

**MINUTES
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
JANUARY 20, 2026
ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5:30 PM**

The Community Redevelopment Agency met in a regular session with the following members and staff present:

Destin Community Redevelopment Agency

Board Chair Terésa Hebert
Boardmember Jim Bagby
Boardmember Dewey Destin

Boardmember Rodney Braden
Boardmember Sandy Trammell
Boardmember Torey Geile

City of Destin Staff

CRA Executive Director Larry Jones
Public Works Director Michael Burgess
Grants/Project Manager Jeff Cozadd
Principal Planner Daniel Butler
HR Director Jayme Haynes
City Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey
IT Director Andy Peters
Finance Director Krystal Strickland
Building Official Noell Bell
City Engineer Robert Tomasek

1. AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Boardmember Trammell, seconded by Boardmember Bagby, to approve the agenda, passed 6-0.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of minutes of August 18, 2025, CRA Board meeting

Motion by Boardmember Trammell, seconded by Boardmember Bagby, to approve minutes of August 18, 2025, CRA Board meeting passed 6-0.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Seawall at 1 Harbor: exploration of funding options with the Tourism Development Council

John Stephens, Harbor CRA Chair, requested a status update regarding the Harbor Boulevard seawall at 1 Harbor, specifically in relation to potential Tourist Development Council (TDC) funding. He noted that a prior request had been made for a TDC representative to explore funding options for seawall repairs, but no update has been provided.

Since the council's representative to TDC, Boardmember Kevin Schmidt, was not present at this meeting, it was suggested that staff follow up and provide a status report at the next meeting so the CRA can better plan next steps.

B. Clarification of CRA-AC's role after board approval of workplans.

Mr. Stephens highlighted ongoing confusion among committee members regarding what is expected once plans are approved, particularly around responsibilities such as pursuing grants, hiring engineers or consultants, and developing cost estimates. He explained that many volunteers do not have the expertise to carry out these tasks and expressed concern that, without a defined process, projects could stall indefinitely. To address this, he created a draft workflow outlining the steps he believed should follow the approval and asked that staff review it to help establish a standardized process.

Boardmember Trammell responded that she had already begun coordinating with staff and CRA committee chairs to organize meetings aimed at clarifying roles and developing a workable process. She emphasized that each project differs in scope and complexity, making it difficult to apply a single rigid framework, and instead advocated for a collaborative, case-by-case approach. She also noted that both staff and committee members are relatively new and that earlier stages of the process focused primarily on defining goals rather than implementation. Now that goals have been established, the next phase would involve determining how to execute them.

Overall, there was agreement that work plans must first be approved before further action can occur, after which CRA committees would take the lead in moving projects forward with support from staff, and that additional coordination would help resolve confusion.

C. Workplan – Breakwater/Snorkeling Location & Oyster Gardening.

The board discussed the individual work plans, beginning with the breakwater, snorkeling, and oyster gardening proposal. This project involves creating a living shoreline at Clement Taylor Park using breakwaters and vertical oyster gardens to reduce erosion, protect swimming areas, and establish a safe environment for beginner snorkelers. It was noted that some materials, particularly oyster stock, are already available, which could significantly reduce costs, and that grant opportunities may exist to support the project.

However, several concerns were raised, including the strength of water currents in the area, which could affect both the effectiveness of the breakwaters and cause unintended erosion elsewhere, as well as salinity levels that might impact oyster survival. Additional considerations included potential conflicts with existing recreational uses, such as children's swimming areas and events like the cardboard boat race. It was emphasized that the current proposal is conceptual and that detailed engineering, permitting, and environmental analysis would be required before implementation. There was also discussion about whether the project might be better suited for oversight by the Harbor and Waterways Board rather than the CRA.

D. Workplan – Harbor Mooring Field

The work plan for a harbor mooring field was then reviewed. This proposal aims to create a designated mooring area to better manage anchored boats, but several significant issues were identified. Among these was uncertainty over jurisdiction, as the waters near 1 Harbor may be controlled by county, state, or federal entities, requiring clarification before any progress can be made. Additional concerns included the potential impact of a future bridge project on the proposed location, as well as the need for upland facilities such as restrooms and access points.

Board members also discussed the possibility of community opposition depending on where the mooring field is located. Alternative sites were suggested, including areas within the harbor, Joe's Bayou, Marler Bayou, and near the old concrete plant. Given the number of unresolved questions, there was general agreement that this project may be more appropriate for further review and development by the Harbor and Waterways Board before proceeding through the CRA.

E. Workplan – Camera Systems in Destin Harbor CRA

The camera system work plan was discussed next, focusing on the installation of surveillance cameras integrated with the sheriff's real-time monitoring system to enhance public safety. Board members viewed this as one of the higher-priority projects and discussed the possibility of securing funding assistance from the Sheriff's Office, given the direct benefit to law enforcement operations. Staff were tasked with exploring potential partnerships and funding contributions. There was a sense that, if funding could be identified, this project could move forward relatively quickly.

F. Work plan – Implementation of Christmas Lighting/Decorations/Events in Harbor CRA District.

The final work plan discussed was the implementation of Christmas lighting within the Harbor CRA district. The goal of this project is to improve the area's appearance and encourage greater community and business engagement. Mr. Stephens indicated that the intent was for local businesses to ultimately fund the lighting, with the CRA helping to initiate and organize the effort. However, concerns were raised about the infrastructure requirements, including the need for electrical connections and possible modifications to irrigation systems. It was noted that the city may incur costs to install power in certain areas, particularly medians.

Additionally, prior requests had been made to install electrical outlets on light poles to support decorations, and there was a need to assess what infrastructure is already in place and what additional work would be required.

Boardmember Trammell moved to approve all the work plans collectively as presented, seconded by Boardmember Hebert.

Before the vote, it was clarified that these plans represent an initial framework rather than fully developed, final plans. Approval would allow the projects to move forward and be refined over time, with updates expected on a quarterly basis and flexibility to adjust as needed.

Motion passed 6-0.

Boardmember Trammell commented that, since this is the CRA Board, the work plans should be forwarded to the city council for final approval. She then offered a motion **to adopt a Resolution to ensure that any funds raised – whether through donations, grants, or fundraising – for the Harbor CRA would remain dedicated to Harbor CRA projects and would not be diverted into the general fund or used for previously allocated debt service.**

Boardmember Trammell emphasized that the intent was to ensure that locally raised funds directly benefit the Harbor CRA projects themselves. During the discussion, board members agreed with the concept but clarified that such restrictions may already be required under state law, and care must be taken not to conflict with existing financial covenants tied to appropriated funds used for debt service. It was agreed that the resolution should specify “as allowed by state law” and apply only to non-appropriated funds.

Motion passed 6-0.

Some members also expressed concern that the document presented was not a complete work plan, lacking strategic priorities, and sending it to council prematurely could lock the board into an incomplete framework.

Mr. Stephens stated that the current document was a starting point, not a finalized plan, and that the board would review updates quarterly, allowing for adjustments, added details, and new opportunities such as grant applications. He also noted that special meetings could be called if time-sensitive issues arose.

Next, Boardmember Bagby proposed appointing a new CRA Board Chair to ensure continuity while the current CRA Board Chair transitioned to Mayor Pro Tem, aiming to maintain a clear division of responsibilities and avoid conflicts in leadership duties.

Boardmember Bagby moved to appoint Boardmember Trammell as the next CRA Board Chair, seconded by Boardmember Hebert. Motion passed 6-0.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

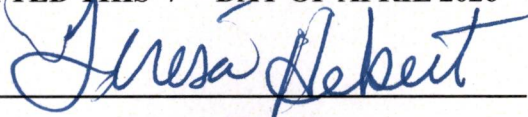
During public comments, Lance Johnson, Vice Chair of the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee thanked the council for the opportunity to serve and praised John Stephens for his leadership, noting that the committee had consistently maintained quorum under his direction. He also highlighted past challenges with attendance and meeting continuity and expressed appreciation for the board’s support in allowing collaboration with other committees and pursuit of funding opportunities.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.

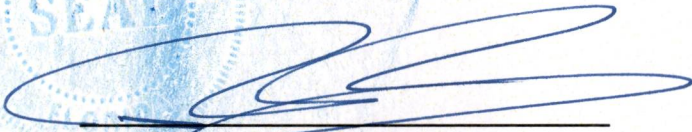
ADOPTED THIS 7TH DAY OF APRIL 2026

By:



Terésa Hebert, CRA Board Chair

ATTEST:



Rey Bailey, City Clerk