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### **Call to Order**

Chair Bass-Prieto called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

The Quincy Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting of the Regular Board met on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, with the following present at roll call: Member Dr. Nash, Member Dr. Wood, Member Sapp, and Member Harris.

### **Also in attendance:**

Manager Nixon, Attorney Brown, Admin Pam Tribue

### **Approval of the Agenda**

*Motion by Member Harris to approve the agenda as presented for the April 9, 2024 meeting, seconded by Member Dr. Nash, motion carries 5-0.*

### **Approval of the Minutes**

*Motion by Member Sapp to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2024 meeting, seconded by Member Harris, motion carries 5-0.*

*Motion by Member Dr. Nash to approve the minutes from the March 28, 2024 meeting, seconded by Member Sapp, motion carries 5-0.*

### **CRA Projects**

#### Virginia Street Commercial Property

Recap by Manager Nixon. Board members and staff previously toured this property. It's the former Quincy Joist building consisting of 4.11 acres and a two-story building. It is owned by the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the asking price is \$335,000 (down from the original asking price of \$360,000). A straight purchase is preferred by the Foundation is open to a lease-purchase agreement with no interest or fees. This was previously listed as one of the Boards economic development opportunities.

Member Dr. Nash asked why the board would be buying this property and what, if any, are the future plans for it. She also inquired about the actual square feet of the building and the current appraisal value. The plan is to develop an economic development opportunity, creating job opportunities. Additionally other options included relocation of Public Works, a staging ground for equipment and even an area for a homeless park. A lot of prep work would be needed to get it ready for someone else to come in and take it over. Dr. Nash would like a tour of the bldg. and property. The manager will set up the tour. He also advised that the building is in good condition, around 10,000 sq, feet and may need an HVAC system and that the building recently had the roof replaced and was painted.

Member Sapp remembers the building from the previous tour but inquired about a drainage problem and stressed the need for a plan prior to purchase. Would like to take another look at the property.

Member Bass-Prieto sees the building as a moat and is concerned about the condition of the building. Noted the following:

- Survey is one-year old (How long is it good for?)

- May be overpriced.
- Suggested testing for mold and environmental issues.

Manager Nixon will arrange tours and find answers to the questions being asked.

Member Sapp questioned if the building is up to par and offered that an engineer may need to take a look at it. The board gave the manager permission to move forward in securing the answers to questions from the board including items with a cost associated with it. The manager anticipates the cost will be under \$5,000 which he is authorized to approve.

Attorney Brown reminded the board to either tour separately or to notice it as a meeting.

Audience member Regina Davis asked if the board is considering this for Public Works or a homeless facility, wouldn't this be under the City not CRA. Where does the insurance come in? Asked about construction and renovation costs and if this would be included in the information that the manager is bringing back.

Member Harris hopes that once the information is received the board will be able to move forward with a decision regarding the purchase.

#### Request for Demolition Assistance

Manager Nixon reviewed the information previously submitted to the board. The building has been acquired and the owners are asking for assistance with demolition. This is in line with the CRA's mission of removing slum and blight. The request is for \$50,000.

Member Sapp asked why we (the CRA) assisting with the demolition, feels the funds could be recouped once completed and sold. Would like to avoid any problems with environmental issues.

Member Harris reminded the board that the goal is to remove slum and blight. Feels the board should provide funding as a boost to encourage owners to move forward with the project.

Member Dr. Wood advised that this was brought up in her recent District meeting. Her constituents say it's an eyesore; but should not be involved beyond the demolition.

Chair Bass-Prieto wants to see it gone but is concerned about the environment. Suggested providing the funds but tie it to the completion of the project. Would like to see the environmental study done prior to approving expenditure.

Member Sapp says the board may want to consider other options including a loan. May be setting a precedent for others to make similar requests.

Member Dr. Nash is concerned about environmental issues as well. If approved there should be clear conditions attached to the amount of funds needed to remove this eyesore.

Member Harris once again reminded the board of their responsibility to remove slum and blight. This will go far in beautifying the Pat Thomas corridor.

Member Dr. Wood feels that some of the concerns will be the responsibility of the property owner.

Attorney Brown agrees that any problems after demotion would be on the property owner.

Chair Bass-Prieto stated that although the board may not have a legal obligation, it is a moral issue as well if it impacts our community.

Manager Nixon said that the demolition company will have to take all necessary precautions. He has toured the building and described it as being in good condition (has been gutted). There are also legal guidelines that must be followed.

Member Nash asked if there is a list of buildings in the CRA District that need to be demolished.

Member Dr. Nash agrees that there are many buildings throughout the district that need to be demolished as well.

Member Sapp shared that the building was a tobacco warehouse prior to being a tannery.

*Motion by Member Harris to approve Option 1: Approve request for up to \$50,000 in funding assistance to the property owner for demolition the structure located at 502 Pat Thomas Parkway, the owner would engage in a contractual relationship with the demolition company, seconded by Member Dr. Wood, motion fails 2-3, with members Sapp, Nash and Bass-Prieto voting against the motion.*

#### **Comments from Audience**

Veronica Ashley-Reid, owner of Sweet Abayomi, asked for clarity on the previously approved Small Business Assistance Program and what the next steps would be for business owners to apply for funds. Manager Nixon explained that once the application is completed and returned, it will be reviewed and presented to the board for review/approval.

*Motion by Member Dr. Nash to table discussion on CRA Manager Position Advertisement and remainder of agenda until the next meeting, seconded by Member Dr. Wood, motion carries 5-0.*

**Meeting adjourns at 6:05 pm.**