

Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of October 28, 2004

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Belle Glade City Hall – Conference Room “B”

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Denny Abbott, Employer Services Executive, P.B.C. Workforce Alliance
Debby Blauvelt, Glades Community Development Center
Albert Dowdell, Police Chief, City of Belle Glade
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Roswell Harrington, Sam's Investment Corp.
Mark Huggins, USDA Rural Development
Diana Hughes, City of Belle Glade
Renesheia Inman, City of South Bay
Edward Lowery, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Matt Mills, City of Belle Glade
Angela Morlok, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development
Stephanie Rice, Belle Glade Fire Dept.
Houston Tate, City Manager, City of Belle Glade
William Wynn, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)

Absent:

Ralph Butts, City of Belle Glade Community Development
Dale Erickson, Erickson Farms
Joe Glucksman, Florida Housing Corporation
Douglas Green, City of Belle Glade, Workforce Development Center
Roswell Harrington, Sam's Investment Corporation
Iris Jackson, City of Belle Glade, Community Development
Kelly Johnson, Glades Initiative
Arthur Kirstein, P.B.C. Cooperative Extension
Lillie Latimore, City Manager, Pahokee
Raoul Pierre-Louis, Business Loan Fund (Representative for John Brown)
Sandy Mercer, Canal Point Citizen
Tammy Moore, South Florida Water Management District
Theresa Newton, USDA/Rural Development

Absent: (Cont'd)

Alan Schafler, CEO, EDGE
Michael Sklar, P.B.C. Housing & Community Development (HCD)
Barbara Spence, City of Belle Glade, Community Development
Andrea Stephenson, Glades Initiative
Clifford Stuart, Stuart Farm
Alice Thompson, Pahokee Chamber of Commerce
Autrie Moore-Williams, Glades Community Development Corporation

Welcome and Introduction

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. Mr. Gainer welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced himself and asked everyone to introduce herself or himself.

Review of Minutes (August '04 Meeting)

Mr. Gainer asked if there were corrections to the minutes. There were no corrections to the minutes.

Participant Updates and Comments

Duane Gainer, OCR, reported on the following:

- Briefly talked about the creation or the reorganization of the Office of Community Revitalization and the plans for expanding the outlook of the program. OCR is now looking into implementing the following: assisting businesses in the CCRT neighborhoods, Officer Next Door Program, and the Neighborhood Home Beautification Program.
- Funding Recommendations for FY '05 - The recommendations will be presented in December to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for approval.

William Wynn, OCR, reported on the following:

- REAP (Resident To Action Program) – The program educates the public in dealing with County officials, applying for non-profit and grants, building a neighborhood plan, and how to focus on community issues, etc. He distributed REAP brochures.

Mr. Lowery commented that the program would be beneficial in helping the residents to become focused and to determine the needs in their community.

Mr. Gainer mentioned that on November 1st at the next CCRT Meeting, he would be distributing copies of the preliminary FY '05 Funding Recommendations Report. The topic of discussion at the November 1st CCRT Meeting will be on Lessons of Hurricane Frances and Jeanne. The guest speakers are Florida Power & Light, Solid Waste Authority, American Red Cross, and Florida Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development, reported on the following:

- Request to USDA – Did not receive the \$25,000 requested to go forward with the Regional Economic Development Entity for the Glades area. After being denied twice, Economic Development got permission to move forward with just the \$25,000 in hand and asked if whether Analytica would accept the \$25,000 to do the #1 Recommendation on the business plan. The #1 Recommendation will create a regional economic entity. The person in this position will be responsible for bringing jobs into the area. If approved, the project will begin in January '05.

Mr. Houston Tate inquired about the time period or the scope involving the \$25,000. Ms. Nolan responded that first a Planning Policy Group will be put together to work with the stakeholders in the area. She further mentioned that the process is a three (3) year budget plan.

Mr. Roswell Harrington thought this process should include business owners from the Glades. Ms. Nolan responded that Analytica's purpose is to work with all stakeholders.

Mr. Harrington commented that jobs in the Glades are critical. But where are the jobs that will allow the residents to be able to purchase a home. The group discussed the need in attracting businesses to the Glades, which will bring jobs.

Ms. Nolan distributed copies of the report on Regional Organization's Impact on Rural Communities.

- Benchmarks – USDA Rural Development require benchmarks. She is requesting these benchmarks by tomorrow, October 29th. These benchmarks should include five (5) major things that could help you access funds from rural development.
- Development Regions Grant Program – The maximum amount per application is \$50,000. The requested funds required for every \$10,000, you must create one (1) equivalent full-time job.

Edward Lowery, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR), reported on the following:

- Community Development Block Grant (Housing & Community Development) – Opened up this month. The deadline to submit applications is January 7th. He mentioned the Area of Hope Allocation process. This means instead of receiving the regular annual allocations every three (3) years, one of the Glades municipalities would receive \$400,000. He suggests starting early completion of the applications.
- Economic Development Set-a-Side Program – The process opens in April.
- Section 108 Program (Economic Development, Housing & Community Development)– This is a loan program; with a low interest rate. There is no application period. The initial application should be submitted to Economic Development. Housing & Community Development is involved with the processing of the application. The Section 108 Program will provide up to \$35,000 per job creation.
- Officer Next Door Program (Office of Community Revitalization) – This program will provide up to \$335,000 to purchase a home or up to 97% of the purchase price. The officer will bring 1% and the bank will give a 2% unsecured second mortgage. A requirement is the uniformed officer must drive the marked sheriff vehicle home. The officer's presence in the community is very effective in turning the neighborhood around.

Mr. Tate inquired if the Fire Department was included in this program. Mr. Lowery responded that if the Fire Fighter drives home a clearly marked vehicle, they would probably be included. In the future, teachers are being considered to participate in this program.

- OCR Neighborhood Partnership Grant Program – This program provides up to \$20,000 in matching funds to community groups or municipalities.
- OCR Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) – This program is allocated approximately \$3 Million dollars annually by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). On a monthly basis, OCR meet with other County Departments (he named the departments), which are partners in this program. The program assists with parks, sidewalks, streetlights, and infrastructure projects. Mr. Lowery suggested that it is important for the Glades to attend these meetings. The meetings are held on the first Monday at 10:00a.m.

Edward Lowery, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR), reported on the following: (Cont'd)

- Hurricane Disaster Relief – Housing & Community Development Department has approximately \$2 Million dollars. The contact person and telephone number is Keturah Joseph at (561) 233-3660. This program is for homeowners that did not have proper insurance coverage or that cannot afford the high insurance deductible. Also if you were renting and the property is not livable, the program will provide up to three months rent, and utility deposits. Also if you own rental property that was damaged, you qualify for assistance. Finally, if you have trees damaged, you can apply for assistance through HCD, Debris Removal Program, Amin Houry at 233-3625.

Ms. Inman inquired about assistance in relation to the churches. Mr. Lowery responded that if the church has church owned property, it would qualify under the Hurricane Relief Disaster Program. Mr. Lowery asked Duane Gainer to look into this issue for assistance that could be provided to the churches.

Mr. Lowery further commented regarding a new fire station and police department. Someone needs to provide the request for funding in writing. Mr. Tate stated that they are in the process of putting together a plan. A meeting is scheduled next week to meet with the architects.

Ms. Nolan inquired about the Community Facilities Program. Mr. Tate explained that he is familiar with the program as it relates to water & sewer. His concern is making the funds available for other areas, such as: using the funds for the Fire Department or the Police Department. Mr. Mark Huggins responded that the Rural Utilities Services Program is for incorporated areas of ten thousand (10,000) or less. Therefore they have been unable to come into Belle Glade with the low interest grant program for water & sewer. Pahokee and South Bay are ineligible for financing. There is a meeting scheduled for Monday to meet with the County regarding the Glades Regional Water Treatment Plant. He understands that Pahokee and South Bay will be submitting applications for loans and grants for their prorated participation in the Glades Regional Water Treatment Plant. In the Federal Register there is a notice to raise the population limits up to fifty thousand (50,000). If this happens, Belle Glade will be eligible for both water & sewer and the Housing Program (single family, multi-family). Discussion and comments were made relating to funding regarding water & sewer. Discussion entailed other areas that would qualify under the Community Facilities Program. The funds can be used for building, land purchase, infrastructure, equipment (fire trucks, ambulances, police cars, police stations, medical clinics, etc.), or anything the community needs.

Debby Blauvelt, Glades Community Development Center, reported on the following:

- Hurricane disaster – GCDC has been working with helping people that were affected by the hurricane. They assisted with the distribution of supplies to communities.
- Old Belle Glade City Hall – Having problems with receiving the CDBG funds from Remar Harvin, HCD, for the \$147,500 & \$250,000. Without HCD's commitment, USDA cannot/will not release the \$50,000. Now GCDC is running into a problem where they expected to be at a certain construction stage and they may not meet the commitment made to the State of Florida. Mr. Harvin would like to see the project at or about \$500,000. The total project cost is estimated at \$650,000.

Angela Morlok, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), reported on the following:

- Doing a follow-up with GCDC to consolidate transportation for after school and weekend activities.
- Completed developing a survey that should be implemented within the next few weeks. She would like to see transportation more cost effective and efficient in the Glades areas.
- Next month, she will be doing a survey on the Clewiston/Belle Glade route to see what is going on with the ridership and how the system is going.
- Working with District #1, Florida Department of Transportation, in Henry County to see if there needs to be an extension to Belle Glade.

Mr. Tate commented that the City of Belle Glade is looking at enclosing the bus stop benches. In order for people to be able to wait on a bus, the bus stop benches need to be enclosed. Ms. Morlock mentioned to Mr. Tate that Palm Tran has a shelter program.

Mr. Gainer inquired about a grant's list that came directly from FDOT for cities. Ms. Morlock responded the grants were for shuttle services.

- CMAC Funds – Some of those funds will be used to encourage cities to do community shuttle buses. Later, doing a joint venture with Palm Tran to do longer distance routes. Discussion entailed about the cost involved per route, and requirements for the program. She will inform the group when the next round of RFP's opens.
- Steam Locomotive – MPO has already started outlining routes for each city in the Glades area. They are still in negotiation stage with U.S. Sugar. She further discussed future routes, stations and designs with the Steam Locomotive.

Renesheia Inman, City of South Bay, reported on the following:

- South Bay is taking part with the funding from HCD for the hurricane disaster relief. The city has been distributing flyers notifying the residents to apply to GCDC for assistance.

Diana Hughes, City of Belle Glade, reported on the following:

- City of Belle Glade is also working with GCDC regarding the Hurricane Disaster Relief.
- CDBG Grant – Opens on Monday, November 1st.
- Emergency Shelter Block Grant – Opens on Monday, November 1st.
- The city distributed water, ice, and mrt's to the residents. Various items are still being donated to GCDC for distribution to the residents.

Houston Tate, City of Belle Glade, reported on the following:

- Distribution site - He commended the two (2) Chief's for their support. They did an excellent job. Each city in the Glades was given the same support as the City of Belle Glade. He commended the efforts and assistance from Red Cross in responding to his requests. Also, FP&L did an excellent job in making sure the lift stations were in operation. He is excited about the future in terms of what was shown that could be done during this disaster.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Gainer stated that the next meeting is scheduled for November 25th, Thanksgiving Day. He asked if there were suggestions for the next meeting date. The group agreed to have the meeting on November 18th.

Mr. Gainer commented on the Rev. Leon Camel Park Grand Opening held on September 18th. The park was completed in one (1) year. Another park (Pioneer Park) is a project requesting funding for this year in the Glades.

Ms. Nolan inquired about someone from Head Start coming to speak at GTAC. Mr. Gainer commented that he was looking into this.

Adjournment:

Mr. Gainer stated that if there were no other questions or comments, the meeting is adjourned. The next meeting will be held on November 18th.

Minutes prepared by:

Joyce Harrell, Secretary
P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization

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