

Eloise Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

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

Monday March 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

NOTE: Sign-In Attendance sheet not available

Observed Attendance List (not a complete list):

Advisory Committee Members present:

- Lee Castillo, Eloise CRA Committee Member
- Eugenia Barton, Eloise CRA Committee Member
- Martha Paul, Eloise CRA Committee Member
- Diane Rosebrough, Polk County School Board, CRA Committee Member

Polk County BoCC Staff & Invited Guests present:

- Delia Jouppi, CRA Manager
- Lisa Urban, Budget & Management Services
- Elizabeth Voss, Assistant County Attorney
- Mike Callender, Parks & Recreation Manager
- Jamie Vance, Eloise Resource Center Program Manager
- Ben Ziskal, Director of Land Development
- Chanda Bennett, Comprehensive Planning Administrator, Land Development
- Mark Bennett, Senior Planner, Land Development
- Art Wade, GIS Coordinator, Land Development
- Robert Bolton, Planner, Land Development
- Deputy Jordan Owens, Polk County Sheriff's Office
- Kim Long, Polk Vision
- Bobby Williams, The Freedom Tour

Residents present:

- Hope Musselwhite, Eloise Resident
- Sara Musselwhite, Eloise Resident
- Freda Brooks, Eloise Resident

CALL TO ORDER –Committee Member, Lee Castillo called the meeting to order at 6:05p.m., welcoming all attendees.

No. 1 on Agenda: Welcome to Stakeholders

Lee Castillo welcomed stakeholders and had the CRA Committee Members introduced themselves.

No. 2 on Agenda: Approval of Past Minutes

December 4th meeting minutes:

- 1st Motion to Approve: Eugenia Barton
 - 2nd Motion to Approve: Martha Paul
- Minutes approved by all attendees.

No. 3 on Agenda: Old Business

Mike Callendar introduced Jamie Vance as the Program Manager for the Eloise Resource Center.

- Jamie was pleased to announce that the center is now fully staffed.
- She noted that this new team would like to start some new programs, so if anyone has ideas, please share your suggestions with Jamie.
- In addition to the new programs, the Resource Center will begin relationship building with community members and area businesses to help strengthen the community.
- The goal is to have more programs begin by Fall 2024.
- Mike provided updates on the following projects:

- All PO's have been cut & sent to vendors for items for Snively Books Park Renovation:

Soccer Field:

- Benches have been ordered for the soccer field. Delivery is anticipated in the next couple of weeks. Cost: \$2,033.80
- New soccer goals were also ordered for the soccer field. Cost: \$8,528.15

Playground Area

- A tot swing with a safety surface underneath & a shade has been ordered for the playground area. The shade has been manufactured and being held until the tot swing assembly is completed. Delivery & installation anticipated in approximately 30 days.
Cost: \$49,527.62 (Tot Swing) & \$14,984.80 (Shade)
- The total spend for the park renovation is \$75,074.37.

Exercise Equipment

- The exercise equipment still needs to be ordered. The original equipment selected for purchase is no longer available, so the team is looking at other options for equipment reselection. The order will be placed soon.

Sign Upgrade

- At the last meeting Mike explained that the sign upgrade project needed to be rebid. New bids came in slightly higher, but the PO has been submitted. Preliminary electrical work is being completed now in preparation for the new sign. Delivery of the sign is anticipated in about two weeks, but could change
Cost: \$40,024.00 (sign) / \$1400.00 (estimate electrical & permitting costs)

Basketball/Multipurpose Court Resurfacing

- Mike was unable to get a rendering of resurfacing possibilities for the basketball court area. This is not due to the manufacturer. Mike was unable to get out to the park to take pictures to send for use in the renderings.
- The court size is approximately 5,900 sq. ft. The good, estimated cost for this project is approximately \$45,402. This is based on the completion of a similar sized project which included three basketball courts and two tennis courts. The installation time was three days, starting on a Friday and completing Sunday afternoon.
- Mike will have renderings for this project for the June meeting. Diane noted that asked the park basketball coaches to provide a drawing of how they would like the courts to look.

- Mike went to explain the positive outcomes that would result in completing this project:
 - The surface is heat resistant, so it doesn't feel as hot under foot when the sun beats down on it.
 - The material is slip resistant even when wet.
 - Good wear is anticipated.

No. 4 on Agenda: New Business

- Delia advised the group that Lee Castillo's term is up as Eloise Advisory Committee Chair. If anyone is interested in serving on the Committee, please let Delia know. In order to serve, candidates must meet the following criteria:
 - Candidate must be a citizen of Eloise.
 - Candidate must have a business in the Eloise community.

It was announced that Diane Rosebrough is also leaving the Committee, as she will be retiring from the School Board in June.

Interested candidates should reach out to Delia with their resume and she will present them to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

The Committee Members up for Chair & Vice Chair are:

- Martha Paul
- Minerva Gil (recently served as Chair)
- Eugenia Barton

The decision was made by the Committee to hold this vote until the June meeting.

- The vote on the basketball court resurfacing:
 - The Committee would like to see renderings before voting on this project.
 - The decision was made by the Committee to hold this vote until the June meeting.
- Delia introduced Ben Ziskal, Director of Land Development to talk about their plans for Eloise. He began with a brief explanation of what the purpose of CRA's are in the State of Florida.
 - CRA's are set up with the express purpose of redeveloping and revitalizing urban area that have suffered from slum, blight, and neglect.
 - Assisting in creating improved quality of life for the people who live in the Eloise community & preservation of the community's history.
 - Increase property values.
 - Grow & improve the community together.
 - Ben explained that the Eloise CRA is its last six year before it sunsets. This is when the CRA's budget has the most money, so the most lucrative projects can be accomplished.
 - Over the course of Eloise's 24-year history, much of the money has been spent on Code Enforcement, Utilities projects, and working with the County's Housing and Neighborhood Development group.
 - CRA monies will be used on specific projects within Eloise's CRA plan.
 - Previously completed projects include:
 - Pedestrian safety: providing improved road signage.
 - Improved street lighting
 - Improved sewer/public water using public grants and CRA money.
 - Bus shelter installation

- During the last six years, the focus will be on the following:
 - Improving property values
 - Rehabilitation of lots/properties to assist in creating affordable & sustainable housing opportunities for Eloise citizens.
 - Infrastructure & beautification projects.
 - Provide roofing repairs to existing homes as needed.
 - Leveraging grants alongside CRA monies to finance larger projects.
 - Work with Utilities to ensure that all homes that need to be connected to the public sewer system are connected.
 - Assistance with down payment, closing or lien costs to property owners who need it, including residents in rental housing.

Board Direction for Land Development

- Building more houses on the vacant lots
- Clean up lots / demolition of dilapidated, vacant houses (work with Code Enforcement)
- Monies to be assigned to suggested various projects at June meeting

No. 5 on Agenda: Request from the General Public & Opportunity to be Heard.

- Diane requested that the road across from the elementary school. The road is currently merges to a single lane in front of the school. Look into extending the two lanes of traffic beyond the school to just past the lights.
This project will be discussed separately with Roads & Drainage prior to June meeting.
- Many of the properties in Eloise are owned by out-of-state owners. If the owner doesn't want to pay these fees, look at acquiring the property from them so it can be improved.
- Question was raised about creating access to showers, nice clothes, and food so homeless can work towards getting jobs & improving their lives.
The CRA dollars are not allocated for something like this, however, it is possible that some of the money could be allocated to Housing & Neighborhood Development as a grant to accomplish this.

Approval of 2024 Meetings:

Meeting location: Johnny & Freda Brooks Resource Center

- Monday, June 3, 2024, at 6pm
- Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 6:00pm (due to Labor Day holiday on September 2nd)
- December 2, 2024, at 6pm

NOTE: There may be some additional meetings called if special discussions/approval of projects are required.

ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned at 7:41pm

Minutes transcribed by:

Lisa Urban, CAP-OM

Management & Budget Analyst I
Budget & Management Services Division
Polk County Board of County Commissioners