

Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of November 30, 2006

9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

South Bay City Hall

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Denny Abbott, P.B.C. Workforce Alliance
David Broadbent, Canal Point, & Pastor of Canal Point United Methodist Church
Deputy Willie Brookins, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office (Frend Village)
Ruadean Butts, Belle Glade/Raderville Resident
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Joanne Green, City of South Bay Community Development
(Repr. For Eric Lewis)
Douglas Green, City of Belle Glade Workforce Development Center
Suzanne Harper, EDGE
Roswell Harrington, Pahokee Resident, & Repr. For Canal Point
Kelly McDonald, Florida Department of Transportation
Cpl. Natasha Mitchell, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office (Doublin Villas, Sugar Cane)
Bonita Moore, Belle Glade/Raderville
Deputy Jessie Moreland, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office (Marshall Heights)
Angela Morlok, P.B.C. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development
Michael Sklar, P.B.C. Housing & Community Development (HCD)
Victoria Williams, Florida Department of Financial Services

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Gainer introduced himself and asked everyone to introduce her or himself.

2. Review of Minutes (October meeting)

There were no corrections to the minutes.

3. Follow-up Issues – October Meeting

Mr. Gainer announced that there were several follow-up issues.

3. Follow-up Issues – October Meeting (Cont'd)

Mr. Harrington inquired if whether someone would be speaking about the 911 issue. Mr. Gainer stated that he had spoken with Matt Cronin, Assistant Emergency Coordinator about this issue. He asked him to contact Mr. McLelly, P.B.C. Public Safety person. He provided him with a copy of the GTAC minutes and he will be inviting him to attend the GTAC meetings. Mr. Gainer further talked about the Glades telephone directory; which has some addressing issues.

Mr. Gainer stated that he wanted to skip over the next follow up issue and began to talk about the two (2) organizations that were the GTAC meeting today. He introduced Ms. Kelly McDonald, Florida Department of Transportation, and Ms. Victoria Williams, Florida Department of Financial Services. Ms. Williams did a presentation at the October Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) meeting; which she will be doing a presentation at today's GTAC meeting. Ms. McDonald is here to answer any DOT related questions.

4. Presentation: Ms. Victoria Williams, Florida Department of Financial Services

Ms. Williams stated that she is proud to do the presentation because the State agency has done a lot for the community. Also she has been in the Glades working with a First Time Homebuyers workshop held in the Glades. She asked the group to take her business card and feel free to contact her for any future events to see how the agency could participate.

Ms. Williams began by stating that the agency regulates and takes complaints on insurance situations. She talked about a program that is for homeowners that were not paid enough money from the insurance company to repair any hurricane damage. The agency has specialist that speak Spanish and English. They will answer any related insurance questions. The agency also helps homeowners find affordable coverage. She brought brochures about homeowners insurance.

The agency has another program called the My Safe Florida Home Program. She brought flyers on this program. This program is for homeowners that are homesteaded and are insured for windstorm insurance. Additionally, the value of the home has to be \$500,000 or less for just the structure. She gave an example of a homeowner that applied for this program. The agency does a free safety inspection, which could help the homeowner get insurance discounts/insurance premiums reduced for new roof/shutters, etc.. She stated that the increase in insurance premiums is one of the reasons that people cannot afford to keep their homes.

Ms. Williams talked about the P.B.C. Affordable Housing Collaborative. The group is lenders that deal with low cost loans. She further stated that if you cannot qualify for the funds, there is a grant program to assist you.

The agency also licenses car dealerships or anyone for financing on time payments; such as pay day loans, check cashing stores, banks, credit unions, mortgage brokers, stockbrokers, investment advisors, and funeral service advisors.

Ms. Williams talked about two other programs: Financial Literacy For Youth, and Financial Literacy For Those New To Our Culture. These programs assist the youth with how to reconcile a bank account, buying & insuring your first car, your first credit card, and credit scoring.

Ms. Williams concluded that if anyone has any problem issues or with claims, you may contact her or one of the specialist. She asked the group for questions or comments.

Pam Nolan commented regarding filing an insurance claim. The group began to discuss the process for filing claims for mitigation insurance discounts.

Douglas Green inquired about if whether there was a program to assist with getting hurricane shutters. Ms. Williams stated that you could get on the program by requesting an inspection. She further explained the funding and the steps involved once the inspection has been completed.

Mr. Green inquired about the eligibility requirements for requesting an inspection. Ms. Williams stated that you must be a homesteaded homeowner of the property & windstorm insured; the property must not be a mobile home; it can be a condo or duplex, but not more than four (4) under one roof; and the house is \$500,000 or less to rebuild.

Mr. Green mentioned incidences that happen when inquiring about placing the blue tarp on roofs. Ms. Williams informed the group that your insurance company will help pay for putting a blue tarp on the roof. Actually it is one of the responsibilities of the policyholder to protect it from further damage. They will help pay for this outside of the claim. The insurance company has twenty-one days to settle a claim or you could go to mediation.

The group began to discuss grants and programs available to assist people with hurricane damages. Roswell Harrington mentioned that there were several programs in the Glades, such as My Safe Florida Homes Wee Care, and P.B.C. Human Services are some of the programs.

Mr. Harrington began to talk about and inquired about assistance to help people repair their mobile homes. Ms. Williams mentioned that on the coast some mobile homes have been enclosed with concrete blocks. Also, Ms. Williams stated that the State agency has a program for mobile homes. The contact information to speak to a representative is 1-800-342-2762.

Denny Abbott inquired about the number of mobile homes that were in the Glades. Mr. Gainer stated that he could get that information. He further mentioned that OCR was requested after the last hurricane to assess damages in the Glades.

Mr. Green expressed a concern with the information provided by the agencies to assist people after the hurricane. There needs to be a better system in place for helping disaster situations. Ms. Williams stated that she brought disaster assistance pamphlets for the group. Also, Mr. Harrington mentioned another agency called The Long-term Recovery Program, operates under EOC, if you need assistance. You could contact LJ Margolis, EOC in the Glades.

Mr. Harrington further mentioned the need for affordable housing. In addition, there needs to be some type of program to help people maintain the housing now.

Ms. Williams mentioned that the Palm Beach County Realtor Association does presentations on affordable housing. Several Cities has invited the agency to do a presentation for the employees. This could be done during the lunch hours. She suggested that you bring this to your employer's attention.

Mr. Gainer thanked Ms. Williams for coming and doing the presentation.

Mr. Gainer stated that Ms. Kelly McDonald, Florida Department of Transportation, is also a guest at the GTAC meeting. He asked Ms. McDonald to give a brief background of the agency. Ms. McDonald stated that all of the Glades, parts of Okeechobee, and Martin County are under an asset maintenance contractor; which is a contractor that maintains all of our state roads. Any concerns going on for any of these areas, you may contact Ms. McDonald, Asset Maintenance Contractor for these areas. She was invited to the GTAC meeting because of a concern mentioned about a sign. Ms. McDonald as the group for questions or comments.

Denny Abbott inquired about a completion date for State Road 441. Ms. McDonald commented that the construction project is about 90% complete.

Mr. Harrington inquired about the status of State Road 700 East (Southern Boulevard or Highway 98) in Canal Point. He also inquired about State Road 15, North of Canal Point. The State Road 15 project is scheduled to start in March '07. Ms. McDonald agreed that the project is still on schedule to start March '07. Ms. McDonald further commented regarding State Road 700 (98). She stated that the road was constructed in 2001 but was not constructed correctly. Therefore the construction of the road is being revised. The project should be completed next year.

Also, Mr. Harrington inquired about the cleaning of the ditch along State Road 15 (between Pahokee & Canal Point). He further inquired about the overloaded cane trucks on Highway 98, and performing inspections. Ms. McDonald commented that Motor Carrier Compliance is a State Agency as DOT. There are not enough people out there at the checking point areas.

Pam Nolan inquired about a contact person for placing sidewalks on State Road 80 (city limit of South Bay to Highway 715) going to the water park. She has a concern with the safety for people riding bikes and walking to the water park. Ms. McDonald commented there is money for this type of project. The problem is getting the right of way, and this is the costly part of the project. The group began to discuss easement, and maintenance of the sidewalk. Mr. Gainer asked Ms. McDonald to look into this issue. OCR allocated funds for this project.

Angela Morlok suggested contacting Bret Baronak with MPO about bike paths, and sidewalks. Also the sidewalks need to be identified on any MPO future maps. The group began to discuss construction of sidewalks, cost, data analysis, justification, implementation, & etc. of projects.

Mr. Harrington informed the group that MPO has one (1) seat available; which has been given to the City of Belle Glade to fill this position. Mr. Gainer stated that the seat has been filled. In the minutes, it states that Barbara Bell-Spence reported that Dr. Ray Torres Sanchez was appointed to be the MPO Representative.

Angela Morlok reminded the group about the MPO meeting. This is a public input meeting, held on the 3rd Thursday's at 9:00a.m., at the Governmental Center Building.

Mr. Green asked if the Glades had a representative at the MPO meetings. He suggested selecting another person to attend the meetings in the appointed person's absence.

Pam Nolan began to talk about the funds allocated for the water park project in the Glades. She mentioned the CCRT funds, and MPO funds. She stated that she is working with the cities to become local area program certified. It is going to take up to six (6) months to get this certification. This program is for sidewalks. These funds cannot be used for designs or engineering cost.

Ms. Nolan commented that if anyone had school zones or school areas on state roads that need revamping, Economic Development has funds for signing, flashing signals, crosswalks, stripping, & etc.

In reference to the above funds, Ms. Morlok mentioned an area of concern at an intersection by the community college. The traffic is very heavy.

Mr. Harrington inquired about a representative for the unincorporated Glades areas at the Local Area Program Certified meeting. Ms. Nolan stated that this could be discussed at the Canal Point Visioning Workshop

5. Participant Updates/Comments:

Denny Abbott, Workforce Alliance, reported on the following:

- Commerce with the Sheriff's Office – On separate times, he had a meeting with Col. Michael Gauger, and a meeting with Capt. Barnes to meet with the business owners who have products and/or services to sell to the Sheriff's Office. This is being done in an effort to improve the economy between the Sheriff's Office and the small business owners in the Glades.
- Port of Palm Beach Meeting – DOT has contracted with a private company to do a feasibility study for an inland port, here in the Glades. The contract was awarded to a company called Globe Tech to lay eighteen (18) miles of transmission pipe for the new water treatment plant. This project will enable the water to be carried from the water treatment plant to the cities distribution points. The construction should start within the next few weeks.
- Economic Development group in the Glades – The original name has been changed from Glades Economic Alliance to LORE (Lake Okeechobee Regional Economic Alliance) of Palm Beach County. The purpose of the group is to look at economic development regionally in the Glades. On December 19th, this project will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners. If you are interested in attending the Workforce Alliance meetings, you may contact Mr. Abbott at (561) 829-2040 ext. 144.

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

Douglas Green, City of Belle Glade Workforce Development Center, reported on the following:

- Mr. Green stated that his main focus is on jobs. He expressed that he is dedicated to improving the standard of living in the Glades. Mr. Green focuses on attracting employers to give the Alliance job orders. The agency has been training, and assisting the participants on how to prepare resumes, how to dress properly, identifying jobs available, and referring participants for employment. The agency has identified employment regarding the Everglades Restoration Project. They have been meeting with Bernard Construction Co., one of the contractors, and they have employed over seventy one (71) participants in the program.
- The agency along with Palm Beach Community College is working on getting the workforce trained. He mentioned a trade or class that has been established: construction trades at West Tech three (3) nights per week; LPN; CDL license; and Medical Assistant. The agency encourages employers to visit the office for recruiting students.

David Broadbent, Canal Point, & Pastor of Canal Point United Methodist Church, reported on the following:

- Canal Point Visioning/Charrette Workshop – The workshop will be held at the Canal Point Elementary School. (Since this meeting, the workshop was scheduled for January 27, 2007 at 10:00a.m.)

Mr. Gainer commented that the purpose of the workshop is to bring the community residents together to discuss what improvements they would like in Canal Point.

- FEMA trailers – He stated that Pastor Denny Moore has placed sixty-five (65) FEMA trailers in trailer parks. This improved better living conditions for the residents. He has more trailers but he has no place to put them. Pastor Moore is looking to eventually building some houses.
- Pahokee Crusade – is scheduled to be held on January 31st & February 1st, 2nd & 3rd. This is a multi-cultural event.

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

Pam Nolan, Economic Development, reported on the following:

- Economic Summit – Denny Abbott will follow up on the scheduled date & time.
- Canal Point Sanitary Sewer – The CCRT has really supported this project. The bid packages will be going out. This will create opportunity for jobs. This project is a low-pressure sewer system going from Pahokee into Canal Point.
- Okeechobee Scenic Trail – They are planning to schedule a meeting with the residents in February. The entryways have increased from four (4) to five (5).

Mr. Green intervened and mentioned that his neighbor has a business and his company is interested in investing in the Glades. He asked Ms. Nolan if he could give him her contact information. Ms. Nolan responded, yes.

Angela Morlok, MPO, reported on the following:

- Transportation & Land Use – should be coordinated together because if people cannot get to the place of business, this is not going to work very well. She is working with the South Florida Water Management District, Community College (teachers), and anyone to develop this program. She will have more information on the Belle Glade/Clewiston route over the next several months.

Denny Abbott intervened and he mentioned that on route 27, SFWMD is currently building the world's largest reservoir, as part of the Everglades Restoration project. This is a \$480 million dollar project.

- Transfer Station/Transfer Stop – Ms. Morlok mentioned that this idea started at the Workforce Alliance. This is a stop for Palm Tran, which will include bike hookups, and maybe a taxicab stand to help people get to their destination. Also the plan is to have a fuel facility for the buses in the Glades. This will create jobs.

Joanne Green, City of South Bay Community Development (Repr. For Eric Lewis), reported on the following:

- Christmas Toy Drive – Planning to have the event on December 24th. You can get more information by calling the City of South Bay. Mr. Gainer asked Ms. Green to have Mr. Lewis give him a call.

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

Duane Gainer, OCR Staff, reported on the following:

- Funding Recommendations Agenda Item – The Board approved the funding recommendations. Also the District 6 Commissioner Jess R. Santamaria was sworn in. He suggested that the Glades Representatives contact the new Commissioner. Mr. Gainer further talked about the funds allocated to Economic Development and for other programs.
- NPG Grants – He will report on this program at the next meeting.

Michael Sklar, HCD, reported on the following:

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application – is due January 5th, by 5:00p.m.. If you need further information, HCD's website is pbcgov.com/hcd.

Ms. Butts inquired about her concern with demucking the area that was demolished, which left a tremendous amount of glass on the ground. She provided Mr. Gainer with pictures of the area. Mr. Gainer stated that he would be getting with Tim Granowitz, Parks & Recreation Department.

6. Adjournment of Meeting:

The next GTAC meeting was to be held on December 28th, 9:30a.m., in Canal Point. The group cancelled the December meeting; therefore the next GTAC meeting is January 25, 2007, at the Belle Glade City Hall. The next Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) meeting is December 5, 2006, 10:00a.m., at the Clayton Hutcheson Building.

Minutes prepared by:

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