

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE FORT PIERCE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, HELD IN THE CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 100 NORTH U.S. #1, FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, AT 2:00 P.M. ON **THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2019.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Hudson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairperson Linda Hudson; Commissioner Rufus Alexander; Commissioner Jeremiah Johnson; Commissioner Thomas Perona; Commissioner Reginald Sessions

Staff Present: City Clerk Linda Cox  
City Manager Nicholas Mimms  
City Attorney Peter Sweeney

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Request for Proposals No. 2019-003 Redevelopment of the Former H.D. King Plant Site – Overview of Proposals from Each Respondent

Nick Mimms, City Manager, introduced the process for the meeting. Dr. Kim Delaney will serve as the facilitator, along with the planning consultant, John Jones from S & ME and the financial consultant, Charles Johnson from Johnson Consultants. Each proposer will be given 10 minutes to make a brief presentation, followed by questions and answers by the FPRA Board. The public comment period will be limited to 60 minutes.

Dale Matteson of Audubon made a brief presentation describing the proposal they have submitted to the FPRA for the redevelopment of the former H.D. King Plant site along with a video. The pedestrian friendly site will consist of single family homes, multi family residential units, hotel, restaurants, retail options and parking, along with a potential future rail stop.

Rusty Roberts, VP of Government Affairs Virgin Trains USA and Brian Kronberg, VP of Development Virgin Trains, made a brief presentation describing their proposal and showed a brief video. Proposal will include a hotel, retail, apartment rentals and a train station and they are willing to pay for the site. At this time, Virgin Trains has not made the final determination as to the location of the Treasure Coast station and can not commit that it will be on the King site.

The FPRA Board members proceeded to ask questions of the proposers.

Mr. Charles Johnson, Financial Consultant for the City, indicated that Audubon had more detail in their proposal, and Virgin Trains had less specificity as to the financial structure. He saw no inconsistencies in either proposal. The consultant has not done due diligence on the financial background of the proposers but has seen some of the track record of Virgin Trains; they have not seen the track record of Audubon.

Mr. John Jones, S & ME, Planning Consultant for the City, indicated the proposals were consistent with the City's CRA plan. When evaluating thirty-two points within the plan, Audubon was deemed more compatible by a slight margin.

- b. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Any person who wishes to comment on any subject on this agenda may be heard at this time. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes or less, as directed by the Chairperson, as this section of the Agenda is limited to sixty minutes. The FPRA Board will not be able to take any official actions under Comments from the Public. Speakers will address the Chairperson, Board Members, and the Public with respect. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated. **Sign-up sheet is located in the lobby.**

Eddie Becht spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Holly Theuns spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Glynda Cavalcanti spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Chauncelor Howell spoke in favor of Virgin Trains.  
Kia Fontaine spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Randy Chapman spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Jon Neprud spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Jeanne Arias spoke in favor of Audubon but was concerned it was too dense.  
Mike Perri spoke in favor of Audubon.  
Luca Fontaine Bradley spoke in favor of Audubon.

Mr. Rizzo spoke in favor of Audubon.

At the conclusion of public comment, the proposers were given the opportunity to speak for 3 minutes in response to the comments.

Mr. Matteson, Audubon, thanked everyone for the opportunity. They are a local group, with local ties to the community and will be solely focused on this project.

Mr. Rusty Roberts, Virgin Trains, appreciates the opportunity to talk about their project. They also have a group of local people. Asking the commission to take a leap of faith even though they are not quite ready to commit to Fort Pierce as the train stop location. Whenever they develop a stop, they also like to develop around the stop which is a catalyst to development.

c. Request for Proposals No. 2019-003 Redevelopment of the Former H.D. King Plant Site – Evaluation by Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency Board

Dr. Kim Delaney, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council serving as the facilitator, discussed options on how to proceed. The board can say they have enough information and take no further action today or you can rate the projects using the established criteria with the scoring sheets available to evaluate the proposals.

Commissioner Sessions indicated that he would like to hear from other members first and learn what they are thinking. While everyone is excited about a train station, he is concerned about the time line proposed by Virgin and believes Audubon provides the best option for the City.

Commissioner Perona expressed concern as to the hesitation of Virgin Trains to commit to a train stop in Fort Pierce, particularly in light of the assets within Fort Pierce. Fort Pierce has a 100 year history of supporting the railroad. If he believed a train station was on the table, he would be highly motivated to support Virgin Trains, even with the extended timeline presented. He is very disappointed that he has no train station to consider.

Commissioner Johnson discussed the various evaluation criteria that the Commission will use. Virgin Trains provides a great regional vision and acknowledges a station will trigger development. Audubon has a great local vision incorporating the CRA plan and citizen input. The project does a great job tying the Downtown to Edgartown while maintaining the charm.

Commissioner Alexander discussed the redevelopment of Downtown as a result of the CRA plan. The City cannot afford to wait; we need the development now.

Mayor Hudson indicated the property is a jewel and its development will be transformative for the entire community. Virgin Trains presented themselves as a transportation, hospitality and real estate company; she wished there was more detail in their proposal and the train station was confirmed. As it stands, that proposal is dependent on the train station which will be decided at some point in the future. Audubon is ready to go now and will still provide the opportunity for the train station on the property if that is ultimate decision.

Members ranked the Audubon Project as follows and the scores were read into the record:

AUDUBON DEVELOPMENT

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Possible Points	Alexander	Johnson	Hudson	Sessions	Perona	TOTAL
Preliminary Development Plan	25	25	20	25	25	23	118
Meeting CRA Goals	5	5	5	5	5	5	25
Preliminary Traffic Assessment	5	5	4	5	5	5	24
Economic Feasibility	15	15	14	12	15	14	70
Acquisition/Financing	20	20	16	20	20	18	94
Schedule	15	15	10	15	15	15	70
Qualifications/Experience of Proposer	15	15	12	15	10	15	67
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>468</b>

Members ranked the Virgin Trains proposal and the scores were read into the record:  
VIRGIN TRAINS

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Possible Points	Alexander	Johnson	Hudson	Sessions	Perona	TOTAL
Preliminary Development Plan	25	25	15	20	10	15	85
Meeting CRA Goals	5	5	2	3	2	5	17
Preliminary Traffic Assessment	5	5	4	5	4	5	23
Economic Feasibility	15	15	12	10	15	12	64
Acquisition/Financing	20	20	16	20	15	15	86
Schedule	15	15	11	5	5	1	37
Qualifications/Experience of Proposer	15	15	12	15	15	15	72
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>384</b>

Dr. Kim Delaney indicated that this information is to be used to assist in your decision-making. You may use this information to make a decision, you may request additional information, you can proceed with what appears to be the topped rank firm or continue to deliberate that point since it is not exclusive to the points, or you can take a moment of pause. The facilitator and consultants remain available to assist in any way but it is entirely up to the Board.

Dr. Kim Delaney explained that this is just the beginning of the process; the Board is simply executing the transparent, consistent evaluation process to determine if there is a proposer that is appropriately responsive to your request for proposals needed to move forward. If the Board moves forward, the next phase is to begin negotiations to finalize the details of what the project will be, such as land transfer, protections to the City, specify time frames and final renderings.

At the conclusion of the negotiations, a final agreement will come back to the Board in a public meeting for a final decision.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas Perona, seconded by Commissioner Reginald Sessions to proceed with negotiations with Audubon.

AYE: Chairperson Linda Hudson, Commissioner Rufus Alexander, Commissioner Jeremiah Johnson, Commissioner Thomas Perona, Commissioner Reginald Sessions

Passed

**5. STAFF COMMENTS**

No comments.

**6. BOARD COMMENTS**

The City Clerk will collect the score sheets.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Hudson adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK

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CHAIRPERSON