

*C.R.A. Monthly Meeting*

*July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
5:30 P.M.*



The Monthly CRA Meeting of the City of North Miami was held in Council Chambers of City Hall on Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014, beginning at 5:30 P.M.

(Phonetic spelling of each speaker's name may be used throughout the minutes unless correct spelling is known.)

***I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL***

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Good evening everyone. Today is Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014. You can hear me? Can you fix the mic? Do you hear me? Thank you, thank you very much. Today is July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2104 and it's 5:40 P.M. This is our regular CRA meeting and thank you for coming in. Mr. City Clerk, let the record show that we have come to conduct business today. Roll call please.

ROLL CALL	Board member Keys	Here
	Board member Galvin	Here
	Board member Steril	Here
	Acting Chair Bien-Aime	Here

Mr. Louis: Chair, we have a quorum.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you very much. Tonight we have a distinguished guest and it's Commissioner Sally Heyman. You know she's been working hard in the CRA area to make sure we have money in our CRA account to serve the people, to serve the residents and we're happy to have you here tonight. And I don't know if you want to address the podium. Yes she can come forward.

Ms. Heyman: Thank you Mr. Mayor and Councilmembers, Managers and Administration. And I apologize it's a workday but I came straight from downtown. I wanted to be here. I saw the significance of an administrative decision related to the CRA. I apologize, Commissioner Sally Heyman, Miami-Dade County 111 N.W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami, Florida and proud to represent the City of North Miami. It's one of my 13 municipalities. I'm coming to speak specific to the CRA Board, specific to make a record that hopefully will be memorialized not just in your mediums but also in the minutes taken. I've been an extreme critic of the CRA structure whereas it exists under Florida Statute. Anybody who can justify a blighted area that needs match money by a municipality to a County or another governing body and then can share the monies coming in, they get to spend it. Then their oversight from the County as a partner is afterwards to reimburse it. That's a little late. And over the years each time North Miami CRA presented their budget in recent years, I had great concern and that's polite. I believe that the money had been misused. And knowing that you're talking about

hundreds of thousands of dollars that could be directed to what meets the legal definition of blight under CRA that creates great concern for me. Let me tell me, you're one of 13 cities, better Scott can tell you, my heart is in the City of North Miami. I'm a proud North Miami Pioneer graduate. I know this community. I grew up and played in this community. And to represent east of Biscayne Boulevard as a money source and a bargain deal from the development of Biscayne Landings and what it could offer to the City coffers and redistribute to a blight area, was a unique formula we created at the County. Because usually it's the City and then it goes into the designated area. We were going to create it into another area removed on the worst blight in the west end. And to have it go into salaries, to have it going into performances and get together and commercials and economic development trips that didn't ever materialize because nothing was done at your home base caused me to hold up your CRA dollars year after year until it came to the point of having to release it or you would lose it and have to deck back a payment to the County. Because that's how it works. You have to make up what we gave you that you spent and in my opinion wasted for years. And I have the support of my colleagues because we sort of respect parochial who represents an area to know it best. There isn't any doubt but concern and the compassion, the professionalism that exist now in this administration in my mind to the decisions made by this administration. And I hope and I believe supported by your Council. When you can take a quarter of a million dollar in salary for less than three positions and redirect it into services, into define blight that's speak to what the intent of the CRA is and what your obligations have been and seem to be a struggle to succeed in. I have the confidence in this Council to back up the administration. I am delighted that they took a suggestion cause we had a dialogue of what works. And a meeting with the Manager who ran the most successful CRA when he was at City of Miami. And they did it in house. And that recommendation was made to Homestead when they were on the cutting edge of losing theirs. And they had a management meeting. And heard what they could do in house with professionalism and professions whose commitment is to their own respective city. The same applies to the City of North Miami Beach with the new Manager. They went in house, both with Attorney counsel for the few times you have a meeting to Finance management to direction of what is the best in meeting the obligations of resolving blight and enticing and increasing economic development. I believe the decisions made here is only detrimental to people who made over \$100,000.00 and didn't deliver and put you on the cusp of losing your CRA dollars match from the County. You have resources downtown that are absolutely free. You have a compassionate, professional management team in other cities that have successful CRAs that are embracing your Manager's willingness to work with him. You don't have to pay the money to have assistance. And I am delighted you are redirecting what I saw in adding it up was from your own statement, is \$251 millions. Envision what you can do to façades, to no interest loans, to grants for painting, improving, steam cleaning, signage, assistance on anything else that goes in...commitment to say, we are reducing the blight. We are committed to this community and we're going to use the tax dollars to deliver service. Bottom line is, I can't tell you how happy I am. I actually for the first time await with great anticipation

your objectives, your redirected funds and the goals you will achieve. I'm signing off for the first time without hiccups and hesitancy to a CRA budget that really is committed. Whether you're dealing with the main strip, the west end, the east side, Biscayne Boulevard, you got your pick. I just can't wait to see you redirect money to the services. You have my commitment. I will be not only next to you Mr. Manager, Mr. Finance Director, I will leading the flag downtown to get you fully refunded and support your future endeavors if this is the direction you're going to take. I'm here for any questions. I'll hang for a little while. I want to put on record how proud I am to represent this initiative and look forward to great things. Thank you very much.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you. Thank you Commissioner Sally Heyman. And Mr. City Manager you heard the Commissioner, she's willing to help this City get money. Money we're going to transfer to the people.

## ***II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Right now can I have a motion to approve the agenda.

Boardmember Galvin: So moved.

Boardmember Keys: Second.

## ***III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Can I have a motion to approve the minutes from the last Board meeting?

Boardmember Galvin: So moved.

Boardmember Keys: Did we get minutes? Do we have minutes?

Executive Director Ghany: Yeah you have. There's a correction.

Boardmember Keys: I haven't seen the minutes.

Boardmember Galvin: I'll remove my motion for a second...excuse me. I'll remove my motion for approval.

Mr. Louis: Mr. Chair, we need a roll call or...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay. Give us a second, I think we're going to review it and...

Executive Director Ghany: Just review.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Just review it and...

Mr. Louis: But you now have one even for the agenda or...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Whenever you're ready. No, we're going to go for the...

Mr. Louis: Oh go back, okay.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: No for the agenda. A motion to approve the minutes and we can just reintroduce the motion after review.

Boardmember Keys: Mr. Mayor, didn't we approve the minutes from April also? Didn't we approve two sets of minutes last month?

Boardmember Galvin: Since we don't have the actual minutes here, I'll move that we continue the approval of the...

Acting Chair Bien-Aime: The minutes...

Boardmember Galvin: The last minutes until our next meeting. And ask and plead to staff. I understand there's been turnover. Handing of stuff right now has put us in a bad spot. So I move to continue.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay. Second? Anyone wish to record a no? That mean the approval of the minutes is going to be on the next CRA.

Executive Director Ghany: On the following agenda.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Following CRA meeting. Mr. Director, is there any item for review or for actions?

Mr. Sorey: No, nothing for direction.

#### ***IV. ITEMS FOR REVIEW AND/OR ACTION***

##### ***Agenda Item #1***

DISCUSSION                      REGARDING                      COMMUNITY  
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) AUDIT REPORT

Mr. Sorey: Our first item on the agenda that we do have is the CRA's CAFR just for brief discussion.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay Agenda 1 for discussion. Can I have some more explanation about it? Are we going to have a presentation by (inaudible)?

Executive Director Ghany: No, we're not going to have a presentation. What I want to do is to just summarize and I believe you heard everything already in my memo that was sent out to the Board. Just Page 3, I believe summarizes on the financial highlights. Page 3 of the CAFR that was sent out to all the Board Members.

Boardmember Steril: Do you have a copy of the memo?

Mr. Sorey: Of the memo?

Boardmember Steril: No, no.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: You're talking about the original one?

Executive Director Ghany: The original CAFR that went out to everybody.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: For the CRA.

Executive Director Ghany: For the CRA. Just the highlights I believe on the financial highlights. The CRA has actually dropped 31% which decrease by \$213,000.00. And then a further additional decrease of 62% resulting in another \$600,000.00 in...bottom line is what we're looking at is \$469,000.00 for the CRA budget. And with cost of operation and personnel cost together with rental of the building adding up to \$307,000.00. Which resulted in the measures taken thus far in making the adjustments or restricting of the CRA. With those numbers I believe in consultation with the finance with our Budget department and also Public Works, most of the work in the CRA is going to be held...going to be in house. We're using in house staff. The monies allocated for blight in the community and for projects are all going to be focused towards actual projects or brick and mortar projects, which I believe was the intent of the CRA.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Any questions from Board members? Are you going to say something?

Mr. Sorey: Yes.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay, go ahead.

Mr. Sorey: Also identified in the CAFR, it was recommended that we start fund balance accounting, monthly reconciliations and just overall management of the CRA. And we've put...putting measures in place to follow these recommendations as suggested by the auditor. So we'll have a report at the next meeting on our action plan of how we're going to move forward and adjust these recommendations by the audit firm.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Is there any questions from the Board members?

Boardmember Keys: I have some comments. I met twice with Mr. Sorey and thank you Mr. Sorey for getting us the bank statements of where our money is. I've been asking for that for almost...about nine months. So now I know where our money is. I'm glad it's there. We spoke and we do have some liabilities, current liabilities as of 2013 of \$1,380,781.00. I don't believe you all have that tonight. But I would like to sooner than later get a breakdown of what those current liabilities are. I believe they're supposed to be projects that monies been allocated but we want to look at that money. I want...I'd like a breakdown of those projects and see if we still have to have those allocated. There was a shortfall; I guess there was an overdraft to the tune of almost \$16,000.00. Checks drawn in excess of bank balance. I assume that's been taken care of by now?

Executive Director Ghany: Staff, myself and the CRA...the budget staff from the CRA met with the bank. We had a meeting today with the bank. And I will let Mr. Sorey go into the minutes of that meeting.

Mr. Sorey: What's happening with the accounts, we have two accounts, one is a regular operating account and one is a money marketing account. Monies have to be transferred into the operating account. The overdraft didn't show up. Basically the day when they did run it, say if it was a Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, there was an overdraft in the operating account. They hadn't transferred the money. But since the problem has been rectified.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: You said they have to transfer the money?

Mr. Sorey: They have to transfer money out of the money market account into the operating account to pay bills, pay staff you know everything they were doing. That has been rectified. The problem is rectified. In moving forward in the future this will not happen. We just today were sending a memo to the bank after we met with them, for us to have E-banking where the money will automatically be moved over. We can do that without having to contact the bank so we can move the money into the account to pay the bills. So we won't have the overdraft. It shouldn't happen again.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: That's the \$252,000.00 you want to transfer from...

Mr. Sorey: Yes that's exactly what. That's one of those. We won't have to do that moving forward.

Boardmember Keys: I have two other questions.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Yes.

Boardmember Keys: Going forward with a transparent CRA, will we be able to start posting our checks and expenditures online? Our website has not been attended to for about two, three years. It's void. That's one of the things as far as websites, all of our minutes and agendas for the past...from inception until about a year ago have disappeared from online. I want our CRA website back up and running. We haven't posted a project in several years. And I'm hoping we'll get with I.T. and start posting. But when I go back to look at something that happened three years, it's gone. So I'm hoping that will...we'll get that back up and going forward, I'd like to see our checks posted.

Mr. Sorey: Yes, we will take care of that from now on.

Boardmember Keys: And one last item. We didn't discuss it and it's not on the agenda. But does this Board feel the need for any type of forensic audit as we're doing in the City. Because this is a separate agency, it's not the City and I'm just throwing it out that maybe the CRA should also do its own separate audit.

Mr. Sorey: In meeting with the auditing firm and if this is the direction of the Board, we can do so. But in meeting with the auditing firm, he saw no need for us to move forward with the forensic audit. The money was there and the bank accounts showed the same. But if it is the direction of the Board, we can move forward with the audit.

Boardmember Keys: Well then I'm still going to request because I requested this a while ago. I wanted a year worth of expenditures. I'd like to be able to review the expenditures for the past several years. You've given me copies of checks since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. I would like to go back further and see where our money really has been spent.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: You think we'll be better to have another CRA meeting before we go on recess where we can all those information about the financial situation, all the information about the banks account. Then we will move forward and decide what we want to do?

Boardmember Keys: I'd like to get some more financials.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Because I have a lot of information that I just...that was just sent over to me. And by reviewing them I have a lot of questions that I would like to ask you about those accounts, those transfers, those projects that have been financed by the CRA. And if it's the desire of the Board and why don't we have another separate CRA meeting like a workshop where we can put everything...

Executive Director Ghany: And (inaudible).

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: ...together and talk everything and see exactly where we want to go.

Executive Director Ghany: I apologize. And through the Chair, I do apologize for giving you all this information at the meeting today. But the meetings with the bank and going through the files at the CRA office it was done on Friday when 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday. We are putting together the report and all the businesses that actually got contracts with the CRA. I had two people come in my office today saying that they did meet with the previous CRA Coordinator and monies were allocated per contract. All of those are being put together with the reports and how much the CRA right now is indebted or how much is committed with the CRA funds. And a complete report would be...you know we'd be putting together a complete report and sending it to the Board.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Can we have another Board meeting like next week where we're going to have all those information and...keep moving forward.

Boardmember Steril: I agree with the Acting Mayor or the Acting Chair. But we do need to...I would prefer to sit down with the Executive Director Ghany individually to ask our questions. And I know that Board Member Keys has been asking for those account, check balance for a while now. I would suggest because to me having another meeting, we're just going to sit here and ask him for things that's not going to be provided to us. So I would suggest during those weeks that we're not meeting, each one of us in our regular time that we meet. Because I know next week if you have it, I'm not going to be here. And for recess...the month of recess that's when I plan different things with family and personal things. I would prefer to do it individually instead of calling a meeting.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Why I was asking that, is first of all, and I get all the information, all the tools that we need then we can go public and explain to the people exactly what we want to do with the CRA; to extend the life of the CRA. I think that's why I'm asking that. I've been meeting with you personally one on one with everybody. We get all the information, then we can know exactly what we want to do

with our CRA. That's why I say another public meeting after we gather all the information.

Boardmember Keys: That's fine with me.

Boardmember Galvin: Personally I think its extreme circumstances. We should forgo our summer recess. I think we should continue to meet through July, August and into September as regular. So it would be my recommendation that we suspend...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: We extend our recess maybe for this month since...

Boardmember Galvin: Get rid of the recess. Don't do the recess. You know we've got a lot of business at hand. We've got...after tonight as it stands now, we don't meet again until September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Executive Director Ghany: September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: And it's going to be a budget.

Boardmember Galvin: Right and then we're right in the heart of budget. So my personal opinion and I'm pained to say this because we should have a recess. But under the extraordinary circumstances we're in, I'd ask that we meet regularly through the summer.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Since I know and some people already set up vacation time with the family, I don't think...

Boardmember Galvin: I think we should if we...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: ...we should do that. Maybe if we have one or two...

Boardmember Steril: Special meeting I wouldn't mind.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: ...special meeting for this month. And first of all about that CRA issue to know exactly what direction we're going to go. Because it's very, very important between the information that we have and the information it's always out there on the street. And I don't know if I can bring a motion on the table to have another CRA meeting next Tuesday at 5:30?

Boardmember Steril: I won't be available.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Another day? A day where everybody can be there?

Boardmember Steril: May I? I will try my best to be in the meeting if it's possible for me. If not...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: No we want to make it possible that you're there.

Boardmember Steril: But what I'm suggesting is that, if we want to have a productive meeting we give staff direction. I know Board Member Keys wants...what is it that...

Boardmember Keys: I want to see numbers.

Boardmember Steril: She needs some numbers. We need to give staff time to find the numbers. You have questions so I would say...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: I want to see names and numbers.

Boardmember Steril: The same way that we usually do it when we call for an emergency meeting or a special meeting. So once we feel that we have enough information then we met...then we can call a special meeting with different dates. And I will make myself available. But if you call it for Tuesday, next Tuesday, I'm not going to be available.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay if I understand, you will prefer an executive session.

Boardmember Steril: Not executive session, a special meeting. An executive session you'll meet separately without the public. Special meeting we can call it whenever and it's up to the public or a workshop. It doesn't matter to me. But I would suggest that we meet and then we call it whenever. But if you schedule it tonight...

Executive Director Ghany: Actually we need about two weeks. Staff has just...I just talked to staff. We're putting together the report and all the contracts. So with all the financials and the contracts and the numbers, we will need about two weeks to put together the report to bring for the Board to review.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay and do that then. When you're ready then you will call us and we'll set it up. And any other questions? Does anybody have any questions for the Board members? Mr. McDearmaid?

Mr. McDearmaid: Mike McDearmaid, 840 N.E.127<sup>th</sup> Street. We had a CRA Advisory Board meeting last night. And the Board made a motion and we voted to absolutely thank the City Manager and endorse everything that he's doing going forward with the changes that he has already implemented. And we just wanted to put it on record that the Board was totally in favor of what he's doing and where he's going with the CRA. Thank you.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you. And automatically jumping on Agenda #2. And we've been discussing about it.

Mr. Each: Kenneth Each, I'm a member of the Planning Commission, also the CRA. I concur with what Mr. McDearmaid said about last night. We did vote unanimously to support the director's decision on this. And if we go back in time I'm not here to point fingers but we did squander money on things that were not essential to the CRA. Sending young people on a journey up to Savannah, Georgia or Washington D.C. or Tallahassee, had nothing to do with getting rid of blight. Giving money to different associations had nothing to do with getting rid of blight. I think even the Attorney General in the State of Florida came down and said specifically, CRA funds are to be used for brick and mortar projects. It's not a pool to dip into and have a good time with. And we did waste a lot of money. I've been in this City since 1971 or 2. I bought my first property in 1980 and it breaks my heart to see what I see out there today. Also with regards to the CRA downtown redevelopment and the Planning Commission, you have like three different entities here and we all have to work together. Because we all want to see the City progress; to become something that we can proud of instead of a drive through. We should be a destination point. You know I look at what's going on around us at North Miami Beach, Bay Harbor, Bal Harbour, Sunny Isles, Aventura and I see stagnation. I've said this before; when I was in the Police Department we used to say that this is the town that time forgot. Folks, you're not the Council of Trent, you don't have to look through your telescope because you see what I see. When (name indistinct) went before the Council of Trent and he said look the world rotates. And they said, no we don't want to look because we don't want to believe. Well you believe. I know what's in your heart. I know what you want to do. It's time that we use downtown redevelopment, the CRA, the Planning Commission, redo our Land Use Ordinances and bring this City to the current century. Not the last century but the current century. We can generate a great tax base, create good jobs and have a decent beautiful city. I look at N.W. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, I look at 125<sup>th</sup> Street, it breaks my heart. We have areas where we can develop and develop them magnificently and we don't have to look at high rises or density as something that's evil. You know one other thing I just want to say and I mentioned this last night, Biscayne Landings got a pretty good deal up there. They got a pretty darn good deal. The last good deal like that was Peter Stivenson when he brought the island of Manhattan for \$26.00 from the Indians. And they got a deal and we got to hold their feet to the fire. And I want to see something nice happen in this City. Not the same treadmill that we've been on for the last 30 years. Thank you very much.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you.

Ms. Montgomery: Good evening Annie Montgomery, 2082 Laurel Lane.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: The mic.

Ms. Montgomery: Now it's on. Annie Montgomery, 2082 Laurel Lane. I see a gentleman here in this room who was one of the smartest, most brilliant director that ever was here and our CRA and many other CRAs and that's Frank Schneidmann. And it's great to see him here and know that he's on board with us. He was dismissed by a former City Mayor which that's when our trouble started after he left. So I'm very happy to see him in this room and I hope he's very involved with our CRA going forward. Thank you.

**Agenda Item #2**

DISCUSSION REGARDING REORGANIZATION OF THE  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA)

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you. Any questions? Any comments about Agenda #2?

Boardmember Steril: We're on two?

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Yeah Agenda Item #2. The discussion about the reorganization of the CRA.

Mr. Sorey: One thing just that I want to share with the Board. The CRA office is still over there. We're in the process of canceling some of the contracts now, some of the operating contracts. The copy machine, Comcast, the internet and we're in the process of going through all the files and trying to scan the files because it's all public records. But we do have about eight years' worth of stuff over there that we're trying to get scanned and put in some type of order. But we're working on that now to eventually try to close the office in the next month or two.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: And in your memo you said by October 1<sup>st</sup> everything is going to be moved in here.

Executive Director Ghany: That's correct.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Any other things we should know about the redevelopment and...

Executive Director Ghany: With the restructuring as mentioned earlier, most of the services are going to be brought in house. I have also the services of Grey Robinson who is budgeted right now \$45,000.00 per year. I've renegotiated...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: The CRA attorney?

Executive Director Ghany: ...with the CRA attorney.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Before he was \$45,000.00.

Executive Director Ghany: Right and he's willing to do it for \$20,000.00 for the next fiscal year. The CRA meetings...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: That means you're saving about \$25,000.00 for the upcoming year.

Executive Director Ghany: That's right. The CRA meetings moving forward will also be...

Boardmember Steril: The City Attorney or the CRA?

Executive Director Ghany: CRA attorney.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: No we're going...we're talking about the CRA attorney.

Executive Director Ghany: The CRA attorney.

Boardmember Steril: Can I?

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: No let him finish and after that we ask questions.

Executive Director Ghany: All CRA meetings moving until the end of this Fiscal Year which is 13-14 will be held at no cost by the...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: No but since we're going to be on recess...

Executive Director Ghany: Well including this meeting they are not going to be paid for.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: For this one and maybe...okay.

Executive Director Ghany: And maybe the other meeting that we have in September.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay starting October 1<sup>st</sup>, the contract is going to be \$20,000.00 instead of \$45,000.00?

Executive Director Ghany: That's correct.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: You can ask your question.

Boardmember Steril: Thank you. You renegotiated with the City Attorney...the CRA attorney. He agrees to have \$20,000.00 cost?

Executive Director Ghany: That's correct. I have the contract upstairs. It's not signed. I was waiting on this Board meeting approval before I signed it and send it out.

Boardmember Steril: That sounds very good. And a total of how much money that we saved by now almost...

Executive Director Ghany: \$25,000.00 on the contract as it exists right now.

Boardmember Steril: So at the end of this Fiscal Year we'll be saving almost \$300,000.00?

Executive Director Ghany: That's correct.

Boardmember Steril: Which is very good and I applaud you for that.

Executive Director Ghany: Thank you.

Boardmember Steril: But here's my concern. Discussing the reorganization of the CRA, I think should have done before all that story on the streets right now. I know that you have the power to fire and to hire and I agree. And I think the CRA...all of us up agree that that was well overdo to reorganize the CRA. I don't have a problem with that. But what I have...the problem that I have is that, I am discussing as the Board...one of the Board member, I am discussing a thing that already take in action before I was aware of it. Not what you did is wrong but I think the process never ever done here at the City of North Miami. And it's weird to see we agree on that which normally we never allow that. And I know some of us will be upset if it happened before then. And as I talked to you before, it's not about the staff because I think even those

staff members knew that...know what the possibility was coming. But it's just how it happened. Like you sit down with the CRA attorney, negotiate his salary which we voted to hire him, from what I understand. I didn't know that. That's a good thing. But at the same time it does not...I don't know how many of the Board members that know and I know I'm always available, which you know. Night, day I'm always available for phone calls or meeting and I'm starting to question myself. Why is it that everybody knows about what's happening in the City business, in the CRA business but I don't know about it. And it's a shame, it's embarrassing to know that people are calling me, telling me what's happening in the City or what happened with the CRA when I'm available. And I hope that doesn't happen again because I am available. And I'm willing to serve the people that elected me. Thank you.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you and...

Boardmember Keys: I just want to thank Commissioner Heyman for joining us this evening and your support. I really appreciate it and I know you got a busy schedule. You're not here that often so this was important to us. So thank you very much. And also I want to thank Dr. Schneidmann for joining us this evening.

Boardmember Steril: Is he on board for free as well? I heard a lot of freebees. Schneidmann is on board for free?

Executive Director Ghany: No, not as yet.

Boardmember Keys: He's here tonight. He has not...I don't believe we're getting a bill for Dr. Schneidmann. He was...he attended last night's meeting. He made a very astute observations about our CRA. It was incredible and thank you for that.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you very much. Boardmember Scott Galvin.

Boardmember Galvin: Thank you Mr. Chairman or Mr. Chairman. I think the amount that we're paying Grey Robinson is too much. I think we should just have them on an hourly basis for the time that they're here. I'm sorry I'm sort of motioning at you not knowing if you're from Grey Robinson. My personal opinion, whatever the hourly rate is, if they're here for an hour...our CRA meetings usually don't last that long. So if they're here for an hour at \$500.00 an hour, that's \$500.00 a month. And if they spend two hours, three hours looking over information in the meantime give them that rate per month. I think it should be an hourly basis as needed. It's nice to say from 45 to 25. I want to say from 25 down to seven. Personally that's where I'm coming from. If we're going to be moving money towards projects, let's move money toward projects. This moment legally the CRA is not turning out enough that I can imagine \$25,000.00 is

warranted. So depending on what the rest of the Council feels, I would take that number down to an hourly rate.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: But like Boardmember Steril bring concern, I think the redevelopment structure that you want to bring and you put the plan together and you try to put the financial situation of the CRA together. I think the Board members we're going to need to approve that. That's a plan we're going to need to approve. That mean I don't think it's in place, we should put it in place before final approval. I don't know if I'm right or wrong, I don't know.

Unidentified Male Voice: You are right and let me address the comment by Board member Galvin. I need to verify this but I believe the way that our existing engagement with the City is structured is we establish an annual budget and we work against that on an hourly basis. Right now we're well under budget and we're not entitled to that \$45,000.00. We're only entitled to the amount of money that we worked based upon the hourly rate with a not to exceed budget like all your other departments in your City. So the reduction of \$20,000.00 would be our not to exceed and we charge against that on an hourly basis. And so if at the end of the year there's less money or less time spent by us, you receive the benefit of that savings.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Do you mean you charge...when you work you send invoices?

Unidentified Male Voice: Yes.

Executive Director Ghany: And that's part of the contract I have on my desk. Is \$20,000.00; not to exceed 20 with a \$200.00 an hour hourly rate.

Boardmember Keys: So we don't have to spend \$20,000.00?

Executive Director Ghany: No, it's not to exceed 20.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: It's a cap.

Executive Director Ghany: Exactly.

Boardmember Galvin: I understand that. Let me rephrase since we're going to get all jargeny. I would cap it at \$7,000.00. And once you're at \$7,000.00 they're out the door. I really think there's no need for a CRA that's barely doing any real programming to have the ability to spend that much money on attorneys. That's just where I'm coming from. You know we laid people off. There are people now without work because we're not producing. What's fair for one is fair for all. Knock it down, I won't say to zero. But I would knock it way down and let everybody know, do it, do it

fast, don't dilly dally if you're reviewing documents. You've only got \$7,000.00 to spend. I'm just saying \$7,000.00 whatever. My personal recommendation is just to...

Boardmember Steril: Scott but we are due for a budget...

Executive Director Ghany: Right. It will all be presented in your budget.

Boardmember Galvin: Fair enough.

Boardmember Steril: Okay it's July. We're going to work on the budget so there's no need to discuss it with...

Executive Director Ghany: The budget will be brought to you in September for approval. So all of that would be...all the details will be in your budget.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Okay.

Boardmember Galvin: Thank you.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: And any other questions from the Council? Any questions from the audience? Nobody want to say anything?

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Mr. Manager, any old business?

Executive Director Ghany: No.

Ms. Metellus: Good afternoon. Thank you Mr. Mayor. Good afternoon Councilmembers, I am Gypsy Metellus. I reside at 515 N.E. 107<sup>th</sup> Street in Miami. And what brings me here this afternoon is to express to you my deep concerns, my pain, my embarrassment at the manner in which, not what occurred but the manner which I think a very reputable member of our community was dismissed by your current manager. I'm here to question your right as a Manager to reorganize an entity that you feel is important. I'm not here to second guess your decision. I'm just hearing you say that you didn't have a plan for this reorganization, this is a plan that you all I suppose creating as you speak. But be that as it may, my concern remains the manner in which you dismissed a member of the community because you allowed the perception to be that on the hand he was being let go because there was some dollars missing, which you attributed to his direct involvement in. Secondly, you took a City resident and barred him from accessing City Hall. And last I checked City Hall is the hall of the people, it's the house of the people. I am not a resident of the City of North Miami but I spend enough of my tax dollars, my money here that I've always felt welcomed to come here, address you, comment on

issues that I think are important not just in this community of North Miami but in general. And so I do want to recognize and acknowledge that you've always provided me that opportunity. But I think what occurred is shameful, you letting...you let this particular occasion feed into a very scary narrative that I see emerging from this Council right. And there's some members on the Council who I think are feeding into that narrative and it's a narrative of people who can't be trusted. A narrative of people who are accused of a number of unspeakable things, a narrative of a community that is spawning more the same. And I'm here to tell you that I am offended. I would require that Mr. Manager apologize to the individual in question, apologize to the community. Excuse me. Apologize to the community and the Officer if I understand...if my facts are correct. The Officer who was I suppose instrumental and creating this barrier or in prohibiting this person from accessing the building also needs to be disciplined. Because again when you...you know you've never been on this side of the color line right so you may not understand Boardmember Galvin and Boardmember Keys. You may not understand what that feels like. You may not understand the issues of perception. You may not understand what it feels like when you walk into an establishment and someone looks at you funny. Or someone assumes that you're up to no good. So let me say to you that on behalf of, I think all of the black residents in this City, what happened was offensive. It was shameful. I am hurt. I'm offended. And I for one, I expect an apology and I certainly hope that you will apologize to Mr. Prudent who was the person at hand here.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you Madame Metellus and Mr. Manager, Director. I don't think here we can answer questions about speculation. I don't think no one here talk about stolen money. I don't think we ever talk about that. And Madame Metellus, I never heard either the City Manager, myself or another member of the Council officially talk about stolen money.

Ms. Metellus: Well let me refresh your memory sir.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: That's speculation. No we're not going to have a conversation. But Mr. City Manager if you want to answer her about the second part of the question that...about the incident maybe she will understand.

Boardmember Galvin: I don't think that that's necessary. And Madame Metellus we've been great friends for years.

Ms. Metellus: Madame Metellus thank you not Madam. Madam has a different connotation thank you. Madame.

Boardmember Galvin: Madame Metellus, Gypsy.

Ms. Metellus: If you'd like Scott.

Boardmember Galvin: As an openly gay member I'm offended to hear you say that I don't know what it's like to have people judge me by who I am. I do know what it's like to be on your side of the fence.

Ms. Metellus: No it's not the same side Scott. It's not the same side.

Boardmember Galvin: Well then we'll agree to disagree greatly cause I guess you've never been on my side of the fence.

Ms. Metellus: No I have not. I have not and I wouldn't presume to know what that feels like either.

Boardmember Galvin: So since we agree that neither of us presume to know anything let me allow you to have the time after this meeting to meet with the City Manager to review what really happened. You said you want to be able to check your facts, so please check your facts. This was not the first time we've used a Police Officer to escort a former employee from the building. But I think it should be the last. It was something that was adopted about 10 years ago or so when a private corporation has an employee fired. They don't need a Police Officer to take them from the building, keep them from the building or anything similar. Mr. Prudent should not have been escorted out by Police escort for lack of a better term, neither should be anybody else whose been fired in the last 10 years though they all have. Let's cease that practice. You can have somebody who supervises somebody and walks them out of the building if necessary. But it doesn't need to be somebody with a badge and a gun because I completely agree with Madame Metellus that that creates a bad impression all the way around. So my advice will be that the next time we have to let somebody go, if that has to happen, that just have somebody in a supervisory nature walk them out. Not a Police Officer with a gun even though I understand that wasn't the intent to have happened with Mr. Prudent, which when you meet with her perhaps you can...with Gypsy you can...

Ms. Metellus: And to the issue of what's been written in the papers I know that many of you, if not most of you, read the Miami Herald as do I. And so reading again on the various reports that was clearly the buildup. Although the very last article had imbedded maybe in the third paragraph that what occurred to Mr. Prudent is not tied to the findings of your auditor though he subsequently said to you that while everything was alright that you should change practice. Such that, things like that don't leave question marks but somebody had to have read that. And somebody had to have been interested in reading that. The perception remains \$100,000.00 missing. You come in and you say, you're going to reorganize, you're going to let go of the coordinator.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Ms. Metellus, you talk about \$100,000.00 missing.

Ms. Metellus: I read the Miami Herald and...

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: We're talking (inaudible) \$100,000.00 and that word has been said by the auditor of the City. We never said anything about the \$100,000.00.

Ms. Metellus: The discrepancy is being allowed to be felt as if someone actually took \$100,000.00, that's what I'm saying.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: No, that's not what it is.

Ms. Metellus: But I'm saying to you this is the perception Mr. Bien-Aime. It's the perception. You don't have to argue against perception. If that's what my perception is and if you poll many of your residents, that may be their perception too. And if that's not the perception there's clearly confusion because things occurred in a manner that lent itself to confusion. And so I'm here to tell you that that's not good. That's not good.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you.

Ms. Metellus: You're very welcome.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you. Mr. City Manager, have a meeting with her and explain...

Executive Director Ghany: Sure after the meeting.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: ...what happened.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Is there any New Business?

Executive Director Ghany: No that's it. That's all I have for the agenda.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you very much.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Is there a motion to adjourn?

Boardmember Scott Galvin: So moved.

Boardmember Steril: Second.

Acting Chairman Bien-Aime: Thank you. See you next time.