



**Minutes of the
Community Redevelopment Agency
Regular Meeting
Monday, July 11th, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m.
Council Chamber, City Hall**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Farley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board members Present: Chairman Farley, Vice Chairman Gudis, Board member Houston, Board member Brown, Board member Holmes

Board members Absent: None

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion to adopt the agenda was made by Board member Brown; seconded by Vice Chairman Gudis. Motion carried unanimously.

3. PRESENTATIONS

A. Chamber of Commerce Survey Findings.....Chamber of Commerce

Josh Wooten, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, presented results from a survey recently conducted by the Chamber of Commerce to gather information from local business owners related to the trolleys used to transport visitors to Three Sisters Springs refuge during the last manatee season. (ATTACHED). He briefly spoke on coordinated efforts taking place to handle the influx of tourism, contributions from the local Main Street partner, and improvements made during the past season.

SEE ATTACHED presentation regarding survey results-

Gerry Mulligan- Crystal River Area Council- Commended the Board on their leadership related to tourism in Crystal River, spoke in favor of the trolley route used during the past season and encouraged continued efforts to improve.

Karen Pieters- Main Street Director- Spoke in favor of the trolley and the new energy that has been brought to the downtown business community.

Mr. Wooten concluded his presentation, discussing various options of how to move forward in preparing for the upcoming manatee season.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve Minutes of CRA Meeting held June 13th, 2016

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Vice Chairman Gudis; seconded by Board member Holmes. Motion carried unanimously.

6. PUBLIC INPUT

7. CRA ATTORNEY

8. CRA ADMINISTRATOR

A. Update on the Riverwalk project

Background: [Agenda Sheet **Requested Motion:** Update on progress related to Riverwalk.

Summary: Verbal Update of progress made in the last month related to the Riverwalk Project.
End of Agenda Sheet]

City Manager Burnell provided a brief status update regarding the Riverwalk project noting that finalization of negotiations with some of the adjacent property owners is currently underway.

B. Motion to allow Crystal River Main Street to utilize the unoccupied "Chamber Building" to create a pop-up gallery for tourists to visit during the 2016-2017 manatee season

Background: [Agenda Sheet **Requested Motion:** **Motion to allow Crystal River Main Street to utilize the unoccupied "Chamber Building" to create a pop-up gallery for tourists to visit during the 2016-2017 manatee season.**

Summary: Citrus County Tourism Development Council studies have repeatedly shown that Crystal River needs to develop as a destination and offer visitors more options for things to do. Crystal River Main Street would like to set up a temporary gallery of interesting and amusing photos and stories of "wild" life in Crystal River to add to our attractions. The vacant Chamber Building would be a perfect location for the gallery. We understand that the building is planned to be demolished and we are not attempting to interfere with those plans.

Allowing us to temporarily use the building would accomplish several things:

- Immediately improve a vacant eyesore that is in a prominent place downtown on Hwy 19
- Create another attraction to draw visitors to downtown
- Create an activity that would unify the community
- Provide a place for the CRBB to give live demonstrations
- Serve as a fundraiser for CR Main Street

Crystal River Main Street is also requesting consideration for the CRA to absorb the cost of the utilities for approximately 8 months. In 2015 utilities averaged \$250.00 per month.

Staff Recommendation: N/A

End of Agenda Sheet]

City Manager Burnell provided a brief overview of the item. Karen Pieters, Main Street Director showed a news clip featuring a pop-up gallery and addressed Council questions and comments regarding the proposed project and provided a status update on other Main Street projects currently in the works. Do you think the scow is working- yes- 72% said yes-

Houston- No cost-

Motion to allow Crystal River Main Street to utilize the unoccupied "Chamber Building" to create a pop-up gallery for tourists to visit during the 2016-2017 manatee season was made by Board member Houston; seconded by Board member Holmes. Motion carried unanimously.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

10. BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

- A. *Jim Farley, Chair*
- B. *Mike Gudis, Vice Chair*
- C. *Andy Houston*
- D. *Ken Brown*
- E. *Robert Holmes*

11. PUBLIC INPUT

Anne Pope- Hometown Values- Complimented the Board on the momentum they have achieved.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

CITY OF CRYSTAL RIVER



JIM FARLEY, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:





MIA FINK, CITY CLERK



Trolley Survey Preliminary Results

1 * Did you experience an increase or decrease for Manatee Season over the previous year?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Increase			22	95.6%
Decrease			1	4.3%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

Notes:

- About the same

#2) If you had an increase, what was the approximate percentage (%) of the increase?

- 10-20%, There did seem to be more people around
- Approximately 30%
- 10%
- Not sure; just more people and activity downtown
- 10%
- 40%
- Don't know
- N/A - 1st year in business
- 20%
- 40%

#3) If you had a decrease, what was the approximate percentage (%) of the decrease?

- 20%

#4) What do you attribute the increase or decrease to?

- Slightly improving economy, allowing people to travel in and out of the state
- The amount of people that the trolley brought into the area, as well as new products that we brought into the store
 1. More people drawn to Crystal River due to Chamber's efforts through advertising
 2. Trolley made it more convenient for people to get downtown for patronizing shops, restaurants, etc.
- People riding the trolley to 3 Sisters, and downtown being a part of the trip.
- Blocked off parking lot; customers can't get to me
- Our website crashed and was fixed and upgraded
- It brings more tourists
- Manatee season; tour buses in area; snow birds
- We had no historical data from previous years. However, a very large percent of our customers said that they rode the trolley or saw us on the the trolley or Visitor Center.

5

* What is your opinion about the price that was charged for a trolley ticket this past year?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Too high			10	43.4%
About right			7	30.4%
Too low			0	0.0%
No opinion			6	26.0%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

Notes:

- For tourists, but locals needed a lower price
- But doesn't seem to matter to tourists

6

* Would you like the trolley program to continue?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes, during peak tourist season			10	43.4%
Yes, year round			13	56.5%
No			0	0.0%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

Notes:

- If practical
- Doesn't affect us
- Didn't stop at our shop, made no difference
- But needs to drop off here

7

* Do you believe having the trolley drop people off downtown was successful?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			23	100.0%
No			0	0.0%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

Notes:

- Don't know enough about it

#8) Please explain your choice for the previous question.

- Yes and no, not sure
- It did seem to bring more people into the downtown area, so in that aspect it was great. As for bringing people into my business, not so much. In general they seemed too rushed to do more than throw open my door and then run out.
- Absolutely, having the trolley take people around town to different destinations was not only a way to get people where they were going, but they were able to explore different areas that they might not have ordinarily have taken the time to stop and explore. The general consensus from the people that came in my store was that they would come again
- Trolley made it more convenient for people to get downtown for patronizing shops, restaurants, etc.
- Because the only way to get in 3 Sisters was by trolley, we had a captive audience to come downtown to eat and shop.
- I did get new customers
- Yes, I believe it brought in more tourists into these local businesses. We have definitely seen a change.

9) * Would you be willing to contribute financially for expanded trolley service?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			3	13.0%
No			7	30.4%
Not certain at this time			13	56.5%
No Responses			0	0.0%
		Totals	23	100%

10) * Would you be interested in advertising on the trolley?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			8	34.7%
No			5	21.7%
Not certain at this time			10	43.4%
No Responses			0	0.0%
		Totals	23	100%

11) * If the trolley was not primarily aimed at visitors to Three Sisters Springs, do you think route from the Welcome Center through downtown would still be effective?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			16	69.5%
No			7	30.4%
No Responses			0	0.0%
		Totals	23	100%

Notes for #11 on next page

Notes (#11) :

- If the trolley dropped off in the parking lot near my shop, it could bring a lot of business
- Good choice if enough tourists
- If used correctly

#12) What are the top three (3) ideas that you have to enhance business in Crystal River and downtown?

1. Help make the area an art destination by encouraging local artists with things like city sponsored grants and public displays/exhibits
2. Invite artists from other locations in to do lectures/exhibits and get the word out to the world about how beautiful it is here
3. More art festivals and bigger/better advertising to draw in artists and art enthusiasts/collectors from all over

1. Keeping the trolley for however long we can
2. Having the downtown area (businesses) more well lit and having everyone expand their hours. People don't want to just shop during the day, it would be nice for them to be able to stroll and shop in the evening as well.
3. Possibly having somewhere to sit near the scow Spirit. Well lit, with music (like in downtown Ocala). The stores are open late, people shop, eat, and get cold drinks and ice cream, and just sit and visit. During the holidays they could bring in an ice skating rink (which would pay for itself and them some if you charge people) and play Christmas music. We go every year to the Ocala one and it's packed. One here would mean people don't have to go out of town to spend their money!

1. More parking!
2. More parking!
3. More parking!

More people are coming all the time. We need more parking!

1. Bike Night on Avenue
2. Every organization working on individual projects NOT at the same time.
3. The boardwalk that they are putting up should bring a lot of good to our local businesses

1. Parking!
2. Stores open later and open on Mondays

1. More businesses working together to cross promote
2. More smaller events

1. More events locally
2. Maybe more restaurants and different shops downtown

13 * Do you think having the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Development Center, Crystal River Main Street and Three Sister's Springs Visitors Center together in the Welcome Center is beneficial to your business?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			19	82.6%
No			4	17.3%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

14 * Are you a Chamber member?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			10	43.4%
No			13	56.5%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

15 * Are you active in any Crystal River Main Street programs or committees?

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes			3	13.0%
No			13	56.5%
No, but I would like to get involved			7	30.4%
No Responses			0	0.0%
Totals			23	100%

#16) Please share any comments or suggestions you have that will help your business and city leaders to plan for the future and help enhance the business climate.

- There is so much potential here for cultural arts and ecotourism, but it needs to be supported and encouraged
- I am happy and thankful for every effort that has already taken place and those to come :)
- As future plans are made to draw more people to Crystal River, it is necessary for the City to create considerably more parking to accommodate the influx.
- Businesses are already stressed for parking when current special events take place, i.e., Manatee Festival, Stone Crab Jam, Scallop Season, etc.
- Don't even give the impression the city is in any way in competition direct or indirect with any business in the city.
- Would like web info for shop owners only to let them know about everything that is going on in town.
- If trolley would come through parking lot here, it would probably help.
- Public murals
- Sidewalk chalk artists
- C.C.A. Pedal Power of Art
- Support & participation of Main Street & new merchants association