



City of Pompano Beach

100 W. Atlantic Blvd.
Pompano Beach, Florida
33060

Detailed Minutes - Final

Community Redevelopment Agency

Rex Hardin, Chairperson
Alison Fournier, Vice Chairperson
Audrey Fesik, Commissioner
Beverly Perkins, Commissioner
Rhonda Sigerson-Eaton, Commissioner
Darlene Smith, Commissioner

Gregory P. Harrison, Executive Director
Claudia McKenna, CRA Attorney
Kervin Alfred, CRA Secretary

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

1:00 PM

Commission Chamber

Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hardin called the CRA Board meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Audrey Fesik, Commissioner Beverly Perkins, Commissioner Rhonda Sigerson-Eaton, Commissioner Darlene Smith, Vice Chair Alison Fournier, and Chairperson Rex Hardin

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Kervin Alfred, CRA Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[25-281](#) CRA Board Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2025

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the Minutes be APPROVED. The motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the Agenda be APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. The motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA DISCUSSION

The CRA Board may pull items from the Consent Agenda. During Audience To Be Heard, a person may speak on any item on the Consent Agenda, which has not been pulled.

Chair Hardin announced there were no consent item on the Agenda.

A. PRESENTATION

[25-280](#) Presentation on the McNab House and Botanical Gardens Project.
(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Sarah Mulder)

Sarah Mulder, CRA Project Manager, began by noting community interest and confusion following the January public meeting, explaining that the CRA exists to revitalize areas and attract investment. She highlighted the success of previous ECRA investments and emphasized how tax increment financing would fund the project without raising taxes. She compared CRA redevelopment to public parks, arguing that redevelopment yields financial returns and ongoing benefits. She recounted the project's history, from the McNab family's donation to the CRA's decision to relocate and preserve the house. She outlined key approvals, public outreach efforts, and over \$2.4 million already spent. She addressed concerns about tennis court removal, commercialization of the park, and traffic, assuring that mitigation and analysis were underway. She also confirmed that available parking exceeds code requirements and emphasized that commercial components support free public access.

Cassandra LeMasurier, Real Property Manager, provided a historical overview of McNab Park's land acquisition. She noted that while most family members had signed quitclaim deeds, the city attorney would contact the one holdout to address concerns.

Tom Di Giorgio from Sterling Hospitality, introduced his firm's role and credentials. He outlined Sterling's national recognition and deep community involvement, noting their consulting experience with high-profile brands. He described the project as contract-based management, similar to other venues they operate. After MadRoom withdrew, Sterling helped redesign the kitchen to save costs and assessed market viability using analytics, confirming strong restaurant performance in the area. He shared both MadRoom's and Sterling's conservative financial projections, both indicating viable earnings and rent returns. He concluded that the botanical garden restaurant and event center was a unique and lucrative opportunity with built-in traffic and unmet demand.

Kayla Hughes from Biederman Redevelopment Ventures, described her firm's role in ensuring the gardens' operational sustainability and community engagement. She emphasized programming that would draw locals and tourists, including educational partnerships, workshops, and cultural events. She detailed various revenue strategies such as vendor pop-ups, sponsored activities, garden store sales, and creative fundraising methods. She argued that, unlike other gardens, the McNab project's inclusion of a restaurant and event space enhances its revenue potential and community impact.

Randy Hollingsworth from Bermello Ajamil, shared excitement about the project and walked through its design

evolution, from relocating the house to the latest master plan. He described the garden's layout themed around the five senses, including distinct areas for smell, sight, sound, taste, and touch. He highlighted features such as the iconic ficus tree, koi pond, event lawn, interactive elements, and unique playgrounds. He emphasized that the design preserves 75% green space and fosters accessibility, beauty, and continuous engagement for both residents and visitors.

Ms. Mulder outlined the upcoming project schedule, noting completion of design development and reviews planned through 2026. She emphasized that the long-term public value of the project-through education, culture, and historical preservation-would far outweigh the financial costs.

Chair Hardin thanked the team for the thorough presentation and expressed his appreciation for what he described as an exciting project.

Claudia McKenna, CRA Attorney, addressed the commission to correct the public record regarding false statements made about McNab Park and the CRA. She specifically refuted a published accusation in the Sun Sentinel alleging misappropriation, nepotism, and financial waste by the CRA, emphasizing that misappropriation is a crime and that there is no evidence supporting such claims. She explained that all CRA expenditures are governed by approved plans and budgets, subject to public meetings and audits. She also addressed an accusation from Comr. Fesik about her representing both the CRA and a consulting firm, RMA, stating unequivocally that it was false and that RMA was never her client. She further clarified that claims about a title issue at McNab Park were also misleading and legally unfounded, affirming that the park's development is lawful.

Vice Chair Fournier expressed that while she appreciated Claudia McKenna's intent to clarify the record, she felt the tone was unproductive and would have preferred a private discussion. She then questioned the claim that the CRA imposes "no burden on the community," pointing out that the CRA is funded by tax dollars collected from increased property values within the district. She emphasized that without the CRA, those funds could be returned to the city and potentially reduce taxes. She challenged the notion that the CRA must continue indefinitely, suggesting that it could be sunset successfully. She voiced concern about the cost of extending the CRA and issuing a \$22 million debt, stating that interest alone over seven years would be \$17 million. She expressed frustration with the presentation's recurring financial figures and requested clarity.

Ms. Mulder confirmed that the \$2.4 million expenditure figure included all project spending to date, including consultant fees.

Vice Chair Fournier stated that she supported the project itself but disagreed with its financing structure. She shared a personal anecdote to illustrate that finding the right partner can change a project's trajectory and asked how the operator would be selected.

Nguyen Tran, CRA Director, responded that an RFP would be issued for restaurant and event operators, confirming that they had already received interest.

Mr. Di Giorgio confirmed the project was generating excitement and that qualified vendors had reached out. He expected strong responses to the RFP due to the project's appeal and solid financials.

Vice Chair Fournier asked when construction drawings would be ready and who would pay for garden maintenance.

Ms. Mulder stated that drawings were expected by May 2026 and that maintenance costs would be funded by revenue from the restaurant and other project components.

Ms. Hughes added that her team was developing a detailed operations and maintenance plan, accounting for programming, staffing, and other costs. She expected the gardens to be self-sustaining by year three, supported by restaurant revenue, sponsorships, and philanthropy.

Ms. McKenna responded to Vice Chair Fournier's earlier comments, agreeing that private discussions were ideal but reiterating her duty to correct misinformation publicly when false statements are made. She welcomed private meetings to clarify legal facts when needed.

Vice Chair Fournier responded that she often directs questions to staff and found Ms. McKenna's implication otherwise to be offensive. She urged for more professionalism and kindness in future discussions.

Comr. Fesik asked for clarification on current maintenance costs for McNab Park, citing a figure of approximately \$11,000 from a previous email. She compared this with the \$101,000 maintenance cost of the similarly sized Miami Beach Botanical Garden, expressing concern over the significant increase. She questioned whether the gardens would be open at all times and learned that the gates would be closed overnight, likely in line with typical park hours. She then reviewed the updated \$2.4 million project cost and confirmed that an additional \$1.3 million was already encumbered. She inquired about the City and CRA-owned parcels and parking opportunities surrounding the park, seeking clarity on what land was currently owned versus future opportunities.

From an overhead display of an aerial map, Mr. Tran explained that red areas were CRA-owned, blue areas were city-owned, and some green areas were not yet acquired. When comparing with previous projects like the beach redevelopment, Mr. Tran estimated the CRA contributed \$13 million, while private development added around \$80 million.

Comr. Fesik questioned whether allowing developers to fund activation around the park might be a more taxpayer-friendly approach.

Mr. Tran responded that the park must remain public and that CRA investment helps "prime the pump" for further development, but that future partnerships for additional structures like parking could occur once more land is acquired.

Comr. Fesik pressed on ownership of a nearby property (East Village 2200 LLC) and whether anyone involved in the project had past or current ties to it.

Mr. Tran acknowledged prior lease negotiations but denied any current associations.

Comr. Fesik then asked how much Bermello Ajamil had been paid.

Mr. Tran replied that it was \$1.6 to \$1.7 million.

Comr. Fesik stated that while the visuals were attractive, transparency is essential, and some confusion remains, especially among residents who feel they have not received full documentation.

Comr. Sigerson-Eaton commended the years of effort and thoughtful design behind the project, praising its transformation from a troubled park into a space for families, tourists, and events. She noted personal experience with the park's unsafe past and emphasized the CRA's role in responsibly leveraging tax increment financing without increasing individual tax burdens.

Comr. Smith also praised the project, calling it a fantastic display and likening it to creating a new local destination restaurant. She recounted a conversation with a tourist staying at the Wyndham who asked about things to do in the city, and she felt the botanical garden would be an excellent new addition to Pompano Beach's offerings.

Vice Chair Fournier clarified an earlier exchange regarding property ownership and consulting ties. She asserted that a question about East Village 2200 LLC was not answered straightforwardly and felt that the response came off as disingenuous. She stressed that transparency is crucial and that it's important to simply provide clear answers to straightforward questions.

Mr. Tran clarified that while RMA is a company with contracts in the East CRA, it does not own the property in question.

Vice Chair Fournier maintained that he likely understood the intent of her question and should have responded more directly.

NO ACTION TAKEN. FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY.

B. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Chair Hardin announced that it was time for "Audience To Be Heard". The following speakers were called to speak before the CRA Board:

Matthew Walsh, owner of a business at 2306 East Atlantic Boulevard, warned the CRA board that a bill in the Florida House aims to shut down CRAs statewide by 2045. He expressed concern that the bill reflects deeper issues, including a lack of accountability in how public money flows through CRAs. He stated he had prepared an ethics complaint naming a former CRA manager and asked four pointed questions about property purchases, disclosures, board approvals, and federal funds. He emphasized that if the board had been misled, he would support them, but if they knowingly allowed misconduct, he would escalate the complaint to multiple oversight bodies. He framed his remarks as a matter of public integrity and accountability.

Anne Bosworth, a resident, expressed skepticism about the McNab project, noting that while it appeared

beautiful, much of the vision was based on imagined outcomes rather than grounded realities. She questioned who would benefit from the high-end plans, pointing out the disconnect between the City's median income and the cost of living. She worried that the project would not serve working families and accused some commission members of being dismissive, stressing that many residents might be priced out of enjoying the amenities being proposed.

Melissa Hess, 551 Southeast 13th Court, Pompano Beach, FL, who serves on the CRA advisory board, pushed back on criticisms of the project's cost. She noted that other city projects, like the McNair sports complex and the senior center, were not questioned for their sustainability despite having high maintenance costs. She argued that the botanical garden offered greater per-capita value for families and future generations. She described a vision of using the park with her children and emphasized that most CRA revenue in the area comes from businesses that have benefited from the City's growth. She concluded by supporting the project as an investment in the quality of life for families like hers.

C. REGULAR AGENDA

1. [25-270](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE POMPANO BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPOINTING ONE CITY RESIDENT OR BUSINESS OWNER, TO THE EAST CRA DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 15, 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Gabriela Gencyigit)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the CRA Resolution - Regular be ADOPTED. Chair Hardin nominated to appoint Lamar “ Paul” Fisher Jr. The motion to appoint Lamar “ Paul” Fisher Jr carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Enactment No: CRA RES. 2025-02

2. [25-271](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE POMPANO BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPOINTING ONE CITY RESIDENT OR BUSINESS OWNER, TO THE EAST CRA DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 15, 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Gabriela Gencyigit)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the CRA Resolution - Regular be **ADOPTED**. Commissioner Fesik nominated to appoint Gigi Doubek and Chair Hardin nominated Danielle Flanscha. The motion failed by a 3 to 3 vote, and the results were as follows:

Vote for Gigi Doubek:

Fesik

Perkins

Fournier

Vote for Danielle Flanscha:

Sigerson-Eaton

Smith

Hardin

Yes: Commissioner Fesik, Commissioner Perkins, and Vice Chair Fournier

No: Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, Commissioner Smith, and Chairperson Hardin

Enactment No:

3. [25-273](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE POMPANO BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPOINTING ONE ATTORNEY LEGAL PROFESSIONAL, OR RELATED INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL TO THE EAST CRA DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 15, 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Gabriela Gencyigit)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the CRA Resolution - Regular be **ADOPTED**. Chair Hardin nominated to appoint Rafael Katz. The motion to appoint Rafael Katz carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Enactment No: CRA RES. 2025-03

4. [25-274](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE POMPANO BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPOINTING ONE GENERAL CONTRACTOR, DEVELOPER, REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL, APPRAISER OR RELATED INDUSTRY

PROFESSIONAL TO THE EAST CRA DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 15, 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Gabriela Gencyigit)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the CRA Resolution - Regular be ADOPTED. Chair Hardin nominated to appoint Fred Stacer and Commissioner Fesik nominated Daniel Lubbers. The motion failed by a 3 to 3 vote, and the results were as follows:

Vote for Daniel Lubbers:

Fesik

Perkins

Fournier

Vote for Fred Stacer:

Sigerson-Eaton

Smith

Hardin

Yes: Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, Commissioner Smith, and Chairperson Hardin

No: Commissioner Fesik, Commissioner Perkins, and Vice Chair Fournier

5. [25-275](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE POMPAÑO BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPOINTING ONE ARCHITECT, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT, PLANNER, DESIGN PROFESSIONAL OR RELATED INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL TO THE EAST CRA DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 15, 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Gabriela Gencyigit)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the CRA Resolution - Regular be ADOPTED. Chair Hardin nominated to appoint Raymond Lubomski.

The motion to appoint Raymond Lubomski carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Enactment No: CRA RES. 2025-04

6. [25-272](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE POMPANO BEACH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) APPOINTING ONE OWNER/ OPERATOR OF BUSINESS TO THE NORTHWEST CRA DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR A TERM OF TWO (2) YEARS; SAID TERM TO EXPIRE ON APRIL 15th 2027; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Fiscal Impact: N/A)

(Staff Contact: Gabriela Gencyigit)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Fournier, seconded by Commissioner Sigerson-Eaton, that the CRA Resolution - Regular be ADOPTED. Chair Hardin nominated to appoint Jay Ghanem. The motion to appoint Jay Ghanem carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Enactment No: CRA RES. 2025-05

D. ADDITIONAL AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Chair Hardin asked if there were any additional speakers signed-up to speak under Audience to be Heard, to which Secretary Alfred replied there were none.

E. REPORTS

Executive Director's Report:

Sarah Mulder, CRA Project Manager, delivered a personal statement responding to accusations made by Comr. Fesik in a published op-ed and on social media. She defended her qualifications and integrity, expressed deep concern about the personal and professional toll the allegations had taken, including cyberstalking and threats during her pregnancy, and urged a return to professionalism and mutual respect.

Greg Harrison, Executive Director, stated that any concerns about city staff should be brought directly to him, as he is responsible for staff oversight.

CRA Attorney's Report:

Claudia McKenna, CRA Attorney, emphasized the need for collaboration and respect. She reminded commissioners that she is available to answer questions about legal or public records for both the City and the CRA.

Next Meeting Date: Chair Hardin announced that the next scheduled CRA meeting is set for May 20, 2025.

Comr. Fesik's Report:

Comr. Fesik shifted the discussion to the downtown development agreement, questioning who the City's contract administrator was and asking for the name of the referee assigned under the agreement. Ms. McKenna confirmed that Suzette Sibble was the administrator, and the referee was Rob Wire.

Comr. Perkins' Report:

Comr. Perkins requested that the City Manager consult commissioners before canceling CRA meetings, noting that recent cancellations prevented her from addressing district concerns. She asked for the names of attorneys involved in negotiating the downtown master development contract.

Ms. McKenna confirmed that it included both outside counsel and city legal staff.

Comr. Perkins criticized Claudia McKenna's earlier public remarks, calling for restraint and leadership in de-escalating tensions. She expressed disappointment in the divisive tone among commissioners and staff, urging the City Manager to lead efforts to unify the City and improve communication.

Comr. Sigerson-Eaton's Report:

Comr. Sigerson-Eaton strongly criticized the public accusations against the CRA and staff, calling them embarrassing and unfounded. She defended the CRA's long record of clean audits and expressed pride in the City's progress, urging critics to file formal complaints if they believe wrongdoing occurred rather than spreading misinformation.

Chair Hardin temporarily paused the meeting for ten minutes before reconvening.

Upon resuming, Chair Hardin continued with the Board's reports

Comr. Smith's Report:

Comr. Smith called for unity and asked fellow commissioners to commit to civility and collaboration. She expressed support for the botanical garden project and highlighted the positive impact of CRA-funded improvements. She quoted John Maxwell, encouraging change and growth.

Vice Chair Fournier's Report:

Vice Chair Fournier acknowledged Comr. Smith's positivity but stressed the importance of addressing deeper structural concerns. She emphasized that not all tension can be resolved by kindness alone and said that commissioners have a duty to challenge the status quo when necessary. She accused the City of promoting certain narratives while undermining others and urged the City Manager to ensure that all commissioners are treated equitably. She then shared a financial plan that would avoid bonding by using a "pay-as-you-go" model, asserting that the CRA could fund the McNab project without taking on new debt if it reduced overhead and

ran more efficiently.

Chair Hardin's Report:

Chair Hardin continued with the Board's reports and welcomed Kim Briesemeister from RMA to speak.

Ms. Briesemeister, principal of RMA, responded to earlier comments about property ownership and clarified that her firm had purchased a property in 2015, years before the McNab Botanical Gardens project began. She provided documentation showing that the purchase was legally vetted and disclosed to the City, with no conflict of interest identified. She stated that she had originally planned to clarify this earlier but felt compelled to respond after being publicly implicated.

Comr. Perkins interrupted, objecting to Ms. Briesemeister's remarks, but Chair Hardin reminded her that it was part of his report time.

Ms. Briesemeister continued, stating that her firm submitted the required disclosure in 2015 and that implying the property purchase was connected to McNab Park redevelopment was misleading, as the McNab family still owned the house at the time and only sold it years later.

Comr. Perkins interrupted to assert that it was the Historical Society, not RMA, that initiated the move of the McNab House.

Ms. Briesemeister clarified that RMA did not move the house but was consulted during the process. She stated that the Historical Society wanted to preserve the house and led the effort. She refuted accusations of impropriety related to RMA's property ownership, emphasizing that RMA purchased its building in 2015, well before any plans for the McNab project. She cited a legal opinion confirming there was no conflict of interest and presented documentation that the purchase was fully disclosed to the City in 2015. She addressed allegations raised during the meeting and in previous public comments, including questions from Comr. Fesik and accusations from her tenant, Matthew Walsh. She pointed out that Walsh had never raised concerns during his two years as a tenant but coincidentally made public accusations echoing criticism from Vice Chair Fournier. She stated that Vice Chair Fournier had visited the building and was photographed in Walsh's business, implying awareness of Walsh's identity and connection. She accused certain commissioners of engaging in targeted efforts to malign RMA's reputation, despite having received and acknowledged disclosures and legal clearance years ago. She stated that continuing to question RMA's integrity, especially by public officials trusted by the community, was inappropriate and politically motivated. She respectfully asked that commissioners refrain from misrepresenting RMA's actions or intentions.

[25-282](#)

Monthly Reports

- Financial Statements - January, February
- East CRA Advisory Committee - March 6, 2025
- NW CRA Advisory Committee - March 3, 2025

- FPI Security Reports - January, February, March
- Professional Services Expenditures - January-March

The Informational Report was RECEIVED AND FILED.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.