

Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee  
**Meeting Minutes**

Johnny and Freda Brooks Resource Center  
710 Snively Avenue  
Eloise, FL 33880

**Monday, March 6, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.**

**Attendance:**

Advisory Committee Members present:

- Eugenia Barton, Eloise CRA Committee Member
- Minerva Gil, Eloise CRA Committee Member
- Martha Paul, Eloise CRA Committee Member

Polk County BoCC Staff present:

- Delia Jouppi, CRA Manager
- JD Metcalf, Budget & Management Services
- Mike Callendar, Parks & Recreation Manager, Parks & Natural Resources
- Tonya Long, Code Investigator, Code Enforcement
- Kimberly Gonzalez, Code Investigator, Code Enforcement
- Elizabeth Voss, Assistant County Attorney
- Jay Jarvis, Director, Roads & Drainage Division
- Deputy Jordan Owens, Polk County Sheriff's Office

Other Polk County Staff Members present:

- Diane Rosebrough, Polk County School Board

**CALL TO ORDER** –Committee Member, Minerva Gil called the meeting to order at 5:59 p.m., welcoming all attendees.

**No. 1 on Agenda: Welcome to Stakeholders**

Eugenia Barton welcomed stakeholders.

**No. 2 on Agenda: Approval of January 9, 2023, Minutes**

Committee Member, Eugenia Barton, made a motion to approve the January 9, 2023, Eloise CRA Advisory Committee meeting minutes, with a second from Martha Paul. All approved.

**No. 3 on Agenda: Old Business:**

- Homeless Camp – Tonya Long, Code Investigator Supervisor
    - Tonya addressed the topic of the homeless camp. She noted the front part of the property that runs along Hwy 17 and Snively Ave has been cleaned up. Code Enforcement has been in contact with the property owners regarding the back portion of the property. This is where most of the homeless people are staying. The owners' have reached out to The Sheriff's Department to try and have the homeless people removed. An agent agreement is being put together for the back part of the property to allow the Sheriff's Department to issue trespassing citations to remove the homeless people still living on that property. There are also vendors' being looked at for the cleanup.
- It was noted that several local homeless support groups are offered help and aid, but many of the homeless don't accept it. A lot of them have mental health issues and are veterans.

- Snively Brooks Park Renovation – Mike Callendar, Parks & Recreation Manager
  - Mike updated the Committee on this renovation project as follows:
    - The soccer field is moving ahead – finalized the grating pattern. He noted there was still several weeks of works remaining to do before we do the sod.
    - His team is getting ready for sod work.
    - Prior to the sod work will be the concrete work to make repairs on some of the trails.
    - They are also creating a walking path, and a sand volleyball court.
    - A question was raised as to why the soccer field’s grade has been raised so high? This is due to previous water retention during storms, so raising the grading should prevent this from happening in the future. The water will now be sloping in two different directions towards the woods, and towards one of the conveyances on site. It shouldn’t be noticeable when the sod is down because water won’t puddle at all.
    - Park renovation is anticipated to be complete in approximately three months.
- Digital Signage for Eloise Resource Center (if available)
  - Will this be CRA funded or does this need a quote?  
Delia noted that a quote will be needed.
  - Mike also noted that he had one of the Parks & Natural Resources Planners look at the signage requirements. It appears that a sign that is approximately the same size as the existing one should not pose any issues from a code or compliance standpoint. The team is looking at different costs for different signs right now. Another consideration is getting power out to that sign, that will need to be added into the signage proposal. Mike requested direction from the Board as to signage type.
  - Mike also noted that he will need to go through the County’s procurement process to be able bring back examples of digital signage. It’s important to note that these examples may not be the exact sign we end up getting, due to the bidding & supply chain process. Certain specifications can be made, but not a specific model.  
What is the funding range available for this sign? \$100,000 budget to cover both signage & shade project.
- Update on covers over playground equipment (if available)
  - Will this be CRA funded or does this need a quote?  
Delia noted that a quote will be needed.
  - The team looked at various options with costs starting at around \$25,000.
  - One idea was using shade cloth or something similar
  - A better idea was fast growing shade trees
  - Mike deterred against using shade cloths for playgrounds based on previous use. As they do not hold up well in storm or hurricane situations. Yes, they come down easily, but putting them out again is labor intensive.
  - Eugenia Barton raised the question: in terms of the fast-growing shade trees, what kind of trees would work best? Larger type tree like oaks or elms. Mike also noted that there will be leaves clean up from the trees, but that’s to be expected, and is a normal part of the park environment. However, location may be an issue. The question of where to place these trees was raised. There’s a retention pond, a school fence and portables to consider. The Parks & Natural Resource team will check with arborists and other experts to see what works best as a good, fast growing, shade, canopy-type tree, as well as the placement of those trees. Mike request Board direction as to expected outcome.

- Suggested adding a retractable shade in the back patio area of the Johnny & Freda Resource Center
  - This makes the area much more functional
  - This is part of a proposed renovation for this space.
  - This will allow for kids' programs, exercise activities, among other things.
- Restroom Renovation (Update)
  - The restroom work has been done:
    - Walls painted
    - Interior fixtures have been replaced
- Snively Brooks School & Park - - Diane Rosebrough, Polk County School District
  - Kickball Field – Snively Brooks School
    - It was noted this tends to become flooded (aka “Lake Snively”) when it rains. This is a hazard.
  - Snively Books Park Restroom Defacing
    - Diane also noted that there was some sort of party out at the park. Both the men's & ladies' restrooms were left a complete mess. Broken glass was found among other things.
    - Large 4-wheel bikes were driven through the park, tearing up the landscape.
    - The Deputy Sheriff noted that there are Sheriff's deputies on staff 24/7 and advised anyone who see's people illegally joyriding through the school grounds to call right away. The Sheriff's Dept will send someone out right away.
    - Deputy Owens advised that patrols of the area will be set up, however they only last for two weeks, and would need to be scheduled again.
    - For this reason, Mike noted that many of the newer parks do not have restrooms in them.
  - Graffiti – Playground at Snively Brooks School
    - Mike noted that all his team can do is paint over it as quickly as they are made aware it.
    - Deputy Owens also advised to report any acts of graffiti to them at **863-298-6200**. They will get a full report to document what and where it happened to try and figure out who's doing it. He could not stress enough: **Call When You See It**.
  - Park Security
    - If you see any suspicious activity in or around the school or park, be sure to call the sheriff's department.
- Plants on Right of Way (Update) – Jay Jarvis, Director of Roads & Drainage Division
  - Jay noted that the County has landscape agreements in place.
  - Typically, the County does not like to put any landscape in the right of ways that his team would have to maintain. However, if they enter an agreement where another party is responsible for the landscape maintenance, that's different. If the landscape isn't maintained appropriately, then it can be removed and replaced with grass.
  - Approach the owner to set up agreement to maintain any landscape work that's done.
- Lighting on Snively Ave
  - Low lighting on this street – makes this a bit of a problem for school busses picking up kids in the morning. Can additional lighting be added?
  - The County has a couple of different programs:
    - The County will pay to a light installed at an intersection (but not an entire street or corridor).
    - If a community or neighborhood forms its own Light District or Board, The County is willing to front the money for larger lighting projects such corridors. However, the

residents of the neighborhood or community will receive a monthly charge on their bill to help pay the County back for the lighting project.

- If the lighting request is for a particular intersection, email Jay Jarvis at [jayjarvis@polk-county.net](mailto:jayjarvis@polk-county.net). He will bring these requests to Board as part of the Sidewalk Board Advisory Committee, which are reviewed monthly. These lighting requests are installed by the electric company on a priority basis, based on workload, as approved by the Board. Note: subject to funding availability.
- There is \$250,000 available for lighting including the electricity costs for those lights. It's important to note that once these funds are depleted, this program stops for the year, unless additional funds are requested and approved by the County Board.
- Overgrowth at Hwy 17 and Old 7-Eleven
  - Jay noted that Hwy 17 is considered a DOT road, however the right of way is on Lake Shipp Drive, which is a county road.
  - If the overgrowth is on the property, this would be a Code Enforcement issue, but any of the overgrowth that infringes onto the right of way would be addressed by Roads & Drainage, or DOT will have their contractors address it.
  - The pandemic & hurricane clean ups have caused the Roads & Drainage team (like the Parks team) to pull back much of their Maintenance teams in recent years, but now they are starting to get back to normal routines. So, if you see any areas that need to be addressed, please email Jay and he will get it scheduled with a Maintenance team as soon as possible.

**No. 4 on Agenda: New Business**

- Re-Nominate Martha Paul for a Second Term
  - All Committee Members agreed
- Re-Nominate Eugenia Barton for a Third Term
  - All Committee Members agreed

**No. 5 on Agenda: Requests from the General Public to Be Heard**

- No requests currently

**Reminder About Upcoming Advisory Committee Meetings:**

Meeting location: Johnny & Freda Brooks Resource Center

- Monday, June 5, 2023, at 6:00pm
- Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 6:00pm
- Monday, December 4, 2023, at 6:00pm

**ADJOURN**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Minutes transcribed by:

*Lisa Urban, CAP-OM*

Secretary II

Budget & Management Services Division

Polk County Board of County Commissioners