



COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

The Board of County Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the Columbia County School Board Administrative Complex Auditorium, 372 West Duval Street, Lake City, Florida 32055. The first meeting of every month is at 9:30AM while the second meeting of every month takes place at 5:30PM. All agenda items are due in the Board's office one week prior to the meeting date.

Today's Date: 6/6/2022 Meeting Date: 6/16/2022

Name: Ellen Snyder Department: BCC Administration

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Ellen Snyder", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

1. Nature and purpose of agenda item:

The Greater Lake City Community Development Corp. Inc. would like to update the Board of County Commissioners on changes to the financing proposal for the Sweetwater Affordable Housing Project. Due to the current economic climate, the project is eligible to receive additional State funding,

2. Recommended Motion/Action:

None

3. Fiscal impact on current budget.

This item has no effect on the current budget.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA
RESOLUTION NUMBER 2021R-35**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR
COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA, EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR
SWEETWATER APARTMENTS, PHASE II, A PROPOSED AFFORDABLE
HOUSING PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners received a presentation on September 2, 2021 outlining a proposed affordable housing project known as "Sweetwater Apartments, Phase II", an 84-unit complex proposed for construction on approximately 6.5 acres with frontage on Martin Luther King Street and Davis Avenue in Lake City, Florida (the "project");

WHEREAS, as part of that presentation, Lake City Community Development Corporation, Inc., (the "Developer") requested a statement reflecting the County Commission's support for the construction of the project in Columbia County;

WHEREAS, the Developer further requested that the County Commission commit to loan three million dollars (\$3,000,000.00) to be used in the construction of the project on terms set forth in an August 11, 2021 written request to the County Manager; and

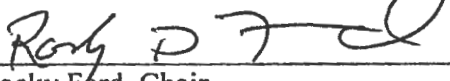
WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners wishes to express its support for the construction of the project and make known its willingness to further consider the loan as requested, but subject to a separately negotiated agreement.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS OF COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS**

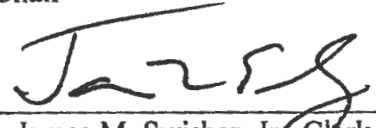
1. The recitals above are true and correct and are incorporated herein.
2. The Board of County Commissioners for Columbia County, Florida hereby formally expresses its support for the construction of the project as described in the proposal made on September 2, 2021, and the Board of County Commissioners expresses its agreement with the Developer that increased and improved affordable housing is needed in Columbia County.
3. The Board of County Commissioners directs the County Manager and staff to negotiate terms of any proposed loan or other incentive from the County to the Developer for the construction of the project, and the Board will further consider any such negotiated arrangement if the same is approved for legal sufficiency by the County Attorney.
4. This resolution shall in no event be construed to obligate the County to make any loan or pay any incentive in connection with the project. This resolution shall not be construed as a promise or guarantee of any kind with respect to any financial or other obligation of the County with respect to the project. Any decision to offer financial support of any kind for the project shall be made only in the discretion of and with a majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners, all of which shall occur in a regular or special session of the Board.

PASSED AND ADOPTED in its regular session held on the 16th day of September 2021.

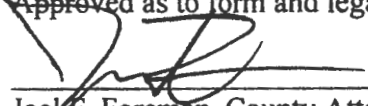
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COLUMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA



Rocky Ford, Chair

ATTEST: 

James M. Swisher, Jr., Clerk

Approved as to form and legality:


Joel F. Foreman, County Attorney



"Where everybody is somebody and JESUS CHRIST IS LORD"

Reverend Henry Ortiz, Pastor

May 31, 2022

The Greater Lake City Community Development Corporation
c/o Mary Ann McKellum
363 N.W. Bascom Norris Drive
Lake City, Fl. 32055

RE: Sweet Water Affordable Housing Project

To whom it may concern,

I am respectfully requesting that the Columbia County Commissioners act favorably on the Sweetwater Affordable Housing Project.

As a local pastor in the general area of the proposed building site, I can confirm there is a great need for affordable housing needs with the continued population growth in our area.

The Greater Lake City Community Development Corporation is a non-profit organization dedicated to enriching the lives of the community and the people they serve.

Sincerely,


Reverend Henry Ortiz,
Pastor

541 N.E. Davis Avenue
Post Office Box 537 (32056)
Lake City, FL 32055
(386)752-1990
Email: ortiz@etmbc537@yahoo.com



CHRISTIAN SERVICE CENTER of Columbia County, Inc.

"Serving those in need in Columbia County through our Christian faith and resources."

Chris Walters
Christian Service Center
of Columbia County, Inc
421 NW Washington St
Lake City, FL 32055
386-755-1770

May 24, 2022

Mary Ann Mckellum
The Greater Lake City
Community Development Corporation
363 NW Bascom Norris Dr
Lake City, FL 32055
386-752-9785

Affordable Housing Opportunity

To whom it may concern,

It has been brought to my attention there is a possible opportunity for new affordable housing in our area. On behalf of the Christian Service Center and the neighbors we serve, I can confidently affirm there is an essential need for this in our community. Over the past few years, we have not only experienced growth in our community, but we have also seen a drastic increase in homelessness and a decrease in housing opportunities for lower income families. We attribute this to a lack of availability in the local housing market, including both viable rental and homeowner properties.

On average, we have perpetually received close to 15 to 20 calls per week about homelessness or families in need of housing and several individuals stopping by for help or information. We also have countless conversations during our interviews with individuals facing eviction or seeking suitable, affordable, and sustainable housing. This year alone we have already reach 54% of the homeless assistance totals that we ended the 2021 year with and that number continues to climb exponentially. Our neighbors we were meeting merely a couple of years ago for occasional needs are now struggling to keep a roof over their family's head or have already lost their homes to distressed circumstances.

As Lake City continues to grow and flourish, we must also remember our neighbors that might be struggling in the conditions or circumstances they are living through. Our national poverty rate is currently over 14% nationwide and that number seems to be unfortunately fluctuating. The opportunity for much needed affordable housing in our community could be beneficial to many individuals and families in our area.

Sincerely,

Chris Walters
Executive Director



SOULS' HARBOR Church Of God In Christ

June 1, 2022

To: Columbia County Commissioners

C/o: Greater Lake City Community Development Corporation
363 NW Bascom Norris Drive
Lake City, FL 32055
386-752-9785

Re: Affordable Housing Opportunity

Please receive this letter as a request for consideration to grant a loan to the Greater Lake City Community Development Corporation to complete phase 11 of the Sweetwater Housing Project.

Phase 1 of the project has been completed and is an asset to our community. Souls' Harbor Church of God in Christ, of which I am the pastor, recognize the need for low to moderate income housing; but the demand and need is greater than the availability.

Inadequate housing and homelessness have resulted from more people coming into the area and not being able to afford the rent. We see in our community that the available housing is poorly maintained and the rent or affordability exorbitant. People's health and safety are compromised because of this. The Greater Lake City Community Development Corporation has a proven track record for stability, consistency, and the fortitude to fulfill this need.

Thank you for your consideration,

Superintendent Melvin L. Goggins Sr.

Superintendent Melvin L. Goggins Sr.

"Where love makes the difference"

PH: 386-752-8380
901 North East Lake Drive - Post Office Box 1134
Lake City, Florida 32056-1134
Elder Melvin L. Goggins Sr., Pastor

**COLUMBIA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBIA CAREER AND ADULT EDUCATION**

409 SW ST. JOHNS STREET
LAKE CITY, FLORIDA 32025
(386) 755- 8190 FAX (386) 758- 6749
<http://adulthood.columbia.k12.fl.us/>

ALEX L. CARSWELL, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT

**HOPE JERNIGAN
TODD WIDERGREN**
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS

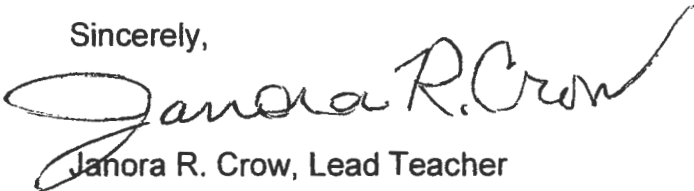
June 1, 2022

Dear Columbia Commissioners:

As you consider participation in the SWEETWATER Affordable Housing Project, please know Columbia Career and Adult Education programs serve adult learners who are in need of single-unit housing. Currently we have young adults who want to establish their own homes but local selection is limited and many times out of their financial reach.

Thank you in advance for your deliberation of the Project as you consider how Sweetwater Housing can assist the citizens of Columbia County.

Sincerely,



Janora R. Crow, Lead Teacher

crowj@columbiak12.com

(386) 755 - 8190

**United Way
of Suwannee Valley**

871 SW State Road 47
Lake City, Florida 32025-0433
Phone: (386) 752-5604
Fax: (386) 752-0105
www.unitedwsv.org



June 1, 2022

Columbia County
Board of County Commissioners
135 NE Hernando Ave, Suite 203
Lake City, FL 32055

Dear Commissioners,

United Way of Suwannee Valley is writing this letter to express the need for more affordable housing in our area. As a city, we are facing a housing affordability crisis, and one of the most important actions we can take to address that crisis is to build more affordable homes.

United Way of Suwannee Valley received the Emergency Solutions Grant CV dollars through the CARES Act funding. During the past year, United Way of Suwannee Valley fielded over 58,000 calls, provided assistance for 105 families to remain housed and housed over 184 households (367 total individuals housed) with these funds alone. The 2021 eviction moratorium really emphasized the need for affordable housing for this area. A substantial increase in local rent in response to the eviction moratorium has brought challenges to an already burdened population. HUD determines what the Fair Market Rent for our area is each year as a guideline of allowable costs for rentals. The 2022 FMR for our area is \$873 for a two bedroom, and the average of what we are paying for rent is \$1200 for the same two-bedroom unit. Once the housing assistance provided through ESG CV is over, we will see an increase in evictions, thus creating another housing crisis. As it stands today, the recidivism rate for those becoming homeless when the housing assistance ended is 35%. The number of literally homeless individuals for 2022 in Columbia County is 208. This number has been slowly declining over the last few years, but is expected to rise again with the sunset of the CARES Act funds and the housing assistance that will no longer be available.

As our community faces this housing affordability crisis, one of the most important actions we can take to address that crisis is to build more affordable housing. At the core of a community is home, but that is out of reach for so many without bold, forward-thinking measures to increase affordable housing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Anchors". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" being more prominent than the last name "Anchors".

Jennifer Anchors, Executive Director
United Way of Suwannee Valley