

Pinellas County

*315 Court Street, 5th Floor Assembly Room
Clearwater, Florida 33756*



Minutes - Final

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

10:30 AM

**Pinellas County Schools Administration Building
301 4th Street SW, Largo**

Board of County Commissioners - Work Session

*Janet C. Long, Chairman
Kenneth T. Welch, Vice-Chairman
Dave Eggers
Pat Gerard
Charlie Justice
John Morroni
Karen Williams Seel*

Roll Call - 10:37 A.M.

Members Present:

Board of County Commissioners (BCC) – Janet C. Long, Chairman; Kenneth T. Welch, Vice-Chairman; Dave Eggers; Pat Gerard; and Karen Williams Seel.

Not Present: Commissioners Charlie Justice and John Morroni.

Pinellas County School Board (PCSB) – Peggy L. O’Shea, Chairman; Rene Flowers, Vice-Chairman; Carol J. Cook; Terry Krassner; Joanne Lentino; Linda S. Lerner; and Eileen Long.

Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) – Dr. James Sewell, Chairman; Brian J. Aungst, Jr., Vice-Chairman; Susan Rolston, Secretary; Bob Dillinger, Public Defender; Dr. Michael A. Grego, Superintendent, Pinellas County Schools; Michael Mikurak; Patrice Moore, Sixth Circuit Court Judge; and Karen Williams Seel, County Commissioner.

Also Present: Mark S. Woodard, County Administrator; Dr. Marcie Biddleman, Executive Director, JWB; David Koperski, School Board Counsel; other interested individuals; and Lynn M. Abbott, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk. (Minutes by Lynn Abbott and Helen Groves.)

Copies of all documents identified in the minutes have been made a part of the record.

Chairman O’Shea called the meeting to order, welcomed the attendees, and expressed sorrow for the loss of Maria Edmonds and Ray Neri, former JWB members; whereupon, at her request, those present introduced themselves and noted their board affiliation.

1. Pinellas County Demographic Presentation

Dr. Biddleman presented maps portraying the five at-risk-zones: (1) Tarpon Springs, (2) North and South Greenwood and Clearwater, (3) Highpoint, (4) Lealman, Pinellas Park, and St. Petersburg, and (5) South St. Petersburg and showing data pertaining to school success, school readiness, prevention of child abuse and neglect, and strengthening the community, along with charts depicting various facts for each zone, including the programs available, the number of residents served living in each zone, and the money budgeted for the five zones in each of the above four categories.

Dr. Biddleman related that considerable dollars have been going into the South St. Petersburg zone; and that the JWB is intentionally moving more of the funding into the mid-county and north-county areas in order to more equitably distribute the resources; whereupon, she discussed the services JWB provides.

2. Youth Health Presentation

Sara O'Toole, Managing Officer, School Health Services, and Donna Sicilian, Executive Director of Student Services, Pinellas County Schools (PCS), conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Why Do We Need More School Nurses and What Will It Cost to Get There?*, provided information on school nursing in Pinellas County and the challenges facing the nurses, and discussed the different nursing and nursing assistant categories, the role and importance of a school nurse, the current and desired nursing staffing plans, and the need for school nurses both nationally and in Pinellas County.

Dr. Ulyee Choe, Director, Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County, conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *School Health: Public Health Perspective*. He related that he previously was the Polk County Health Department Director and was surprised to learn that, unlike Polk County, Pinellas County does not have a trained professional nurse in each school. He discussed (1) the current school year budget that allowed eight additional Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) at a total cost of \$264,089; and (2) the current funding for school health nursing (Health Department, \$1.1 million, plus \$280,000 for administrative support; School Board, \$3.1 million; and JWB, \$900,000 for school-based clinics), stating that there continues to be a funding gap that prevents having an LPN in every school, noting that it would cost approximately \$1.4 million to do so.

In response to query by Commissioner Welch, Dr. Choe discussed ways that different Florida counties fund school nurses, noting that Pinellas County is funding two of the school LPNs this school year through the Health Department; whereupon, Ms. Lerner suggested developing an action plan and, at her request, Dr. Choe agreed to provide a summary showing current funding and what is needed.

In response to queries by the members, the presenters indicated that medical assistants, although significantly less expensive than LPNs, must work under the direction of a physician, and PCS does not currently have a physician available; that for safety reasons, PCS does not permit medical assistants to handle some duties that are allowed by Florida Statutes; and that the typical Registered Nurse in the Pinellas County schools covers three or four schools. She confirmed that the Legislative Delegation has not seen today's presentations.

Commissioner Seel commented that 9-1-1 and Emergency Medical Services average 500 calls from the public schools each year, about half of which entail transports to an emergency room, and offered a personal story regarding her role as Big Sister to a teenager. She stated that Florida Statutes would allow the BCC to raise its millage cap considerably; and that she and Dr. Biddleman are asking area foundations to support public health funding; whereupon, she challenged the boards to come up with a joint funding proposal to close the student nursing gap.

Superintendent Grego related that the Florida School Superintendents have brought up the issue at the state level several times, and their answer is that the school assistants can be trained to perform many of the responsibilities. He stated that he thinks the community can

meet the challenge of closing the \$1.2 to \$1.4 million funding gap, and discussion ensued regarding raising the millage cap, with input by County Administrator Woodard, Dr. Choe, Chairman O'Shea, Mses. Flowers and Rolston, Chairman Long, and Commissioner Gerard; whereupon, Chairman Long referred to the action plan suggested by Ms. Lerner, and in response to her queries, representatives of the three entities meeting today agreed to work with the different staffs to come up with the funding needed to close the gap.

Dr. Choe indicated that he would provide copies of the graphs he referred to in his presentation.

3. Homelessness Presentation

Susan Myers, CEO, Homeless Leadership Board (HLB) and St. Petersburg Councilmember and HLB Chairman Amy Foster conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Homelessness in Pinellas County*. Ms. Myers indicated that there are 25 Board members, many of whom are members of the three entities meeting today; presented an update of the activities of the Board; and discussed new initiatives.

Councilmember Foster discussed data contradicting a U.S. Housing and Urban Development report assessment that Pinellas County has too many beds for homeless families and not enough for individuals, noting that different agencies use different data sets. She related that many homeless people are leaving one shelter only to go to another; reviewed various funding the county receives related to homelessness; and discussed the strategies being used to combat homelessness, including Housing First and a coordinated entry system, noting that the same strategies are used for veterans, and homelessness has almost been eliminated in the veteran community; whereupon, she indicated that an action plan is needed to prevent homelessness, such as the one advocated by Ms. Lerner for the school health program.

Vicki Sokolik, Founder and Executive Director of Starting Right, Now, invited everyone to the February 8 grand opening of the new youth home at the old Harris Tips School in St. Petersburg; thanked Superintendent Grego and Commissioner Seel for encouraging her to bring the program to Pinellas County; and discussed how her agency helps end generational poverty by assisting unaccompanied youth, holistically, to become productive citizens. State Attorney Bernie McCabe, Superintendent Grego, and Commissioner Seel offered kudos for the good work the agency does, and in response to queries by Ms. Lentino and Chairman Long, Ms. Sokolik indicated that staff members live on the premises; and that only high school students are eligible for the program; whereupon, Chairman Long commented that the same type of program is needed at the elementary level.

Lourdes Benedict, Director of Pinellas County Human Services, conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Doing Things, Joint Workshop Meeting, Pinellas County Homeless Investment*, and provided an update regarding programs and services Pinellas County provides to assist the homeless, including:

- Adult Emergency Financial Assistance Program (client assistance, \$1.4 million; 2-1-1 administration, \$368,740)
- Family Housing Assistance Program (\$971,795)
- Homeless Leadership Board (\$100,000)
- Shelter and permanent supportive housing (Boley Local Match PSH / HUD, \$437,969; Catholic Charities Pinellas Hope, \$607,327; Westcare Turning Point Shelter Inebriate Receiving Facility, \$154,697)
- SOAR - SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (\$118,380)
- Social Action Funding - Homeless (various agencies, \$286,671)
- Street Outreach and Shelter Beds (various agencies, \$627,442)
- Homeless Funding (Travelers Aid - Daystar, \$15,750; 2017 Homeless Decision Package - \$1,330,984)
- Homeless Funding - Healthcare (MMU, \$960,310; Bayside Clinic, \$641,500; Combined Specialty Care, \$1.3 million; Combined Pharmacy, \$1.4 million)

Ms. Benedict indicated that Human Services, working with many partners, has brought in over \$14 million in grants to assist the homeless.

4. Next Steps Presentation

Canaan McCaslin, County Administrators Office, offered the following suggestions:

- The County, the School Board, and the JWB join together to make a *coordinated legislative ask* to bring the issues identified today to the attention of the lawmakers in Tallahassee.
- Consider changing the Florida Statute relating to the funding of the nursing and health programs to make it stronger and create a dedicated funding stream.
- Determine how local agencies can increase existing contributions or continue the contributions beyond the June 30 deadline.
- Encourage volunteers in the schools.
- Invest in affordable housing options.

5. Progress Report on School District

The item was deferred due to the time. Dr. Grego's PowerPoint presentation has been made a part of the record.

Ms. Lerner recommended that the agenda packet be distributed in time for the members to prepare for the issues; and that time be allowed for thorough discussions. Commissioner Welch concurred, and requested that another joint meeting be held in six months, echoed by Ms. Flowers, who suggested meeting sooner.

Dr. Sewell and Mr. Aungst stated that the JWB will be pleased to partner with the County and the School Board on the school nurse issue. Dr. Sewell invited Superintendent Grego to speak at a JWB meeting and expressed interest in working with the Health and Human Services Leadership Board.

Adjournment - 1:19 P.M.