

+Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of April 27, 2006

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Canal Point United Methodist Church

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Denny Abbott, Workforce Alliance
David Broadbent, Canal Point United Methodist Church
Alain Denis, Project Hope
Mayna Echemique, Project Hope
Dale Erickson, Erickson Farm
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Roswell Harrington, Canal Point Resident
Angela Morlok, P.B.C. Metropolitan Planning Organization
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development
LaToya Ricketts, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization
Barbara Bell-Spence, City of Belle Glade
William Wynn, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Gainer introduced himself and asked everyone to introduce her or himself. He thanked Pastor Broadbent for opening up his church and for the refreshments for today's meeting.

2. Review of Minutes (March Meeting)

Mr. Gainer asked if there were corrections to the March 23, 2006 minutes. Denny Abbott had a correction regarding the relocation of Canal Point Marina.

3. **Follow-up Issues** – March Meeting

Mr. Gainer stated that there were no follow-up issues from the last GTAC meeting. He commented that Linda Jeter, from P.B.C. Housing & Community Development/Commission on Affordable Housing did a presentation on the housing programs.

Mr. Gainer mentioned that Chuck Tear, Director of Emergency Operations Management did a presentation at the April CCRT meeting. Mr. Gainer briefly highlighted some of the information that Mr. Tear talked about. He stated that Mr. Tear came on Board last year with Palm Beach County and he began to put together a plan for the upcoming hurricane season. Packets of the plan were distributed detailing the following information. A map showing that Palm Beach County is being divided into six (6) geographical boundaries, and within each of the areas Point Of Distribution (POD) sites will be placed. These sites will be used to provide people with food, water & ice, as well as a method of getting the necessary information to the residents. The Publix Market will be working with EOC. Mr. Gainer mentioned that Mr. Lowery had commented regarding there not being a Publix Market in the Glades areas. The GTAC group began to mention the grocery markets that were in the Glades. Also they talked about there being few roads that lead to the markets and inquired what if those streets were blocked by trees, and power lines down. The group began to talk about this issue as it related to occurrences that happened during last year hurricanes.

Mr. Gainer stated that Mr. Tear talked about starting the preparation process now for the hurricanes. Residents need to look at starting to prepare now, not just before the hurricane wind begin. He also stressed that people need to be prepared or be able to sustain themselves for at three (3) days with food, water, ice, medication & etc. after the hurricane winds passes. Mr. Tear feels that this is extremely important and he asked attendees of the CCRT meeting to relay this information to our residents. This will take a lot of the immediate pressure off of the POD sites.

Roswell Harrington commented regarding a transportation issue, if the roads were blocked after the hurricane. Ms. Ricketts responded that there might be a POD site established in Canal Point, where you may not have to travel to Pahokee or Belle Glade for distributions after the hurricane. Mr. Harrington commented that the community building could possibly be used as a distribution site; but it still has not been repaired. He also suggested that the grounds of the elementary school could possibly be used as a distribution site.

Mr. Gainer stated that Mr. Tear talked about the bulk distribution sites. He stated that these sites are used for picking up commodities in bulk quantity. In the past, the Fair Grounds and Lake Lytle Park were the bulk distribution sites.

Someone inquired if the POD sites in the Glades had been identified. Mr. Gainer stated that he had informed the Emergency Operations Director that Canal Point was not on the geographical map distributed at the meeting and that areas are larger than what they appear on the map. Mr. Gainer stated there is a need to communicate to the residents the importance of being able to sustain themselves/families for at least three (3) days after the hurricane or any type of emergency.

Also Mr. Tear talked about an issue with gas stations having gas but no generators to pump the gas. He stated that the gas stations with sixteen (16) or more gas pumps are now being required to have a generator.

Pam Nolan commented that a major concern mentioned at the presentation was with the children that are already going hungry. She stated that this type of situation would be worse during a hurricane.

Mr. Tear also talked about a need to identify the handicapped or indigent residents in the community. He stated that it is important for these individuals to be identified prior to the start of a hurricane.

Barbara Bell-Spence commented that they have been contacting the churches requesting a list of elderly members in the congregation. The list would be put into a database. Ms. Bell-Spence stated that Belle Glade had representation at the Emergency Operations Workshop.

Pam Nolan gave a brief overview and stated that the following categories were discussed at the workshop:

- 1) Rebuilding (fast or smart)
- 2) Quality of Life
- 3) Health
- 4) Economic Wealth
- 5) Business Development & Workforce
- 6) Schools
- 7) Water levels

Ms. Nolan suggested that Butch Truesdale, who coordinated the workshop be invited to do a presentation at the GTAC meeting.

Dale Erickson commented regarding evacuation. He stated that twenty (20) years ago people were told to evacuate. Presently, people are told to stay in their homes. The reason is because you can't evacuate seven (7) million people. The group began to discuss evacuation.

Mayna Echemique, Project Hope, stated that they have been doing a lot of community outreach. She began to comment regarding people getting prepared for a hurricane. She stated that there are some people that cannot prepare for a hurricane because after Hurricane Wilma they are homeless, living in damaged trailers, or living in a FEMA trailer. She inquired if this issue with shelters had been addressed. The group began to discuss shelters that were in the Glades.

Ms. Nolan also mentioned an issue with skilled labor in the Glades. The group began to discuss ways of leaving the Glades, such as: Glades Airport, and roads in/out of the Glades.

Ms. Echemique stated that since there were no Publix Markets in the Glades, she suggested contacting the Winn Dixie Markets. Mr. Gainer commented that Mr. Tear mentioned that he would be working directly with food distributors to provide services to the Glades areas. Mr. Gainer also mentioned that the County barn in the Glades will be the EOC for the Glades areas and POD's will be placed in all the cities.

At this point, Mr. Gainer stated that Mr. Harrington sent him a newspaper article on Project Hope. He stated that he invited them to come to the GTAC meetings. Ms. Mayna Echemique stated that she lives in Canal Point as well as works for Project Hope. Mr. Alain Denis stated that Project Hope is a disaster relief program. They work with FEMA in Florida and through DCF and Health Services. After the hurricanes, Project Hope did counseling to find out how people were surviving. According to the needs, they are referring survivors to agencies that may be able to assist them. Mr. Denis stated that churches might also be a shelter during a hurricane for people. Ms. Echemique stated that because she speaks spanish, she worked closely with spanish speaking people and she found that the churches were the greatest aide for the spanish residents in the communities. Project Hope would like to join in partnership to help out. Also, Project Hope partners with the Red Cross and other groups, agencies, and organizations to assist or provide service to the community. Mr. Gainer commented that he would like for her to contact David Rafaidus. Mr. Gainer also stated that he would like to get some more information and he will relay the information to the OCR Manager.

5. Participant Updates and Comments

Angela Morlok, P.B.C. MPO, reported on the following:

- Lake Commuter Route – extension of route to Ft. Myers. The plan is completed and is being reviewed. District 4, FDOT has already committed \$100,000. The project should be completed within one (1) year. Also MPO did an analysis of jobs in the area and along the route. There are a lot of jobs opening up in the area. The problem has been getting people to the jobs.

Denny Abbott, Workforce Alliance, reported on the following:

- Sponsoring a Young Adult Career Fair – The event will be held on May 12th, 10:00a.m. – 2:00p.m., at the Workforce Center on Maine Street. The targeted group is 18 to 25 year old.
- Regional Economic Entity – He is working with Pam Nolan to set up an entity in the Glades.

Dale Erickson, Erickson Farm, reported on the following:

- Old Canal Point School – Have received a lot of interest in the restoration of the property. He further mentioned that it would be an excellent connector to the Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail. The group began to discuss programs, and suggestions for the use of the property. Ms. Nolan mentioned that OCR would be doing a charette (visioning process) in the Glades.

David Broadbent, Canal Point Resident, reported on the following:

- Florida Conference United Methodist Church is sponsoring a workshop on disaster – The workshop will be held on May 20th for all the United Methodist Churches.

Pam Nolan, Economic Development, reported on the following:

- Canal Point Sanitary Sewer – The bidding will be going out soon. More areas of housing are being included in this project. She further explained hooking up or connecting process involving the septic tanks. She estimates by the beginning of 2007, the project will be completed.
- Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail – a preliminary meeting is being held with the new contractors for the \$1 million dollars. Another \$500,000 has been passed for entryways; \$924,000 for the multi-use (roller blade or biking) connector to get to the trail.

5. Participant Updates and Comments

Pam Nolan, Economic Development, reported on the following:
(Cont'd)

Mr. Abbott inquired about if whether the group could be informed on what the different cities' ideas are being made. Ms. Nolan stated that there would be a meeting on what you want on the entryway.

- Public Market – In the process of hiring the consulting firm for this project. The market will be wholesale or retail for specialty growers. A meeting will be scheduled inviting everyone to attend the first presentation on the project.
- Regional Economic Entity – She briefly gave an example or idea that the West Palm Beach Community Redevelopment Agency has done. They hired engineers, architects and landscape architects to work with small redevelopment projects within their whole 1400 acre area. This is the same idea as this regional economic entity that the Glades is trying to create. This program is to assist with business development projects, for instance: assistance with site plans, etc. The program is going before the Board of County Commissioners on May 16th for approval.

LaToya Ricketts, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization, reported on the following:

- Neighborhood Partnership Grant Program (NPG) – The deadline for submittal of Letter of Intent is being extended to May 12th.
- OCR Gazette (newsletter) – She is requesting that if anyone has information on upcoming events, community events, grants, & etc. that would benefit the community or if you just would like to share the information to please contact her at (561) 233-5239.
- Neighborhood Street Lighting Program – If you would like to submit a request for streetlights, you may contact her at the above number.
- Resident To Action Program (REAP) – The program will start again, possibly in September/October. The class is a six (6) week course. This course teaches resident groups how to formalize a group, write a grant, 501.3C & etc. Translation and transportation services were provided during the course.

Mr. Gainer briefly talked about the different grants that were awarded during both of the REAP sessions.

Mr. Gainer also mentioned that he would be following up on the Neighborhood Visioning plan to be done for the Glades.

5. Participant Updates and Comments: (Cont'd)

Mr. Gainer commented regarding funds from projects that were not completed, and funds leftover from old completed projects or programs. These funds are available for new projects. He is looking for good ideas. If you have any requests, please send them in writing to Edward Lowery, OCR Manager.

Mr. Harrington commented that it has been one (1) year since the P.B.C. Commissioners were suppose to come up with a land use plan for the Everglades Agriculture area. The Department of Community Affairs was given the project.

Also, Mr. Harrington commented that because of some of the types of issues mentioned; he feels that other departments need to be present to the GTAC meetings.

Mr. Harrington also mentioned that Dale Erickson is getting a kiosk for the Lake Okeechobee Center Trail placed on his property. Now, there are two (2) kiosks on the Glades map.

Ms. Morlok commented regarding the first train is now the owner of the American Heritage Association. Receiving Letters of Support for FEC to lease the four (4) acres of land on Avenue "L" in Belle Glade.

Mr. Gainer thanked Pastor Broadbent for hosting today's meeting.

6. Adjournment of Meeting:

The next GTAC meeting will be held on May 25, 2006, 9:30a.m., at the Belle Glade City Hall. He further announced that the next CCRT meeting will be May 9, 2006, 10:00a.m., at the Clayton Hutcheson Building. Also, the deadline for submittal of NPG applications is June 16th.

Minutes prepared by:

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