

Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of October 31, 2002

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Belle Glade City Hall – Conference Room “B”

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Duane Gainer, P.B.C. PZ&B, Planning Division
Lori Hart, The EDGE Center
Denny Abbott, P.B.C. Workforce Alliance
Wendell (Bil) Phillips, P.B.C. Metropolitan Planning Organization
Steve Cramer, P.B.C. Metropolitan Planning Organization
Doug Chozianin, Construction Arts Associates
Douglas Green, Workforce Development Center
Caroline Tompkins Blell, Glades Community Development Corp. (GCDC)

Absent:

Barbara Spence, City of Belle Glade
Felicia Everett, City of South Bay
Tammy Moore, South Florida Water Management District
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development Office
Alice Thompson, Pahokee Chamber of Commerce
June Howard, EDGE Center
Theresa Newton, USDA Rural Development
Lelia Menefee, Workforce Development Center
Raoul Pierre-Louis (Representative for John Brown), Business Loan Fund
Michael Sklar, P.B.C. Housing and Community Development
Sue A. Bailey, Commissioner Tony Masilotti's Office
Henry Bittaker and Carolyn Williams, South Florida Water Management District
Dan Brown, Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Jerry Brownlee, Palm Beach County Library Department
Sandra Chamblee, The Glades Health Survey
Helen B. Franke, Palm Beach Community College
George E. Gadson, Florida Atlantic University
Remar Harvin, Palm Beach County Housing and Community Development
Clayton Hutcheson, Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension Service
Carol Ann Huysse, Housing Partnership
Gwendolyn Johnson, School District of Palm Beach County

Absent: (Cont'd)

Chris Jones, Palm Beach County Department of Public Affairs
Arthur Kirstein, IV, P.B.C. Cooperative Extension
Ken Montgomery, Workforce Development Board
Autrie Moore-Williams, Glades Community Development Corporation
Angela Morlok, Palm Beach County Metropolitan Planning Organization
Curt Thompson, Army Corps of Engineers
Greg Vaday, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Leigh Woodham, Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center,
Palm Beach Community College
Kay Zaccagnino, School District of Palm Beach County

Welcome and Introduction

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. Duane Gainer welcomed those present. Because of new faces, Mr. Gainer introduced himself to the group and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Mr. Gainer proceeded to review the September 26, 2002 minutes with the group. He mentioned that because the tape had ended, he was unable to provide a portion of the meeting in the minutes. Mr. Gainer requested the group to notify him via e-mail of any comments or corrections to the minutes.

Mr. Gainer stated that he received an e-mail from Vicki Silver regarding her being Chairperson for GTAC. Ms. Silver stated yes this could be a possibility but on a monetary basis only. Ms. Silver also stated that because her contract will end with South Bay, as of September 30th, she would not be attending GTAC meetings on their behalf.

Ms. Blell stated that it was not mentioned in the minutes regarding Belle Glade City Hall hiring for the Letterman Contract. There were three (3) qualified bidders. The bids ranged from \$3,000 to \$9,000. The project is due for contract signing on November 20th. Construction is to commence in April 2003. She also stressed the importance of taking the extra step to advertise projects that are out for bid. The newspapers are not enough.

Someone inquired if bidders can be replaced. Ms. Blell responded no, not for asbestos abatement. However in the construction contracts, there will be a provision of the percentage for local participation. It will be necessary to work close with The Workforce Development Board Committee and with the community to make them aware of the process and how to make sure they are included on the list. Someone mentioned that there are approximately ten or eleven contractors within the Glades area. She needed to contact those contractors to inform them that Phase II of the Architecture Construction Drawings contract is beginning, as soon as possible.

Mr. Green stated that a concern in the Glades has been that work is here but people in the Glades are not aware of work until the project is completed and the developer has gone. He feels that developers/contractors should always contact the Workforce Development of job openings, job descriptions, and rate of pay.

Mr. Gainer stated that he would correct the minutes to reflect the mentioned comments. Mr. Gainer also stated that he kept the agenda the same, but would prefer the group in the future to create their own agenda according to topics suggested to be discussed. He stated that their suggestions should be incorporated. It was moved that the minutes be approved and seconded.

Review and Discussion of Committee Role and Tasks

Mr. Gainer stated that per the Supervisor, the organization should use Mr. Gainer as a support person. Everyone agreed that the group should continue to exist. He encouraged the group to contact him referencing the Agenda, status/updates on projects, requesting information, and other concerns. He is here to give assistance.

Caroline Tompkins-Blell talked about a concern she has with the FCAT Test. If the students do not pass the FCAT, they will not receive a diploma; instead they will get a certificate. The certificate has limitations in terms of employment and school options. If there are no options for students with a certificate, this may lead them into crime. We need to take a look at what options are available for students that graduate with a certificate. One option would be job training programs. She inquired about the possibility of having a Job Corps branch in Palm Beach County. She also inquired if they could be used for the construction of old Belle Glade City Hall. Discussion ensued around the FCAT test.

Mr. Gainer stated that Kay Zaccagnino, School District Representative replaced Bruce Thompson, former School District Representative. Mr. Green suggested that Mr. Gainer invite Barbara McQuinn, West Area Superintendent to attend the next GTAC meeting for discussion on the FCAT test.

Mr. Green stated that the format Vicki Silver used was good. He proceeded to explain the importance of keeping the same format. Mr. Green stated that he would also like for the group to be informed of all County benefits that GTAC can derive on. Mr. Gainer responded by stating that he will continue to inform GTAC of County programs. He also explained to the group that someone from the group would need to assume some of those coordinator responsibilities. Someone needs to volunteer to be Chairperson for GTAC. Mr. Gainer enlightened the group of his responsibilities, as far as being Senior Planner, representing P.B.C. County. He reviewed the history of GTAC and how the responsibilities came about when Vicki Silver took over handling the Glades area. Mr. Gainer stated that per the Supervisor, he was asked to request information from all the other planners (including other Departments) that may

have issues and could affect the Glades in the near future to him prior to this meeting. Mr. Gainer stated he would also handle the minutes, typing announcements, and typing of agenda. The group mentioned that in the past they had established a large attendance to GTAC meetings.

Doug Chozianin mentioned that he participates in the meetings because his organization has plans to build in the Glades. He stated the GTAC group act as a forum where information is being exchanged. He further expressed a concern with how projects and jobs are handled in the Glades area. The contractors in the Glades always seem to get by-passed. He mentioned the \$8 million dollar contract in the Glades. Someone stated that is the Everglades Restoration Project for \$8.4 million dollars. We will not see any job creations from that until 2005.

Mr. Gainer mentioned that he attended a course on the Florida Earth Project, hosted by the University Research Center in the Glades. On the agenda were speakers from the Sugar Cane Growers. In reference to the everglades restoration, one of the speakers from Broward said that they set up programs under the magnet school concept. Mr. Gainer used Glades Central High School for an example. The colleges develop a curriculum based on the work that is needed for the everglades for the next twenty (20) years. Someone stated that this program is already in process. Palm Beach Community College received a \$400,000 grant from South Florida Water Management District to create an environmental studies curriculum. They are in the process now to hire a Coordinator for that program.

Someone stated that the jobs coming from the Everglades Restoration Project are big construction dollars. The money will go toward planning and construction. The problem is that the requirements needed to do business with the South Florida Water Management are immense. Therefore the residents may only have an opportunity to do subcontracting. It was mentioned that there is a minority certification process to go through. Mr. Gainer stated that since this will be a business issue, he would expect agencies representing businesses (EDGE Center, etc.) to be proactive. Mr. Gainer went on to discuss concerns with building the County courthouse, such as mandates for local jobs. Sometimes a local business may not have the capacity needed to handle the job. In that case, it will be necessary to go outside. An effort should be made to hire locally first. We should be encouraging and educating the kids about different jobs in reference to the Glades agricultural needs.

Someone inquired if the EDGE Center was listed as a subcontractor to do the community involvement networking and education for that project. She stated that Palm Beach Community College got the contract to provide an education element. Danny Abbott answered, no the project has not been subcontracted. He has the contract in his office between SFWMD and the Community College. The EDGE Center is mentioned as a possible player.

Mr. Green inquired how do you encourage the cities to participate in the GTAC meetings. He feels the organization needs to have a commitment from the City Managers on a regular basis to attend the meetings. They need to be aware of what is going on and the plans for different events in the Glades area. For instance, the Glades need to have an attractive welcome entrance at the main route into the Glades. Someone suggested going to the streets and re-explaining the committee's goals. Someone else mentioned the Glades Tier. Mr. Gainer mentioned that in last month minutes, it was stated that the Tier Policy should not be GTAC's Committee responsibility. Mr. Gainer explained the process of how the Glades Tier project was possibly delegated to Vicki Silver. Since he came on board, the Tier has been placed on hold until a decision is made as to what section in the Planning Division should have that responsibility. Mr. Gainer further stated that he has been contacting City Managers and inviting them to attend the GTAC meetings. Discussion ensued regarding encouraging participation of City Managers to attend the GTAC meetings.

Mr. Chozianin gave an example of why the GTAC Committee could be an important group in playing a role in projects. He mentioned the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail and reviewed issues with that project. He stated that this is just one project that could have a huge economic impact on the Glades. Because the project affects the three (3) cities, a group such as GTAC could monitor what is going on. Mr. Gainer stated that Todd Bonaleren contacted him inquiring about who was in charge of oversight for Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail. Mr. Gainer responded that he was familiar with several groups but he did not know. Mr. Chozianin discussed the budget for this project (Phase II). The group discussed the different jobs involved in this project, such as: printing brochures, signage on the scenic trail. The local businesses in the Glades could handle these jobs.

Mr. Gainer stated that he was requested to pull together as many planning and visioning efforts that has taken place in the Glades for the past few years. His list included: the charrettes, and others going back to the nineties. His next step is to create a list of events that have occurred in the Glades. Mr. Gainer stated that he has reviewed office files and the proposed future plans for the Glades. He suggested that GTAC be persistent in getting those proposed projects completed whether the issue is with the City or the County. These things will improve the Glades area.

"Bil" Phillip commented that they are a Metropolitan Planning Organization for Palm Beach County. Unfortunately when you get to the County line, they are forced to stop. The Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail (LOST), the Heritage Trail, and the Tourist Train Operation all are more global in operation than just within Palm Beach County, Pahokee, South Bay or Belle Glade. There is no one entity responsible. He inquired if it is GTAC's responsibility to work in other Counties, such as Sebring and up the coast. He stated that we need a czar (entity) in place to act on the City/County behalf.

Someone (female) stated that GTAC could be more effective if we could understand how all the pieces fit together for a location. Therefore a project like Heritage Trail, they could monitor and make things right.

Denny Abbott commented in reference to what Mr. Phillips discussed. Palm Beach County Workforce Alliance has written a proposal to create a Glades Business Center. This is a separate entity that will coordinate all the business issues that are going on in the Glades. Last week, he met with Congressman Hastings. Congressman Hastings will be calling a meeting with approximately fifteen (15) agencies to try and make this happen. On November 18th, Herb Marlo's plan will be discussed at a Tri-City meeting. There are about ten (10) recommendations for implementing that plan.

Mr. Gainer stated that the group needed to be prepared when projects come up. If the GTAC Committee were larger, the group could be divided into separate areas, such as: education, jobs, and social committees. Mr. Gainer offered to write a letter to City Managers.

Participant Updates and Comments

Mr. Gainer informed the group that the Revitalization Section is in the process of ranking neighborhoods for targeting CCRT areas. He invited the group to attend the next CCRT Meeting on November 4th. Representatives for all County Departments, Commissioners Aides, and Community Leaders attend the meetings. If there is an issue in a neighborhood, the Department responsible will address the concern. A new list of CCRT areas will be presented to the Board in December for funding. There will be some areas in the Glades selected. He stated that he has been interviewing for a Planner I (Community Liason) to work with him in Districts 1 & 6. Mr. Green inquired if the person would be located in the Glades area. Mr. Gainer responded, no. The person would be located at PZ&B; 100 S. Australian Avenue; W.P.B., FL.

Mr. Gainer also informed the group regarding the Neighborhood Partnership Grant (NPG) Program. The Program is available to any neighborhood organization. The Grant is up to \$20,000 toward neighborhood beautification. The 715 Mobile Home Park Application was submitted by the Sheriff's Office for fencing, landscaping, and dumpsters. The Pahokee Housing Authority has received two (2) Grants since his coming on board.

"Bil" Phillips reported that the Work Force Alliance Incorporated Transportation Subcommittee is having a meeting, called the Black Gold Express for the Tourist Train Operation, held on November 13th, 9:00a.m., at Palm Beach Community College (Belle Glade), Rm. #122 Conference Room. Topics of discussion will be regarding the Church Train Operation, and the Railroad Museum. Mr. Suarez, from Miami Shores, official historian for the FEC Railroad will be attending.

Ms. Thompkins-Blell commented that part of the old Belle Glade City Hall is a museum component. She would like to know the space requirements. Discussion ensued regarding size of building requirements.

Ms. Thompkins-Blell also mentioned that a community meeting was held on Monday regarding Phase I drawings for old Belle Glade City Hall. For the January 2003 meeting, she will be defending a grant proposal in Naples for old Belle Glade City Hall. She also met with the Urban League to establish partnerships, to develop training programs. The Urban League is interested in making marceleous(?) have a presence in the Glades, so that also the Glades could offer some of the programs that are available on the east coast.

Doug Chozianin stated that as of today, a Letter of Intent is to be received from a logistics firm, out of the City of Chicago, to build a Resource Recovery Center. The center will gross over \$40,000,000 in profit. He made a presentation, last week, at the Tri-City meeting. The meeting entailed presentations regarding railroad, and a new water system for the Glades (including Clewiston). He stated to the group that it is beneficial to attend the Tri-City meetings. In respect to the Resource Recovery Center, he is receiving favorable response from transporters of hazardous waste in the Miami Dade Broward County areas. They are not interested in coming to the Glades area, but would like to have a plant in the Miami area. He asked the group to inform him if anyone could recommend someone that is proactive in Palm Beach County government and involved in municipal ways. He visited the Hazardous Waste Center and no one was interested in discussing any new technology. Instead they are moving their municipal waste facility to twenty-mile bend (1,500 acres). If you could take a lot of their hazardous material, process it in the glades, and turn it into a great deal of electricity, could create jobs and zero pollution. Someone (female) asked if he had met Matt McGlaughlin. He responded no, but he has visited his offices and he saw Commissioner Masilotti last week at a meeting.

Mr. Gainer mentioned that the 4th Thursday in November is on Thanksgiving. He asked the group to choose the Thursday before or after Thanksgiving. It was agreed by the group to hold the next meeting on November 21st.

It was suggested that donuts may improve the attendance. Mr. Gainer responded by stating at the CCRT Meetings, members take turn bringing refreshments. Mr. Gainer stated he would provide donuts for the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Next meeting is on November 21, 2002 at 9:30 am.

Minutes prepared by:

Duane R. Gainer, Senior Planner

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