

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF STUART
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT BOARD HELD IN CITY HALL, 121
SOUTHWEST FLAGLER AVENUE, STUART, FLORIDA ON TUESDAY,
MARCH 6, 2012**

Those present: Frank Wacha, Jr., Chairman
Pete Walson, Vice Chairman
Sharon Fitzke
Pete Walson
Austin Tyo
Johnnie Bell
Jean Laws Scott

Those absent: Drew Pittman

Also present: Paul Nicoletti, City Manager

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman

Chairman Wacha called the meeting to order at 4:04PM

II. ROLL CALL: Secretary

Those answering roll call and others present are referenced above.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 14, 2012

MOTION: Pete Walson

SECOND: Austin Tyo

Motion carried 5/0

Public Comments: None

Board Comments: None

1. Consider a recommendation to the CRA regarding the use of the Sailfish Ball Fields by Martin County for Regional Baseball/Softball Organizations; and possible capital funding of ball fields at the 10th Street Recreation Facility

Presentation: Paul Nicoletti, City Manager said the City Commission thought the Sailfish ball fields really need to be reserved for some other kind of development, the city cannot support regional play at about \$150,000 per year and it's clear that it should be a county not a city expense. He said if they are trying to pay for the children in the city, they would not need two different sets of ball fields and they could be accommodated at 10th Street if they built another one or two fields. He said its eight acres in the middle of downtown and that the Business Development Board is working with a prospect for the site. He said they are in the first of five possible seasons that they would allow the Martin

County League to play there and thought that would provide an impetus for the county to build new fields over the next five years and is seeing an effort on the part of the county commissioners to forestall that and use the \$4.5 million they have left for other needs.

Public Comments: None

Board Comments:

Pete Walson asked if he wanted them to discuss something they don't have information on as they don't know what the County wants to do with it. He thought that development of that property would be extremely important down the road and didn't think they should enter into anything longer than they already have and anything they would do with that property they'll have enough lead time that the county would be on notice that they need to provide three fields somewhere else. He maintained that they keep it the way it is and make no long term commitments with the county. He asked if they are hooking the capital funding of the ballfields at 10th Street in with this proposal.

Paul Nicoletti said they are two different things, but there is \$4.5 million dollars out there and the question is, should the City be able to get some of that as they are county constituents as well.

Chairman Wacha asked how much it would cost to duplicate those fields.

Paul Nicoletti said in really round numbers probably \$1 million dollars.

Pete Walson said they would essentially be trading the property on a longer term to the county for \$1 million.

Paul Nicoletti said he thought they would see it that way even though they are independent discussion items.

Chairman Wacha asked how long it would take to build the fields at 10th St.

Paul Nicoletti said approximately a year and asked if it was reasonable to lease the fields at Sailfish for some extended period of time or reserve it for development.

Sharon Fitzke asked if they could do it on a year to year basis after the five years are up.

Paul Nicoletti said from his conversations with the County, they would not be willing to invest in the fields the things they think are necessary to bring them up to county standards and to amortize that out would take at least five years.

Pete Walson asked what the Business Development Board thought.

Paul Nicoletti said Crystal Stiles was hoping to be at the meeting and couldn't make it, but she said they were still actively working with a prospect and they see this property as one of the primary vacant parcels in the city.

Pete Walson said he didn't see them looking at anything less than ten.

Chairman Wacha asked if the County had any other alternative areas to build.

Paul Nicoletti said there is an area called Tuscawilla in Palm City that they have considered but they don't want to have to take so much of the \$4.5 million and it would take most of that to build four or five ball fields. He said on April 3rd the County Parks and Recreation Staff triggered a meeting that has all of the stakeholders showing up in one place to be heard about their needs and the problem with that is it could easily turn against the city...why aren't you keeping these ball fields in play and all of the myriad number of reasons they can imagine and the counter argument is that this is of such economic value to the redevelopment of the city, how can we afford to allow play to continue.

Chairman Wacha said five years is a significant period of time and if at the end of five years there isn't a specific plan, then extend it or phase it out incrementally.

Johnnie Bell asked if there were other fields in the county that they could use.

Paul Nicoletti said there was a study in the county and they needed eleven more fields and have built five or six, so countywide there is a shortage.

Chairman Wacha said if there were things going on around the area to create synergy but unfortunately there are many different uses around there it would be difficult for synergy to occur without a major change of use.

Paul Nicoletti asked what the catalyst would be and said they have wanted to move the Public Works buildings to the old landfill and they have talked to the school board about combining facilities which is an unfunded project as well.

Pete Walson said one of the reasons this is coming to a head is the \$4.5 million but given the power of Martin County North when you get to the joint meeting, they are going to want all of the \$4.5 million and are going to be under the gun to say what they are going to do with it. He said this is their bid, by getting the city involved in a long term lease to get away with not building those fields and spending the balance for other projects that are out there and didn't think it should be tied down if it is a generator.

Paul Nicoletti said he thought they went through that last year but apparently there are those that are going to take another run at it.

Sharon Fitzke asked if they couldn't compromise and not invest that much money in the fields and perhaps renegotiate after five years.

Chairman Wacha said we're offering them land and if these fields can be replaced at 10th Street that is a significant offer.

Paul Nicoletti said the other thing the County struggles with is the maintenance costs and that's one of the reasons they are trying to reduce that.

Chairman Wacha asked if the City built the ball fields at 10th Street, would the City maintain them?

APPROVED

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Frank Wacha, Jr., Chairman

Michelle Vicat, Board Secretary