



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

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Countywide Community Revitalization Team Meeting Minutes

Meeting Title: Countywide Community Revitalization Team Meeting
Facilitator: Houston Tate, Director
Minutes Prepared by: William Wynn, Senior Planner
Date/Time: January 19, 2016, 10:00-11:30 AM
Location: 2300 North Jog Road, West Palm Beach

Meeting Attendance:

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| 1. Verdenia C. Baker | County Administrator, Palm Beach County |
| 2. Robin Rance-Hoffman | Commissioner Burdick's Office |
| 3. Wayne Padgett | Pastor, Crossroads Baptist Church, Gramercy Park |
| 4. Rudi Bester | Memory Trees |
| 5. Debbie Bester | Memory Trees |
| 6. Hazel Lucas | Florida Rural Legal Services |
| 7. Florence French | Enroll America |
| 8. Larry Diegert | Plantation Community |
| 9. Carol Clinton | Lake Worth West Regional Planning Group, Inc |
| 10. Ken Wilson | Florida Department of Health, Palm Beach County |
| 11. Sgt. Angelo | PBSO |
| 12. Sgt. Hightower | PBSO |
| 13. Sgt. Searing | PBSO |
| 14. Deputy Barricklow | PBSO |
| 15. Deputy Hanks | PBSO |
| 16. Deputy Diejuste | PBSO |
| 17. Deputy DeLaura | PBSO |
| 18. Lisa DeLaRionda | PBC Public Affairs |
| 19. Ramsay Bulkeley | PBC Code Enforcement |
| 20. Ken Jackson | PBC Code Enforcement |
| 21. Rick Torrance | PBC Code Enforcement |
| 22. David Rafaidus | PBC Community Services |
| 23. Oscar Alvarez | PBC Contractors Certification |
| 24. Anne Helfant | PBC County Attorney's Office |
| 25. Melanie Borkowski | PBC Department of Economic Sustainability |
| 26. David Rafaidus | PBC Community Services |
| 27. Casey Pranckun | PBC Parks & Recreation |
| 28. Michael Owens | PBC School District |
| 29. Anna Stewart | PBC Drowning Prevention Coalition |
| 30. Gregory Gabriel | PBC Youth Services |
| 31. Houston Tate | PBC Office of Community Revitalization |
| 32. Ruth Moguillansky | PBC Office of Community Revitalization |

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| 33. Chrystal Matthews | PBC Office of Community Revitalization |
| 34. Audley Reid | PBC Office of Community Revitalization |
| 35. William Wynn | PBC Office of Community Revitalization |
| 36. Derrek Moore | PBC Office of Community Revitalization |

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Tate called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed all attendees and asked the group to introduce themselves.

II. Presentation- Verdenia C. Baker, County Administrator, Palm Beach County

After an introduction from Houston Tate, Mrs. Baker advised the group that she would be providing an overview of the state of the county and highlight some of the positives and challenges foreseen in Palm Beach County (PBC) as work begins on the 2017 budget. She will also go over some of the backlogged projects that impact CCRT area communities.

Mrs. Baker stated that PBC is in a good position to move to the next level. In addition, the economy is coming back from a downturn. PBC is generating additional dollars as far as values on land and the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) is holding the millage steady.

PBC has a transition leadership in Palm Beach County Schools with Dr. Robert Avossa, the Palm Beach State College with its new President, Mrs. Ava Parker; and Florida Atlantic University (FAU) with Dr. John Kelly. These new leadership puts PBC in a unique position to move to the next level. Thus far, there have been partnerships created and sharing of strategic plans. The overall arching theme is to continue to improve the quality of life for all PBC residents.

While real estate activity is increasing in south Florida, particularly in PBC, buyers and real estate agents are complaining about the lack of available properties. As of June of 2015, PBC had 1,901 sales which was 16% greater than 2014, the highest increase since 1993. PBC median home price is now at \$305,000 which is good for county government but is a challenge when trying to recruit businesses to PBC and retain existing residents. Mrs. Bakers stated this is why the counties role in improving working class communities is so important. In PBC, foreclosed properties have been sold in bundles to investors allowing investors to create rental properties. This is an issue that has to be dealt with in our communities. The investors will hold on to the properties until the market gets to a certain level and then sell. Investors are not willing to sell their properties as affordable or workforce housing.

The housing market in PBC is two-fold. It is generating the needed capital to sustain the quality of life in PBC but on the other hand there are working class residents that can't afford to live in PBC. PBC is leading the nation in rentals and, when it comes to bringing in more businesses or retaining businesses, the high level of renters makes the business aspect tough to address.

County Administration is looking to work with the Department of Economic Sustainability (DES) and other partners on ways to restrict rental rates to make renting more affordable. Administration is also looking to improve existing area communities by making improvements such as repairing infrastructure, adding streetlights, and having parks built to help bring up property values for existing owners and to also get other working class residents to move into these areas.

The livability in PBC is good, and retirees and now young families are moving to PBC. To continue to attract residents there must be available housing and jobs. This is being addressed with the Business Development Board, DES and the State of Florida Economic Development Office. PBC compares favorably with the state of Florida and the rest of the country as a whole in reference to the percentage of

residents living below poverty. PBC is at approx 14.5%, the state of Florida 17%, and the rest of the U.S. is at 15.8%. PBC is trying to improve the quality of life for residents by bringing the appropriate jobs with benefits.

The Department of Law Enforcement has reported that crime has decreased in PBC. Violent crime has decreased by 4.1% even though there has been an increase in population for the county. Mrs. Baker thanked law enforcement for all they do and residents for participating in crime watch efforts.

The Property Appraisers Office has verified that there were 966 new businesses started in PBC from 2012-2014. In the non-agricultural industry, the greatest gains were in healthcare and social services with 318 businesses, educational services were 101 and in accommodations and food services 109 businesses were created.

The Hospitality committee is one of the fastest segments in the PBC workforce. PBC is working along with Palm Beach State College (PBSC), the Palm Beach Atlantic University (PBAU) and Florida Atlantic University (FAU) on developing curriculums for these entities. PBC will continue to work with the school board and local colleges to create curriculums for K-12 and the college level for careers in the PBC job market. This will help create more jobs and retain residents in PBC.

Mrs. Baker stated that County Administration is starting to build the 2017 budget. OCR will definitely be a part of that budget. Backlog needs will be looked at such as streetlights, water and sewer. There is roughly about 750 million dollars in projects identified such as roads, bridges, parks, 25-30 year old county asset buildings etc. In the coming months, these types of projects will be going before the BCC. County Administration will be looking for direction from the BCC on how to fund these backlogged projects.

County Administration will be also asking the BCC if they are going to raise the millage rate to pay for improvements, use general obligation bond which will have to go to the voters for approval, or use a revenue bond which is decided on by the BCC. The last option will be a sales tax. The sales tax would be ½ cent if it is just the county and the cities. The statute states if a sales tax is used the cities are entitled to a percent of the tax. ½ cent and 1 cent are currently being looked at. If the school board participates the county will go for the 1 cent sales tax. The 1 cent sales tax would address the projects and CCRT area projects that are in the pipeline which there was no funding for such as streets, drainage issues, culverts as well as other identifiable improvements. All these improvements are dependent upon if the millage rate, bonds or sales tax is voted on favorably.

There will also be a strategic budget presented to the BCC that will address on-going assets to avoid future backlog projects. If the BCC does not decide favorably on the millage rate Mrs. Baker advised that the county should be fine with the economy recovering, property values increasing, and if the state does not give any additional unfunded mandates.

Mrs. Baker received an inquiry from Darlene Hatcher, a representative from the Limestone Community, on what were PBC legislative priorities during the Palm Beach County Days in Tallahassee. Mrs. Baker responded by saying that PBC priorities that were brought forward included the following:

- Asked the Legislature not to pass any more unfunded mandates;
- Lobbied to prohibit substance abuse treatment providers and operators of recovery residences from engaging in unethical marketing practices and allows for more stringent regulations of these facilities;
- Expansion of gambling at pari-mutuel facilities (Dog Track) which will help in bringing in more jobs and revenue;
- More criminal justice priorities to adjust county/statewide juvenile detention cost sharing split. A 50/50 split may be proposed for the incarceration or holding of juveniles;

- Expand the use of diversion programs and reentry efforts and alternative programs to the detention for juveniles;
- Pre K-12 education governance giving the local school board more flexibility on educating students;
- Glades Regional Initiative, Lake Okeechobee, economic development and job creation in the Glades area;
- Career training including construction and career academy at West Tech;
- Looking to expand PBC Life Science Cluster (Scripps & Max Planck). The state is allocating additional dollars for next year to support Max Planck and Scripps;
- PBSC is focused on the west campus putting more programs that will assist with bio-life sciences and working with the school board to create the continuum of curriculum from K to the state college;
- PBC is looking at natural resources Lake Okeechobee, Lake Worth Lagoon along with support and appropriations for beach management;
- PBC is also working with Enterprise Florida promoting that the legislature allocate additional dollars for Enterprise Florida whom PBC partner with to recruit businesses to PBC to avoid PBC providing the total funding to bring in businesses; and
- Public records are being looked at by PBC, not to prohibit individual requests but to discourage harassment and unreasonable requests. The goal is to eventually have all PBC public records online to avoid cost to the individual;
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Mrs. Baker advised that these are the issues that PBC went to Tallahassee to lobby for.

In closing Mrs. Baker thanked everyone for their partnerships in getting numerous things accomplished as part of CCRT. She stated that a lot has been accomplished but that there is a lot more things to do. She is looking forward to the additional future accomplishments. Her door is always open!

III. Department Updates

Anna Stewart, Drowning Prevention Coalition (DPC) PBC representative, reported on the following:

- The DPC will have a booth at the South Florida Fair for 17 days.
- The DPC feels that it is important for families to learn about how to escape a sinking vehicle that goes into a body of water. The DPC continuously try to educate people on this issue and the information will be available at the fair.
- On April 1, 2016, the DPC starts its free and reduced cost swim program. More involvement is wanted from the parents of those children who will be participating in the program. An educational online component must be completed by the parent before receiving an application.

David Rafaidus, Community Services Department representative, reported on the following:

- Community Services is initiating the financial assistance program for the next fiscal year. There is approximately 12 to 15 million dollars in funding. The focus for this year is on senior services, economic stability and poverty.
- Community Services is also in the process of updating its Community Indicator report which covers numerous community issues. This report is a living document, intended for use as a guide to making decisions, promoting community participation in government, and providing a statement for those involved in health and human services. It provides a snapshot of information, and will help look at these issues on national, state and local levels to give a better sense of these issues in PBC.
- Community Services will be starting its hearings in the near future. David will forward the exact information to OCR.

Melanie Borkowski, Department of Economic Sustainability (DES) representative, reported on the following:

- DES will be working in conjunction with Parks and Recreation on improvements to the playgrounds at Lake Lytal Park.

Casey Prankun, Parks and Recreation (P&R) representative, reported on the following:

- Renovations at the Westgate playground are almost complete. The playground equipment has been installed along with a 10 piece fitness zone and an expanded outdoor classroom garden with a bed for planting. P&R is waiting on the saturated ground at the sod farm to dry before harvesting sod. Once the sod is harvested and installed, the renovations will be complete.
- In reference to the Watergate Park, P&R is waiting on the permit after addressing PZB comments.
- P&R is in the early conceptual design phase of the Canal Point playground renovation project.

Ramsay Bulkeley, Code Enforcement Director, reported on the following:

- Code Enforcement is currently working with PBSO on the curb stoning ordinance. This ordinance will make it illegal for any person(s) to sell a vehicle on a public right-of-way, (ex. Hypoluxo & I-95). The penalty will be an immediate towing and a \$500 fine. Media releases will be done in conjunction with the PBSO. They are also planning to give warning and tagging vehicles for approximately one month to bring awareness of the ordinance.
- Code Enforcement is in the process of hiring a number of new staff due the retirement of officers.

Oscar Alvarez, Contractors Certification Director, reported on the following:

- Mr. Alvarez stated that his office is responsible for the licensing of, and regulating contractors within PBC. This is done by assuring compliance with state and county construction licensing regulations by contractors. Contractor's Certification also regulates the unlawful conduct of certified and uncertified contractors.
- Mrs. Baker congratulated Mr. Alvarez for the great job that his office did with finding the illegal and unsafe practices made by a screening company. As a result, the screening company's license was suspended indefinitely.

Michael Owens, School Board, representative, reported on the following:

- In March of 2014, the issue of traffic from the Westgate Clinic property which the school board owns, Westgate Elementary school and FAU was brought to the attention of the school board. It has been a two year process. In early January of 2016, an agreement was finally reached between the school board and FAU. Exhibits of an access path will be presented at the February CCRT meeting. The approval of this agreement by all parties should be finalized no later than April of 2016.

Carol Clinton, Executive Director of the Lake Worth West Community Center, reported on the following:

- The Lake Worth West Regional Planning Group is preparing to have its 11th annual health fair on February 6, 2016 from 10am-1pm. They are still looking for vendors that would like to participate in this event. This event is open to everyone.

Sergeant Hightower, PBSO representative, reported on the following:

- Sgt. Hightower stated that he would like to meet with Rudi Bester, from Memory Trees, to talk about the project being planned for Gramercy Park. He also inquired about the lot being donated in Plantation for a neighborhood park.

Mr. Tate advised that the feasibility of using the identified property for a park is still being assessed. No lot has been donated and the one under consideration is not large enough for park development. There is a lot next to it that the county is looking at as well. Ramsay Bulkeley, Code

Enforcement Director, stated that a land swap may be a possibility but a lot has to be assessed. The property that Mr. Tate referred to has fines and there is another property they would have to see if the property owner would sell or donate for park development. PBC Real Estate section is looking into how this process could work.

Gregory Gabriel, Youth Services, representative, reported on the following:

- Mr. Gabriel stated that January is National Mentoring Month. He also confirmed the date for the mentor recruitment event at the next MBK Task Force meeting which will be held on January 26, 2016 from 5:30pm-7:30pm @ Vista Center (2300 N. Jog Road WPB, FL Suite 1W-47). He also briefly mentioned the youth advisory council he is currently working on.

Ruth Mogueillansky stated that she and Mr. Tate were in Sarasota last year for a meeting and Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) training, and learned about the STAR program (Students Taking Active Role in Sarasota County) which might be useful to him. She added that the program is wonderful. Youth are provided with opportunities to become civically engaged through placement in decision making positions in Education, Law Enforcement, Government, Human Services, Philanthropy, and Teen Activities. They actually have youth on advisory boards. They also provide opportunities for students to earn community service hours through involvement in community-based leadership programs with appropriate pre-approval and documentation. In any efforts related to the youth advisory council. She said that she will be happy to share the information if Youth Services is interested.

IV. OCR Staff Reports

Chrystal Mathews, OCR Senior Planner, reported on the following:

- REAP will be starting on January 28th in Pahokee for 5 weeks. There are fifteen (15) participants signed up thus far.
- The REAP session for Central PBC will start on March 8th for 5 weeks. There are seventy-five (75) participants signed up thus far.
- Online sign up for REAP is available and additional notices will be sent out sometime this week.

Derrek Moore, OCR Senior Planner, reported on the following:

- OCR will be continuing with the business and economic development speaking series for both CCRT and GTAC meetings. The featured speaker for the February CCRT meeting will be Kelly Smallridge from the Business Development Board, followed up by Danny Martell from the Palm Beach County Economic Council who will speak at the March CCRT meeting.

V. New Business

Rudi Bester, Memory Trees representative

- Mr. Bester discussed the community project at Haverhill & 45th St that Memory Trees is involved in.

Mr. Tate added that there have been tremendous crime problems in the vacant lot next to Crossroads Church before it was cleaned up. He met with Mrs. Baker, the Sheriff's Office, the Police Chiefs of West Palm Beach and Riviera Beach about this problem, and an agreement was eventually signed by the police agencies to allow the three of them to respond in each other's jurisdictions. The agreement was necessary because the criminal element knew that if they went to one side of the street they would be in one jurisdiction and the other agencies couldn't touch them.

The proposal of using the lot for a community garden will be beneficial not only to discontinue the use of the lot as a hub for criminal activity, but also as a means to provide healthy foods and train residents on how to better provide for and become self sufficient. Mr. Tate thanked Rudi and Pastor Padgett for all they have done thus far to help make this project viable.

VI. Resident Comments

Larry Diegert, Plantation Community representative

- Mr. Diegert thanked Mrs. Baker for supporting OCR, his community and other communities. He also thanked the PBSO personnel for what they do and for the assistance with the Christmas event which went so well.

Mr. Tate advised that OCR provided some assistance with a few toys thanks to the contributions made by Barbra Haider from One Love-One Community. Mr. Tate thanked Ms. Haider for her efforts.

Hazel Lucas, Florida Rural Legal Services representative

- Ms. Lucas wanted to remind everyone that her office assists individuals with getting records expunged or sealed at no cost. Her office also focuses on some juvenile issues. She asked everyone to send anyone who may need assistance or help in these areas to her office.

Mrs. Baker asked if they only serviced the Glades area. Ms. Lucas responded that her office is located in Belle Glade but they service the entire PBC community. Mrs. Baker also asked about the restoration of rights, to which Ms. Lucas replied that they do not provide restoration of rights assistance but they assist with services such as housing, unemployment benefits and social security.

Mr. Moore added that he and Mr. Alvarez are both attorneys, they had a discussion about the records expunged and sealed topics, and they would love to work with Ms. Lucas on this project, if at all possible.

- Ms. Lucas stated that she is also the president of the Community Land Trust of Palm Beach County which provides affordable rental units such as those at Davis Landings and La Joya Villages as well as the Davis Landings West project which will be single family homes and townhomes. All properties are located in Lake Worth.

Florence French, Enroll America

- She invited all in attendance to attend a meeting and learn about options and obtain the proper health insurance coverage. Free in-person assistance will be provided at PBSC, Palm Beach Gardens campus on Wednesday, January 27th from 9am until 6pm.

VII. Follow Ups

N/A

The meeting was adjourned at 11:01a.m.

Approved by: Houston L. Tate, OCR Director

