it is the desire that the executive director return back to the same focus in completing the Main Street, Main Street is a functioning agency in most municipalities; the salary range id \$65,000-\$75,000 **Director Gardner motion to APPROVE \$75,000 for the salary offer for the Executive Director to be moved; moved** by Director Mack; **second** by Chair Randolph; **AYE**; Chair Randolph, Vice-Chair Williams, Director Mack, Director Washington, Director Critton, Director Gardner; **NAYE**: Director Daniels; **MOTION PASSES. Questions/Comments:** What is the correlation of hiring the Executive Director and completing Main Street (Director Gardner - Main Street was created for the town with a partnership with the town, putting in funds and the CRA putting in funds as part of the agreement. The idea stems from the director and still require the town and the CRA coming into agreement, if something has been dissolved, it can easily

bring it back current, if Main Street is not connected to the employment agreement, there is nothing that says it has to be done, it is the desire for Main Street to be back in operation, will address the Main Street matter during the confirmation period, the candidate has been chosen, but has not been offered employment.

**STAFF/BOARD REPORTS:**

**Town Clerk (Veronica King)** — No Report

**Attorney (Greg Jackson)** – No Report

**Director Tarus Mack** – No Report

**Director Rodney Daniels** – Made reference to his recommendation was for the Executive Director’s salary to start at \$65,000; Eatonville Main Street split under the executive director’s 501c3, the name, doing business as Florida Community Corporation, doing business as Florida Main Street, the name was changed to Eatonville Main Street Corporation, there is unaccounted funds in the amount of \$165,000, with the stipulation of Main Street coming back, it is requested that the money is given back or provide information on what was done with the money (\$165,000)

**Vice Chair Donovan Williams** – No Report

**Director Ruthi Critton** – No Report

**Chair Wanda Randolph** – No Report

**Director Theo Washington** – No Report

**Director Angie Gardner** – No Report

**\*\* (Additional handouts):** A copy of the Public Report from the State of Florida Commission on Ethics pertaining to the preliminary investigation on the issuance of payment to the former Executive Director of the Town of Eatonville CRA was given to each board member at the request of Director Washington during a previous meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT** Chair Wanda Randolph Motions for Adjournment of Meeting (**Moved** by Director Critton; **Second** by Director Gardner; **AYE: ALL; MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 6:34 P.M.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

  
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Veronica L King, Town Clerk

APPROVED

  
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Angie Gardner, Chair