

Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of November 17, 2005

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

South Bay City Hall

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Gerald Adams, City of Belle Glade
Tiffany Collins, City of Pahokee
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Cynthia Hammond, City South Bay
Barbara Bell-Spence, City of Belle Glade
William Wynn, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization

Absent:

Denny Abbott, Employer Services Executive, P.B.C. Workforce Alliance
Debby Blauvelt, Glades Community Development Center
Ralph Butts, City of Belle Glade Community Development
Albert Dowdell, Police Chief, City of Belle Glade
Dale Erickson, Erickson Farms
Joe Glucksman, Florida Housing Corporation
Douglas Green, City of Belle Glade, Workforce Development Center
Mark Huggins, USDA Rural Development
Diana Hughes, City of Belle Glade
Iris Jackson, City of Belle Glade, Community Development
Kelly Johnson, Glades Initiative
Arthur Kirstein, P.B.C. Cooperative Extension
Lillie Latimore, City Manager for City of Pahokee
Raoul Pierre-Louis, Business Loan Fund (Representative for John Brown)
Sandy Mercer, Canal Point Citizen
Matt Mills, City of Belle Glade
Autrie Moore-Williams, Glades Community Development Corporation
Bonita Moore, City of Belle Glade
Tammy Moore, South Florida Water Management District
Angela Morlok, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Theresa Newton, USDA/Rural Development
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development
Thomas Padgett, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office & Canal Point Resident

Absent: (Cont'd)

Stephanie Rice, Belle Glade Fire Dept.
Allan Schafler, CEO, EDGE
Andrea Stephenson, Glades Initiative
Clifford Stuart, Stuart Farm
Houston Tate, City Manager, City of Belle Glade
Alice Thompson, Pahokee Chamber of Commerce

Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Gainer introduced himself and asked everyone to introduce her or himself. He announced that the meeting in October was cancelled because of Hurricane Wilma.

Review of Minutes (September Meeting)

Mr. Gainer asked if there were corrections to the minutes. There was one correction: change September meeting held in Belle Glade to Canal Point. The group had inquired about a presentation on Brownfields done by Maggie Smith, Planning Division. Maggie Smith's presentation on Brownfields was done at the August GTAC meeting.

Participant Updates and Comments**Duane Gainer, OCR, reported on the following:**

- REAP Sessions (Glades) – Mr. Gainer stated that he was very pleased with the number of participants that attended the 6-week session held in the Glades. There were approximately 25 to 30 participants that attended each of the sessions. He mentioned some of the topics presented and also the contest called America's Next Top Neighborhood. As a result of the contest, the Awards being recommended to the Board are: Midnight Hoops, South Bay Community Project, and No Wind For Seniors. He mentioned that the next REAP 6-week session will be held on the coast, which began on October 11th.
- Lessons from Hurricane Wilma – At the November CCRT meeting, the departments, and residents shared comments and experiences that happened from the hurricane. He talked about the role OCR had taken in providing assistance almost immediately after the hurricane. He stated that OCR staff went out and did assessments of damages & needs, and tarp distribution in the various CCRT areas. He further talked about the importance of identifying the elderly, and confined individuals prior to an emergency occurring.

Barbara Bell-Spence commented that Belle Glade had somewhat the same type of problem with identification of people in need prior to an emergency. Although there was a list of names available, there were still some people not on the list. She stated that services were also provided for the two (2) senior centers. She feels the problems exist with identifying people that live in their individual places. Ms. Bell-Spence further commented that in addition to providing distributions to people individually, they also did bulk distributions to the various churches, and community organizations; which could better distribute in their own individual areas. She mentioned groups that came to the Glades to help out, such as: a group from Charlotte County (provided hot meals), group from Jacksonville, named Motorcycle Ministry, (provided meals); and meals were provided to the various trailer/mobile home parks. She further mentioned that there was no electricity, and gas stations were not able to supply fuel.

Cynthia Hammond, from South Bay, commented regarding damages to City Hall. Part of the roof was lost, and the upstairs is severely damaged. Ms. Hammond stated that she found there is an issue with the Glades not having temporary housing available for unfortunate situations; no hotels, trailers, or shelters. If we continue to have hurricanes every year, there needs to be a solution to this issue. She mentioned that some families had to place tents on their property. The group began to discuss lack of temporary housing for when emergencies occur.

Also, Ms. Hammond commended the various organizations and groups that came out to the Glades to help out. The support shown was very refreshing because sometimes the Glades communities get the feeling that this area is forgotten.

Tiffany Collins, City of Pahokee, commented that there was a lot of damage to the various business establishments and some residents lost their homes. The City is working toward more permanent structures and getting residents out of the trailers, which were destroyed. One option to start toward this is the City has available pre-qualifying forms for USDA loans, which is for a newly built home or for purchasing a previously owned home. Further, Ms. Collins mentioned the various supplies provided (baby items, etc.), and the sites in Pahokee that provided hot meals, food, water, & ice. She talked about an experience that happened with the Pahokee Recreation Center while being used for a shelter; the roof started leaking and it had to be closed down. This caused an immediate shelter problem in Pahokee. This issue needs to be resolved before the next hurricane.

Gerald Adams, from City of Belle Glade, commented that the temporary fire station was lost during the hurricane, also the Police Station, and the Marina is completely destroyed. Mr. Adams further commented in addition to people protecting their property, we need to educate the people about preparing for at least three (3) days of being inconvenient during the hurricane. This would relieve a lot of immediate stress from the relief distribution centers. Mr. Adams talked about the steps he took in starting to prepare for the hurricane. The group began to discuss the importance of using time wisely in preparing once a hurricane watch has been announced.

At this point, the group began to share the damages in their neighborhoods.

Ms. Collins stated that the Grassy Waters Festival is this weekend (November 19th & 20th). They are working very hard to get the area cleaned up.

The group began to discuss the survival rates for trailers built prior to and after Hurricane Andrew.

Mr. Gainer mentioned a situation with a CCRT area mobile home park where the property owner is selling the property. The group began to discuss relocating, affordable housing, and an increase in value of homes.

Mr. Gainer commented regarding the Economic Summit held on November 9th & 10th. The group began to discuss Scripps in relation to choosing the location for the project.

Mr. Gainer asked if the group would like to have the meeting on December 22nd, the day before the Christmas Holiday. He mentioned that the building, where the meeting is to be held in Canal Point is under repair. The group agreed to cancel the meeting in December.

At this point, Mr. Gainer asked if anyone had reports or announcements.

Barbara Bell-Spence, City of Belle, reported on the following:

- Menorites Nights Disaster Committee – This group will be providing the labor necessary to rebuild. They help with the rehabilitation of homes and building of homes. A meeting is scheduled for the last Tuesday of this month, November 28, 2005. The committee requested for the cities to get together and form a group. This group will recommend the following: a residential area to work in; ten (10) families in the Glades for them to adopt to assist the families with things for Christmas; and recommending a list of names for them to assist with doing repairs. They will only be providing the labor. For example: if you have only enough insurance money to cover the material, the Committee will provide the labor. The only thing the committee is asking is for the resident to provide

accommodations for the volunteers. Ms. Bell-Spence has been working with Ken Jackson, in South Bay; and a young lady, from the Beacon Center in Pahokee; which have been attending the meetings.

Someone inquired if Belle Glade had received trailers. Ms. Bell-Spence responded no; it may be another six (6) months. Mr. Gainer commented that FEMA does not construct the trailers; FEMA purchases the trailers from local dealerships. Ms. Bell-Spence stated that she is under the impression that Verdenia Baker, Deputy County Administrator, is working on negotiating a deal with the local trailer dealers to get some trailers.

Ms. Collins commented that Clewiston has some trailers. She further commented they have a list of authorized names that have the hookup for the trailers; specifically for mobile homes and ultimate for trailers. Also the churches are trying to get hookups on their property for trailers, which will provide space for members to place a trailer.

Ms. Hammond commented that the property in Pahokee, where the old trailers were destroyed is going to be cleaned off so that the new trailers could be put on those lots.

Ms. Bell-Spence mentioned an area in Belle Glade where temporarily trailers are to be placed.

Mr. Gainer inquired and suggested that these issues are addressed to Ms. Verdenia Baker, Deputy County Administrator; and Mr. Bob Weisman, County Administrator.

Tiffany Collins, City of Pahokee, reported on the following:

- She commented that the Fire Station, and the Police Station are fine.

Cynthia Hammond, City of South Bay, reported on the following:

- Water Plant – The water system is up, and operating. The boiling water order has expired.

Gerald Adams, City of Belle Glade, reported on the following:

In addition to comments made earlier, Mr. Adams commented that he is glad to be here and he has been keeping busy.

Duane Gainer, OCR, reported on the following:

- Project Funding Recommendations - The Board approved the recommendations on October 18th for 3.5 million dollars. He mentioned the Glades projects that were recommended.
- Resident Education to Action Program (REAP) – This is the 4th week of the class being held on the coast.

William Wynn, OCR, reported on the following:

- Home Beautification Program – The program was going quite well prior to the hurricane. Because of the impact from the hurricane, OCR will have to come back out to the homes selected and re-evaluate the items that were approved to be replaced or repaired. There were a total of thirty-seven (37) homes selected in the Glades.

Mr. Gainer mentioned the Neighborhood Partnership Grant (NPG) Program. He stated that a total of fourteen (14) projects were submitted to the Board for approval on October 18th. These projects were approved.

Comments and/or questions:

Mr. Gainer adjourned the meeting. The December meeting is cancelled. The next GTAC meeting would be held on the 4th Thursday in January. **The confirmed meeting date is January 26, 2006 (Belle Glade).**

Minutes prepared by:

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

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