

Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)

Meeting of April 26, 2007

9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Canal Point

Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Robert Anderson, P.B.C. Health Department
Joni Brinkman, Kilday & Associates
Dale Erickson, Erickson Farms, Canal Point
Duane Gainer, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Roswell Harrington, Canal Point Resident
Deputy Stan Jackson, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office (Community Policing Unit)
Eric Lewis, City of South Bay
Lillie Latimore, City of Pahokee
Roy M. McGinnis, P.B.C. Dept. of Health/PACE EH
LJ Margolis, Parks & Recreation, & Representative of the Merchants & Management Department Coordinator for the Glades Areas
Natasha Mitchell, P.B.C. Sheriff's Office (Community Policing Unit)
Derrek Moore, City of Pahokee
Angela Morlok, P.B.C. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Pam Nolan, P.B.C. Economic Development
Houston Tate, P.B.C. Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
David Zechman, CEO, Glades General Hospital

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Gainer introduced Mr. Houston L. Tate, new OCR Manager. He asked Mr. Tate if he had any comments. Mr. Tate commented that he had the pleasure of working in the Glades for the last seven (7) years. He was Assistant Director; then Director of Public Works in Public Utilities Department. Also he became Acting City Manager; then City Manager of the City of Belle Glade. Mr. Tate further commented that he had the pleasure of working with some of the people at today's meeting trying to solve our problems. There is still work to be done in the Glades. He mentioned that recently he spoke with the Cities in the Glades, and other organizations about their participation at the GTAC meetings, which he anticipate them attending the GTAC meeting today. Mr. Tate stated that he commits to OCR and to the GTAC group the kind of priorities that the Glades need. He is looking forward to working with all of you.

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

2. Review of Minutes (March meeting)

Mr. Gainer asked if there were any corrections. Someone had a correction on Page 4, last paragraph: Change Fine Stein Program to Feinstein Program. She further commented that the program is an annual fund raising challenge done by a Philanthropist in Delaware. This fund raising program nationally issues a challenge for organizations that feed the hungry to raise funds, donations and canned foods; which he will match. The Philanthropist has a million dollars; which is divided among the organizations according to what they raise. This will benefit the food bank in Pahokee called The Pahokee Harvest; which participates in this fund raising event.

3. Follow-up Issues (March meeting)

Mr. Gainer commented that there were no follow up issues.

Pam Nolan mentioned that Roswell Harrington had an issue regarding implementation of a project on Connors Highway done by FDOT. Ms. Nolan commented that she contacted FDOT and she spoke with someone named Lois. This project involves greenway scenic trail plans. She has an appointment scheduled with David Roach, with FIND (Florida Inland Navigation Department) on Monday to look into some opportunities.

Mr. Harrington suggested talking to FIND about doing something long range with the Lions Club Park; improving the boating docks and making it more accessible to boating.

Ms. Nolan inquired about the report regarding the Canal Point Visioning Charette Workshop. Mr. Harrington commented that Audley Reid stated that OCR is in the process of reviewing a draft report of the meeting. Pam Nolan requested a copy or email her the draft report for her meeting on Monday.

4. Presentation: David Zechman, CEO, Glades General Hospital
Joni Brinkman, Kilday & Associates

David Zechman began by stating that he is new to the area. He commented that he is excited about being part of building a new hospital. This does not happen very often. He stated that the Glades Hospital is very busy. It has approximately Twenty Thousand (20,000) emergency room hospital visits per year; over thirty six hundred (3,600) in patient admissions per year, and between 500 to 600 deliveries per year. He further commended the hospital emergency room for its size and being able to provide care in a wide variety of medical services. Mr. Zechman began to address current issues and future issues that the hospital may have. He stated that from an Administrative standpoint what makes the job very challenging to him is the fact that majority of the patients are either in State Medicaid program, charity, or members of the health care district's local health coverage program. Most hospitals, the majority of patients are 50 to 60% Medicare. The challenge is being able to provide high quality care or access to quality care; and at the same time remain financially viable. He shared that the hospital is run by the Health Care District; which this is nationally very different and unique as it provides money to help support patients that are in a State Medicaid program, charity or members of the Health Care District. He further stated that if it was not for the Health Care District, the hospital might not survive financially.

Mr. Zechman began to speak from an economic development standpoint. He commented that looking at the planning process; performers; and business models, they anticipate generating thirty five (35) new jobs in the facility. The hospital is like an economic engine. Jobs will come from other business aspects such as homecare supply, etc. His hope is that the hospital does grow, and the vision is that this hospital is going to be the regional provider of health care services for Western Palm Beach County. Mr. Zechman further commented that one of his biggest challenges is getting doctors to come back. Since announcing that the hospital is being built, doctors have already shown an interest in coming to the area. He has meetings scheduled to speak with different doctors regarding providing local care at this facility. Mr. Zechman concluded by asking the group for questions.

Pam Nolan expressed a need to have a sports medicine doctor at the hospital. She further stated that the Glades area is recognized for its sports abilities. She further mentioned funds from a NFL medicine program. Mr. Zechman commented that he thinks this is a great idea. He further commented that in order for a sports medicine program to be successful, you would have to have an orthopedic surgeon on board. This is going to be his most difficult recruit. He is going to work very hard toward recruiting an orthopedic surgeon for the Glades area.

Dale Erickson commented regarding the question about sports medicine. His comments were that he hopes the sports medicine program would also involve teaching or education on wellness for athletes; for example eating properly, nutrition, etc. Mr. Zechman mentioned that at the new hospital there would be meeting rooms opened to the community providing community health care education, prevention, & community awareness.

LJ Margolis announced that on May 22, 2007, 5:00pm – 6:30pm, the hospital is hosting the Glades Wellness Fair in the cafeteria. Mr. Zechman acknowledged that the hospital is in support of getting awareness out to the community.

Mr. Harrington commented that the Glades' is the single largest farming area east of the Mississippi. Because agriculture is part of the industry, you have a lot of agricultural based issues. Mr. Harrington further commented that the agricultural area consists of 20 miles wide by 60 miles long; and the population is spread out through this area. Mr. Harrington expressed a concern that he and Mr. Erickson both experienced an issue regarding emergency care; basically getting emergency service promptly to the location. Mr. Harrington further stated that he experienced a loss and Mr. Erickson experienced almost a near loss. Also Mr. Harrington stated that it is very important that all emergency service personnel be familiar with the area. Mr. Zechman responded that he is meeting with ESP (Emergency Service Personnel) next week and that he agrees with Mr. Harrington. If this is an issue, we need to look into finding a better way of seeing that people arrive at the hospital as quickly as possible.

Mr. Erickson mentioned that he believes the County is taking over the EMS service. He further mentioned a recent situation with the EMS service where a lady was transported to Okeechobee; although they were suppose to take her south. It took 1½ hours to arrive at the Okeechobee location. The group disagreed with this decision and began to make comments.

Ms. Morlok commented that in the Glades area about twenty five percent (25%) of the population does not have an automobile; they depend on the transit system. Ms. Morlok expressed a concern for people having to walk the distance from the bus stop to the hospital entrance; along with other on-going traffic. She feels there should be some consideration when creating bus stops.

The second presentation by Joni Brinkman, Kilday & Associates began by describing where the location of the hospital project site is going to be constructed. Ms. Brinkman brought a map of the area and described the location of the site (Southern Blvd. & Maine Street) to the group. She stated that the health care district has been given use of the land by the State; approximately fifty (50) acres. Next, Ms. Brinkman discussed the permitting

process involving this project. She mentioned that the land use amendment plan is being presented today to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. The site plans have been submitted to the County and have been certified to go before the public hearing; which is scheduled on the June 7th Zoning Commission Agenda, and the June 28th Board of County Commission Agenda.

Next Ms. Brinkman talked about Phase I of the project. She stated that Phase I will include seventy (70) single occupancy rooms. Mr. Zechman stated there would no longer be any double occupancy rooms. Ms. Brinkman further stated that Phase I will be one (1) to three (3) stories.

Ms. Brinkman talked about Phase II of the project. She stated that this phase would include a medical office building.

Also, Ms. Brinkman talked about Phase III of the project. She stated that Phase III would include another medical office building, as well as, additions to the central energy plant, and the hospital; bringing the total beds provided up to 116 beds. This is basically the overview on the zoning approval process and the overall project.

Ms. Brinkman commented regarding public transportation. She stated that they have been working with Palm Tran throughout this process. There will be ability for Palm Tran connection to access the site for people who have disabilities. She further commented that they are required to provide handicap accessible paths for the rider to the hospital, and between all the individual buildings.

Mr. Harrington commented regarding the correctional facility surrounding the hospital. He inquired about security. Ms. Brinkman commented that they have been working with the Warden throughout this process. Ms. Brinkman further commented that at this point and time, they are not proposing installing a fence but however they are requesting from Palm Beach County for Zoning approval to allow to do so in the future.

Mr. Zechman mentioned they have a Glades Hospital Foundation. A Board meeting was held last week. Mr. Harrington inquired if anyone from the north end (Pahokee or Canal Point) was serving on the Board. Mr. Zechman responded, no. Mr. Harrington feels that someone from the region should be on the Board.

Ms. Morlok suggested partnership with the community college in relation to jobs and related courses. Mr. Zechman responded that they are partnering with the college with the nursing program.

Mr. Zechman asked the group to contact him if they have any suggestions, comments or would like a tour of the hospital.

Mr. Gainer asked about completion date of construction for Phase I. Mr. Zechman responded that they are hoping to break ground in the fall. He further commented that he anticipates the construction should be done early fall of 2009.

Mr. Gainer thanked Ms. Brinkman, and Mr. Zechman for coming and talking about the hospital project.

5. Participant Updates/Comments:

Roswell Harrington, Canal Point, reported on the following:

- DOT maintenance – He mentioned that on Main Street & State Road 80 in Belle Glade is scheduled for reconstruction. Community Asphalt got the contract and construction should start within the next few months. Also Community Asphalt got the contract for 441/98 going north (from the Post Office to the County line). The construction should start October or November.
- Complaint to MPO - He disagrees with starting construction upon a major highway during or at the beginning of cane season. This is going to cause a major disruption in the community.

Angela Morlok, MPO, reported on the following:

- Belle Glade/Clewiston bus route – She commented that there has been an increase month for the past 4 to 5 years. They were able to get 100% funding for the past 4 to 5 years. The funding will end in December. Palm Tran has to cut back by 10%, therefore they are not considering funding the route. The good news is, in about 18 months, the State is working on a rural transportation network. This will include five (5) counties, in addition to the three (3) cities. Her concern is keeping the route in place for 18 months or until this new funding can kick in. Ms. Morlok is seeking suggestions for funding sources.

Houston Tate inquired about the cost needed for this project. Ms. Morlok responded it would take approximately \$200,000.

Lillie Latimore commented that connectivity plays a very important role with transportation. She stated a concern regarding public transportation service to the greenway trails and further stated there is no connectivity between Belle Glade and Pahokee.

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

Duane Gainer, OCR Staff, reported on the following:

- REAP Graduation – The graduation will be held on April 28th, 11:00a.m., at the Airport Hilton.
- Neighborhood Partnership Grant (NPG) Program – Letters of Intent are due Friday. NPG applications are due within the next thirty (30) days.

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

- Development Regions recommendations – She talked about finding other funding sources. She talked about completion of the application. When applying for these grants, applicants need to have a business plan; financial documents; and know the cost of the project.
- Lake Okeechobee Regional Economic Alliance - \$120,000 was awarded to this group. Will be identifying sites to start implementation. This group will be doing designs for projects or renovation designs of buildings, and have a fascade program.
- Herbert Hoover Dike Business Opportunity Workshop – She announced that she believes there is a meeting in the Glades today. She received an email and if anyone is interested, she will give you the information.

Mr. Gainer inquired if the new hospital project would qualify for one of the items mentioned under the LORE alliance group. Ms. Nolan responded, no. The hospital is a big project and the Economic Development office is looking at small business owners.

Houston Tate commented regarding the GTAC group. He asked the group for comments or suggestions on what they thought or any ideas the group could do to make GTAC more effective. He views this group as a source of information where as the City Managers or anyone can come to the meeting and receive the kind of information and service that they are going to need to assist their communities; so that the communities can then become more independent about going for grants. He stated that also non-profit organizations could benefit from this group, so that they can learn about grants and become sustainable. The group showed a concern and began to discuss non-profit organizations and how to best assist them with the knowledge needed for them to move forward.

Ms. Latimore mentioned a concern regarding contractors not starting projects in a timely manner. Someone agreed that he has the same problem in Pahokee.

Ms. Nolan commented that she requested a list of contractors that had done work in the Glades from LORE. She stated that LORE was putting together a list of landscape architects, engineers, and architects.

Ms. Latimore commented that there should be a way or somewhere to go to find out if there were any complaints made on a contractor. We should know whether they did a good job or not prior to paying them. She further gave example where there was an issue with getting a contractor to complete the work. Ms. Morlok suggested contacting the purchasing department or making a complaint to the County. The group began to share their concerns, and issues with contractors that are not doing the job satisfactorily. Mr. Tate suggested having a meeting to discuss what, and how to improve the process. He further suggested maybe working along with LORE to help solve some of these issues.

Mr. Harrington commented regarding the Canal Point Community Building. He stated that the building and location of the building is perfect for after storm emergency use. There is one problem, when the renovation was done, they did not put the generator switch on the meters.

LJ Margolis commented that she had spoken with Matt Cronin about the generator switch during the renovation, and Mr. Cronin said that he was recommending that generator switches be installed.

Mr. Harrington thanked Mr. Tate for coming to GTAC today and that Mr. Tate had participated in past meetings the same as himself. He is also very grateful to see two (2) of the three (3) cities here. Mr. Harrington further commented that he misses Mr. Jackson's presence at the GTAC meetings. Mr. Tate commented that Mr. Jackson has offered his participation at GTAC. Derreck Moore followed up with Mr. Jackson had planned to be here today but had an emergency meeting come up. Mr. Moore and Ms. Latimore had a scheduled meeting with Mr. Jackson after GTAC meeting but he called and cancelled because of an emergency meeting.

Mr. Harrington further commented regarding the Army Corp Proposal. There are four (4) days left to comment on the Army Corp Proposal for Reach 1A – 1E. There are some major problems with this report.

Mr. Harrington announced that Indiantown Non-Profit have run out of trailers. There are no more trailers. This was a good program. He stated that the emergency housing problem for the Glades area still is not over. The Wellness victims were suppose to move out yesterday. Also the Faith Based Longterm Recovery Team is no longer meeting. The staff person handling this team is now working at Red Cross. He mentioned that FEMA

have trailers available but the problem is it cost \$6,000 to \$7,000 to place the trailers into the trailer park.

Mr. Tate made final comments, and he stated that this has been a wonderful meeting. He is happy that the CEO for the Glades Hospital came to share information with the group. Also the discussion on the bus routes, and about the funding was important. Also the discussion about working together regarding the contractors, and how do we have a centralized way of determining compliance, and successful performance was a good discussion. Mr. Tate concluded by stating this was a good first meeting and he is looking forward to working with everyone.

6. Adjournment of Meeting:

The next GTAC meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2007, 9:30a.m. in Belle Glade. The next Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) meeting is May 14, 2007, at 10:00a.m., in the Mounts Botanical Garden Building Auditorium.

Mr. Gainer thanked Roswell Harrington and The Canal Point United Methodist Church for the refreshments.

Minutes prepared by

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

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