

**Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC)
Meeting of January 28, 2010
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.
Canal Point Community Center**

Minutes

Attendees:

Tish Burgher, QCA Inc. (Consultant for Florida Department of Transportation FDOT)
Driver John Bush, PBC Fire Rescue
Linda Camardella, PBC School District
Kathleen Cole, PBC Human Services
Karen Corbin, Belle Glade Chamber of Commerce
FF/PM Dean Fortunato, PBC Fire Rescue
Jesus Fuentes, American Engineering Group
(Consultant for Florida Department of Transportation FDOT)
Duane Gainer, PBC Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)
Roswell Harrington, Resident of Pahokee / Keene Mobile Home Park /
East Beach Family Emergency Depot
Lt. Chris Keane, PBC Sheriff's Office
Selena Lamotte, PBC Sheriff's Office
LJ Margolis, PBC Parks & Rec / Glades Emergency Operating Area (EOA 1)
Chrystal Mathews, PBC Office of Community Revitalization
Knawza McCall, Belle Glade Weed & Seed
Roy "Mike" McGinnis, PBC Department of Health
Lt. Michael Morris, PBC Sheriff's Office
Pam Nolan, PBC Economic Development Office
Capt. Thomas Paccione, PBC Fire Rescue
Lt. Willie Powell, PBC Sheriff's Office
Ted Roberts, City of Pahokee
Scott Ryder, C3TS Transportation Group
(Consultant for Florida Department of Transportation FDOT)
Debbie Simpson, PBC School District Police
Jeff Tarr, Resident of Pahokee
Ashley Tripp, Lake Okeechobee Regional Economic Alliance (LORE)
William Wynn, PBC Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Duane Gainer called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m., introduced himself, and welcomed attendees on behalf of the Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners, Palm Beach County Administration, and Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization. He thanked the representatives of Canal Point for hosting the meeting and providing refreshments, and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

2. Review of Minutes:

The minutes of the December 17, 2009 meeting were reviewed. There were no corrections.

3. Discussion / Updates:

Chrystal Mathews OCR REAP

The Office of Community Revitalization (OCR) will host the Resident Education to Action Program (REAP), a five-week leadership academy, beginning March 2 in the Glades. The training will address social media, creating an on-line strategy, strategies for neighborhood revitalization and community improvements, communicating with elected officials for results, fundraising and other topics. After the five weeks, participants will have learned essentials of revitalization and grant writing. Participants will be able to submit a grant for up to \$2,500 for neighborhood improvement projects. Under the grant this year reimbursement for 501(c) 3 tax designation will be allowed for incorporated entities needing that tax designation. The sessions will be held in the Bryant Auditorium of the County Governmental Center in Belle Glade on Tuesday evenings from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. It will be catered by Golden Corral. The training will be offered through the Palm Beach State College vocational catalog for Continuing Education credits. There will be no charge as it is underwritten by the County. The training is open to both residents of municipalities and unincorporated areas. Past REAP graduates are welcome to attend because the training is different every year. PBSO and PBFR personnel may also participate and submit grants for projects. A number of community improvement projects in the Glades have been funded by REAP through resident participants. For more information on REAP, visit <http://www.pbcgov.com/ocr/programs/reap>

4. Subcommittee Updates:

Truancy

No update.

Correcting Addresses in the Glades

No update.

Temporary Housing

Roswell Harrington reported that about 5,000 mobile homes will be auctioned off in Louisiana. He is attempting to contact the Farmworker Coalition with this information. It might be possible to obtain some good housing that meets Florida standards for Windstorm 3 and post-2004 manufacture if a non-profit organization would attend the auction with the financing to bid and buy. Mr. Harrington stated that all of the mobile home parks in the Glades have vacancies, but people cannot put in their homes because they do not meet those standards.

5. Participant Updates:

East Beach Family Emergency Depot (EBFED)

Mr. Harrington reported that EBFED encountered some problems that delayed some grant proposals. The organization is negotiating with the property owner and getting issues resolved to move forward with grant proposals. He stated that he had received an emailed report from Washington DC on hunger issues which indicated that Palm Beach County ranks in the top 20 on

hunger issues. This is ironic because in addition to the Glades being a major agricultural area, Palm Beach County also has some of the wealthiest population.

Office of Community Revitalization (OCR)

Duane Gainer briefly discussed the Bike Florida Share the Road grant program which promotes bicycle and pedestrian safety programs. More information is available at www.bikeflorida.org.

Mrs. Mathews discussed OCR's participation in the Home Depot Building Healthy Communities grant program, which provides support to nonprofit organizations, public schools, and public service agencies that are using the power of volunteers to improve the physical health of their communities.

Mrs. Mathews reported that OCR recently completed and had the board vote on the CCRT Area Reassessment Study which was conducted over the span of about six years to determine if certain areas should remain CCRT and if other areas should be so designated. CCRT neighborhoods are essentially the most blighted neighborhoods. Out of 104 CCRT-designated neighborhoods, about 20 areas which no longer met the parameters were deleted from the designation. These include federally-funded areas such as Okeechobee Center, Padgett Island and Fremd Village, as well as privately-owned mobile home parks such as 715 MHP. There are now 84 CCRT areas in Palm Beach County. Whispering Pines in West Palm Beach was newly-CCRT designated. Some of the areas were redefined because some of the streets were left off the 2003 reassessment. CCRT neighborhoods are eligible for OCR services, programs and grants. Mr. Harrington noted that there is no funding or help available anywhere for privately-owned mobile home parks. He said that the only way to get money is to raise lot rents, which would be prohibitive for most of the tenants, or take out a Small Business Administration loan. Mrs. Matthews stated that one reason privately-owned mobile home parks are not eligible for CCRT status is that the county has no jurisdiction over them, and cannot put conditions on the owners to comply with CCRT program requirements. Jeff Tarr asked how often the CCRT program is reviewed and reassessed. Mrs. Mathews replied that the report is done every other year, but it is not printed out that often. She stated that every area is analyzed more often during the reporting period.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Scott Ryder reported that SR 700 is about 43% complete. Phase I should open on schedule. The process used on the roadway has never before been used in South Florida. It is part of DOT's Going Green program. The roadway will be heated up in place, the material will be rejuvenated and reused, and traffic will be able to travel on the road 20 minutes after the process is completed. Significant press coverage is expected. Mr. Ryder offered to take anyone interested to the construction location and show them the process. The advance warning and detour signs have been enhanced to resolve the problem of drivers missing it. DOT is still trying to determine who owns the easement affecting the control structure in Canal Point. Mr. Ryder said that SR 729 / State Market Road work should begin the end of March. A pre-construction meeting will be held around February 17. There will be no detour; this will be a moving project lasting 195 days and will include some sidewalk and some drainage work.

Mr. Harrington raised three issues that he would like to see addressed.

1) Ownership of an easement located on the southerly side of KEC/Canal Point Elementary School. Mr. Harrington stated that easement was established in the original Nemaha plat and according to the Property Appraisers office has never been closed. The ditch located in that easement drains the downtown district of Canal Point, the old elementary school lot and the housing to the south. It then goes into a ditch owned by Pelican Lake (South Florida Conservancy District) and from there to the Palm Beach Canal.

2) He requested that someone acquire ownership of an additional 10-15 foot strip parallel to SR 15 from the intersection of Mill Road North to SR 700. He stated that currently this ditch is owned partially by DOT and the adjacent land owners. He said that maintenance is spotty at best and is important. He said that this ditch is the primary drainage for the entire area, and that South Florida Conservancy shows no interest in getting involved. He stated that as this stretch of road is in the design phase, the issue should be addressed as soon as possible.

3) Mr. Harrington requested that the making of SR 15 into a four lane north of the intersection of SR 80 to the intersection with SR 729 / Muck City Road, be put back on the 10-year plan. He stated that this was first proposed over 15 years ago and planned by DOT.

ACTION ITEM: Jesus Fuentes recommended that Mr. Harrington contact DOT design about the issues so they can be incorporated into the design process.

Ashley Tripp reported that LORE has created a blog spot LakeOPalmBeach.com, and requested Mr. Ryder to send the information to trippat@bellsouth.net for inclusion. Tish Burgher stated that DOT is subject to Sunshine Laws, and is looking at how the department uses social media, including blog spots. They would need to obtain approval from DOT before sending information.

Mr. Fuentes said that the US 27 work is going a little slow due to the cold weather preventing them during the friction course. They need temperatures of at least 75 degrees. He reported that the light poles for South Bay are being installed and that after the asphalt is complete, the project will be finished. After the medians are done, the Lake Harbor Bridge will be opened.

Ms. Burgher said that SR 80 through Belle Glade is finished. The SR 700 project is being done in three phases, and is currently in Phase 1. Lasting until October, each phase will have a detour. Mr. Gainer asked if there could be a notice at SR 700 and SR 80.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Burgher stated that there had been one and she would check to see if it is still there.

Pahokee

Ted Roberts reported on the increase in size of East Lake Park. The city obtained property on each side of the park for expansion purposes.

South Bay

Mr. Gainer reported that Raquel Diaz is no longer with the City of South Bay. He stated that the OCR-funded, S.W. 12th Avenue road project is moving forward.

LORE

Ms. Tripp asked that attendees send any information appropriate for the LakeOPalmBeach.com blog spot to her at trippat@bellsouth.net. This has been developed with the intention of its being the official blog spot for the Glades.

Economic Development

Pam Nolan reported that two Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail signs have been completed and installed: one at the Canal Point Community Center and one in Pahokee. There also will be one in Belle Glade at the old town hall and one at the Market Depot in South Bay. The Office of Economic Development is pursuing more funding to get them constructed. Each one costs over \$100,000. Economic Development is involved in an energy program through the Department of Energy whereby the office oversees \$1.1 million in funds that will be offered in a revolving loan program for businesses, which will be required to conduct an energy audit as part of the grant requirement. The grant will fund energy-efficiency projects such as replacing windows, upgrading insulation, replacing lights and other projects. The State has programs for individuals as well as businesses for refunds for energy audit and efficiency improvements. Visit www.myflorida.com to find available grants. Look for Florida Energy and Climate Change to see programs.

CERT

Mr. Harrington stated that sometime in the next month or so there will be a regional CERT team meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

The next GTAC meeting will be held at Belle Glade City Hall on February 25, 2010 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. A representative of Glades Utilities Authority (GUA) is scheduled to be present.

Minutes prepared by Duane Gainer and LJ Margolis.


Approved By Houston L. Tate, Director