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Glades Technical Advisory Committee Minutes

Meeting Title: Glades Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Facilitator: Houston Tate, Director
Scribe (recorder): Audley G. Reid, Senior Planner
Date/Time: September 26 , 2019, 2013 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM
Location: Belle Glade

Meeting Attendance:

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Comments: Mr. Tate called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. and asked for introductions. He asked the group, “How do we go about making changes to inspire residents to organize themselves, make recommendations and approvals to make changes in their neighborhood”?

2. Special Presentations

Carol Thompson – Special Projects Manager – Economic Sustainability – She gave an overview of the Glades Master Plan process (35 minutes)

There was a question in reference to infrastructure saying we just had a new water plant built but has it not been used to its full potential.

Carol Thompson responded that the delivery system (pipes) is not in good shape.

Question – How do you bring the programs here?

Mr. Tate: This is how you do it because you do not know what access the next person has. There are many programs that we want to work with but we need to organize the community first. When you come home and make corrections you do not have the time. When you have trash on the street people pass right by it, why does that happen what is there that makes people to have a motivation to act. That is what we are going to be talking about in these dialogues. We are going to talk about the very committee that I have. We have leaders but now it is going to get down to organize the work. Those are the Eddie Rhodes’ that live right in the community.

I’m saying what we will and what we will not be doing. This includes a lot of work that we will not be doing. Now we need to refocus on what is the planning that needs to take place. Carol gets the approval

and money that will start and I am looking at it from the base moving up. I am looking at people who you attend church with, go to birthday parties work with. As residents what are we doing to improve our community, improving infrastructure which does not improve the community it is the people. The question is how we involve everyone. We have our organizers become leaders but we need to move beyond that getting volunteers on a specific project.

Look at this plan on page 2. They did a building assessment; they broke it down from north, middle and southern section. What it didn't do is let you know about the buildings, or where am I most likely to invest. What can I do in regards to vacant land? How much is there and where is it? I am going over the plan without being specific. I want to know what the community needs. What can the people on the block do, not can I get a million dollars and build something. I want the community to be stronger and safer. What we want to do is take one area at a time so once we have a plan and give to it the City Manager. It is always great to start north and go south. Sometimes maybe it will be better going South Bay but I recommend we start at Pahokee. I already got it started in Pahokee. What do you want? Employment opportunities? Farmers market? Promote what we have. What are the assets and who are those in the community that really have the gift. There are older, senior, bus drivers, PBSO that has not been tapped because the community is not getting together. Back in the day you know the community would tell on you, for me it was Mr. Johnson but today you do not know your neighbor you are even afraid to spank your child because he can turn you in people are sort of paranoid. You need to know who you live next door to. You need to know their concerns. Next one is empower and engage our youth. I was talking to Commissioner Walker and she said she wouldn't be able to come she is trying to format a youth summit. Families are asking what we are doing with our youth. We need to look at the youth that are doing well. Those are things that we are going to be talking about not the problems but how do we solve the problems with the asset that we currently have so projects may be considered and I am just throwing this out I do not like making decisions for people. 1st in Glades there is a food challenge. How do you have all these farms around you but family does not have fresh vegetables and fruit. In reality, the Health Dept has statistics of what happens to communities that are food deserts. As we talk about that we can talk about a community garden. Does anyone know Vincent Smith, he played ball in Pahokee went on to Michigan, but guess what came back to the community, and attended our REAP sessions. He submitted a grant and part of it was approved that he will be doing a community garden. There could be land and its' good to show the maps. The community garden is a good way to improve the social capital and slowly it will improve the relationship this is a wonderful way to build relationships. They will be solved because people will advocate and come to meetings when they should come and the when you go to the BCC now they have something tangible you have to show an argument that they can weigh and decide do I take money from here or do I use it here it is not easy. We need our residents to understand what the issues are and what is the story and it has to be done in a compassionate way so the commissioners will take money and put it in the project but they don't see it when you complain over here you have to take to them is a story we have to take the time to talk to each other when you look at this plan it is inconclusive what thing about plans it always represent the person who has gas in the car and get to the meetings what about the people who couldn't get here. How do we get them inspired to come? There is a distance between your need and your next door neighbor needs. Turn the chairs around. As we go back and talk to residents we need to begin to talk to them with a different set of changes. That we need them to help make the changes, another thing I was talking about was the Robotics Engineering program. It is a competitive robotic organization. Pahokee has IB Schools, a perfect asset that is what you want the student to be challenged and recognized that you do things we know you play football. How many kids play football? We need to inspire those kids that do not have anybody helping them they stay out of trouble and come to school everyday but we do not have

anything to motivate them to act your math, science, technology, education. The future is focused on those educations but if you have a math background you can take a lesser job but you can always bump off somebody else. You take the lesser job because you have the skills to move forward. We had a guy from the Apollo missions say once you get the project going he would like to come out and talk to our kids about what they are doing. We talked about getting money for travel and a number of things we need Pahokee kids to compete nationally now. Right now we have Jupiter, Delray Poinsettia is an elementary school in the County, why can't Pahokee participate, and there is no other area unincorporated that has all 3. We met with the Superintendent and 3 Principals and it is a go, I just need residents to keep that on the burner. That is something we can work out. We have the assets to move that forward and you are not asking that for another road you already have the students that are the best in math and science you already have the schools but what kind of activities do we have to motivate in the right pathway even though I have the ability to do these things that is what will happen and if we can get our kids into a positive gain enforces these positive skills us nerds area representation of our past those that were successful was those nerds even though you thought you were cool you stayed within a confinement that is how you got out of High School and into College because you were able to emulate both. A lot of people do not have the opportunities to do that.

Question, how can you tie in the #1 industry (AGRI) with the kids that you are saying have the programs the industry out here is engineering how they can tie in to the youth

Tate: and that is what yes what you just discussed and guess what there could be someone else in the audience that may have access.

Sharon Comries, PBSC stated that she has the internship program but didn't realize they had it and they pay the students to intern for you and they could possibly be employed by USDA. She thinks underexposure is the problem. They did ½ day school and ½ day work that is what the High Schools need the opportunities to get with these industries.

Mr. Tate stated that it is the power of the collective impact. There may be an industry looking for a place but did not know that Belle Glade was ready or Pahokee is ready and they need to know that we are ready and there is a communal partnership.

Someone stated that Farming is such a big industry, it is a huge corporation when I talk to the kids they think of a farm maybe we can get the kids to meet the farmers and take them out there.

Ms. Comries stated that when she first came to Belle Glade she didn't think sugar was such a huge business.

Mr. Tate added that there may be people that may not find the value of agricultural because they worked so hard in the fields at one time but the discussion has to be about opportunities for people who say they never eat another bean or oatmeal in my life because of the difficult times in my life, now we need to talk about assets, what are the assets in the community? There are a number of grants and I talk to people and they look at me like and what do we do when business does not come to us.

Mr. Tate stated how do we begin to change perception? We need to tell kids that every major that you are a part of should have a major in the job you are interested in. Some kids say I am going to major in political science but have no idea and then they change their major. You actually can have a business major and have a number of jobs to work for but not know you have to have practical experience but now they want you to have the direct job experience. They need to say I need to narrow my vision and limit my risk. How do we talk to them in a way that this path is directly related to a job? I have twins and they said if in the 3rd grade you don't pass the FCAT they are building a jail for you with your name

on it. I was petrified. Another discussion is parenting. I am saying how long I was up last night because my son could not change fractions into whole numbers. It starts with, “I don’t know the math but I can talk to somebody. I can go to church and talk to someone else and ask.” Everybody we need is in our community. You have your youth in one room is enormous and we need to talk to parents about the assets we really have.

The question of “how can you meet with parents that work 70- hours a week”?

Mr. Tate stated that kids get very bored because they are smart and the classroom is not moving. We have 10 more minutes we are going to put together something and I’m glad everyone is here from Pahokee, Belle Glade, and South Bay. As we talk to our communities tell me this I need to know from you who from the community can you bring to the meetings that would want to volunteer with us part of it has access to the community. We need a Haitian representative, and a youth representative next meeting.

Is there anything that was discussed today that anyone was motivated to act?

3. Participant Updates/Comments

Meredith Cruz with FDOT interjected that there are a couple of DOT projects taking place. Steve Clark of AIM Engineering is the project manager and he will come to future meetings. The projects are 4 miles of resurfacing on Hooker Highway and some fog detection improvements on SR 80 and 700.

4. Adjournment

Comments: The meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m. The next meeting will be held June 26, 2014, at Belle Glade City Hall.

Approved by: Houston L. Tate, Director _____