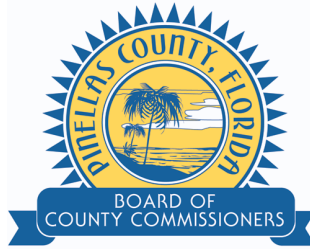


Pinellas County



Minutes - Final

Thursday, April 2, 2020

9:30 A.M.

BCC Assembly Room

Board of County Commissioners

Pat Gerard, Chair
Dave Eggers, Vice-Chair
Charlie Justice
Janet C. Long
Kathleen Peters
Karen Williams Seel
Kenneth T. Welch

ROLL CALL - 9:31 A.M.

Present: 7 - Chair Pat Gerard, Vice-Chair Dave Eggers, Charlie Justice, Janet C. Long, Kathleen Peters, Karen Williams Seel, and Kenneth T. Welch

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; Ken Burke, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller; other interested individuals; and Teresa Adkins, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

Chair Gerard called the meeting to order, and Mr. Burton related that future meetings would be conducted online, noting that the members would receive training on the virtual process after the meeting.

In response to concerns by the members, Mr. Burton, with input by Attorney White, related that due to notice provisions pertaining to public hearings, the Board is required to meet in person for the April 7 meeting. Discussion ensued, and he indicated that he would review options that could allow the meeting to be held remotely to better comply with social distancing guidelines; whereupon, Chief Assistant County Attorney Don Crowell provided a brief overview of the virtual meeting process.

1. Emergency Orders Extended

Florida Department of Health (DOH) in Pinellas County Director Ulyee Choe provided an update regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. He referenced an epidemiology curve and discussed statistics regarding cases within Pinellas County, the expected peak date, testing capabilities, social distancing, and a continued focus on vulnerable populations.

Dr. Choe presented information regarding various practices at long-term care facilities regarding visitations, staff personal protective equipment (PPE), and infection control policies. He related that two cases associated with separate facilities have been identified in Pinellas County; whereupon, he described the efforts of state and local partners to address the situation.

Dr. Choe indicated that a task force has been created in conjunction with the Emergency Management Department to review real-time data, tracking the capacity of local hospitals, and exploring alternatives should the number of cases rapidly increase. He thanked community partners, Pinellas County government, and all healthcare professionals for their hard work and asked the public to continue social distancing practices.

In response to queries by Commissioner Eggers, Dr. Choe, with input by Mr. Burton, discussed the increase in testing capabilities through private laboratories, the accuracy of reported results, hospital data reports, and efforts to establish locations to safely quarantine displaced individuals and to house the homeless population.

Responding to query and comment by Commissioner Seel, Dr. Choe discussed the availability of case data by zip codes and his concern that it may provide a mixed message to the public, and Emergency Management Director Catherine Perkins related that a business working group has been established to collaborate with local businesses on a number of products to impact the shortage of PPE.

Commissioner Welch noted that daily updates occur between County partners and have been informative; and that the updates should be shared with the public. In response to query by the Commissioner regarding long-term care facilities, Dr. Choe discussed the joint assessment process in place with DOH and the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) as it relates to proper disinfection practices.

In response to comments by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Burton related that Marketing and Communications is posting daily updates through social media outlets; whereupon, the members provided suggestions that include consistency in messaging across platforms and the implementation of a weekly front-facing official County update from the Chair or Administrator.

Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri referred to a PowerPoint presentation and provided an update on the level of compliance displayed throughout the community. He discussed the actions that organizations have taken to adhere to social distancing guidelines and provided an account of the measures his officers have made to educate the public. He stated that a tip line has been activated for citizens to report violations and ask questions related to compliance issues; and that he has established six compliance teams to address the concerns brought forth by the public; whereupon, he discussed examples of non-compliance found throughout the county.

Sheriff Gualtieri, with input by Ms. Perkins and Mr. Burton, discussed the restrictions imposed by the Governor's Executive Order No. 20-91, noting that the County's order could not be less restrictive but could increase restrictions; whereupon, he showed a video providing examples of public compliance.

Following discussion regarding what restrictions could be enforced, Mr. Burton clarified that the Miami-Dade amendments referenced by the Governor allow marinas to stay open, and Attorney White provided input.

Upon the Chair's call for citizens wishing to speak, Tom Rask, unincorporated Pinellas County, and Chris VerKuilen, St. Petersburg, appeared and presented their comments and concerns.

Mr. Burton indicated that he is asking the Board to extend the Local State of Emergency originally adopted on March 13, 2020, and Commissioner Justice made a motion to that effect. Following brief discussion, he amended his motion to grant authority for subsequent extensions to the Chair or County Administrator.

A motion was made by Commissioner Justice, seconded by Commissioner Peters, that the item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Gerard, Vice-Chair Eggers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Long, Commissioner Peters, Commissioner Seel, and Commissioner Welch

Resolution No. 20-21 adopted extending the Local State of Emergency established in Resolution 20-16, as well as all orders issued pursuant thereto, beginning as of 3:00 P.M. on April 3, 2020, as provided in Section 252.38(3)(a)5, Florida Statutes, for seven days.

Resolution No. 20-22 adopted designating official authority to execute subsequent extensions of the Emergency Resolution to the Chairperson or County Administrator.

Mr. Burton presented the proposed resolution pertaining to the Governor's Executive Order, and referring to discussion earlier in the meeting, Commissioner Welch confirmed the intent to strike the word *nonessential* in declaration Item No. 3, allowing the Administrator to close any business not in compliance with the order.

A motion was made by Commissioner Long, seconded by Commissioner Welch, that the item be approved as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Gerard, Vice-Chair Eggers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Long, Commissioner Peters, Commissioner Seel, and Commissioner Welch

Resolution No. 20-23 adopted effectuating Office of the Governor Executive Order 20-91 beginning on April 3, 2020, as provided in Section 252.38(1), Florida Statutes, and granting authority to the County Administrator to issue specific orders to close businesses that are not in compliance with the Order.

Thereupon, Mr. Burton indicated that the April 7 BCC meeting will be held online using a virtual meeting platform; and that no public hearings will be heard at that time per State requirements, and discussion ensued.

Meeting Recessed: 12:10 P.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 12:42 P.M.

2. Transportation Update

Chair Gerard reconvened the meeting, and Mr. Burton related that staff is ready to present options regarding a transportation referendum for the November election; and that if placed on the ballot, the Board would have until August 11 to reconsider its decision. Discussion ensued; whereupon, the members requested that due to the impacts of COVID-19, the referendum be tabled in order to allow County resources to address the immediate needs of the community.

Responding to query by Commissioner Seel, Mr. Burton discussed budget impacts and issues relating to the Local State of Emergency, noting that alternatives are being reviewed to help create a financial plan that will identify the best use of stimulus dollars.

Responding to the Chair’s call for citizens wishing to speak, Tom Rask, unincorporated Pinellas County, appeared and presented his comments and concerns.

3. Citizens To Be Heard

Tom Rask, unincorporated Pinellas County - no topic noted on card

4. Agenda Briefing

Mr. Burton and Attorney White provided a review of the agenda items to be addressed at the April 7, 2020 Commission meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the following items, and staff responded to queries by the members and provided input:


- Item No. 4 Hillsborough County Industrial Development Authority bonds
- Item No. 41 Pinellas County v. Duke Energy, Florida, LLC

Mr. Burton, with input by Attorney Crowell, explained the process that will be utilized regarding ballot votes in virtual meetings, and reiterated that more in-depth instruction will be provided individually following today’s meeting; whereupon, the members thanked Mr. Burton and his team for their hard work and dedication.

In response to query by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Burton indicated that funds provided to the County through the federal stimulus program can only be used towards things impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and that a team led by Assistant County Administrator Lourdes Benedict with Office of Management and Budget Director Bill Berger is gathering data and identifying those areas of need for review.

ADJOURNMENT - 1:20 P.M.

ATTEST: KEN BURKE, CLERK

By 
Deputy Clerk




Chair