

RESOLUTION NO. 21- 6

A RESOLUTION OF THE PINELLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, PROVIDING A PRELIMINARY FUNDING COMMITMENT FOR THE PUBLIC ACQUISITION OF THE GLADYS E. DOUGLAS PROPERTY, SUBJECT TO THE EXECUTION OF A FINAL FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF DUNEDIN.

WHEREAS, Pinellas County is dedicated to the preservation of environmental lands and recreation and open space; and

WHEREAS, certain property located at 1900 Virginia Avenue, Dunedin, Florida, as further described in the attached Exhibit "A", (hereinafter the "Property"), is one of the largest pieces of undeveloped property in Pinellas County; and

WHEREAS, the County has previously identified the Property as having significant environmental value for species and habitat protection, including but not limited to the critical protection of the rare Rosemary and Sand Pine Scrub and protection of the threatened gopher tortoise species; and

WHEREAS, the County has identified a need for additional outdoor recreation and open space in Pinellas County and the ability of the Property to provide the same, in addition to providing public access to Jerry Lake; and

WHEREAS, the Property is currently owned by the Estate of Gladys E. Douglas-Hackworth and her heir (hereinafter the "Estate"); and

WHEREAS, Pinellas County and City of Dunedin staff have been negotiating with the Estate for the potential acquisition of the Property, contingent upon approval of the governing bodies of the City and County; and

WHEREAS, the County received two appraisals for the acquisition of the Property, with estimated market values of the property in the amounts of five million five hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$5,525,000.00) and five million five hundred fifty dollars (\$5,550,000.00) respectively; and

WHEREAS, the Estate rejected the City and County's two previous contingent offers in the amount of seven million dollars (\$7,000,000.00) and eight million dollars (\$8,000,000.00) respectively; and

WHEREAS, the Estate subsequently conveyed its firm purchase price is ten million dollars (\$10,000,000.00); and

WHEREAS, the County desires to contribute an amount not to exceed three million five hundred thousand dollars (\$3,500,000.00) for the public acquisition of the Property; and

WHEREAS, the City has expressed its intent to contribute two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) toward the public acquisition of the Property; and

WHEREAS, the community support of the public acquisition of the Property has been overwhelming, with local environmental nonprofits reporting the receipt of a petition with over 14,000 citizen signatures and over 200 private donations in a current amount in excess of two million dollars (\$2,000,000.00) for the Property's public acquisition; and

WHEREAS, the County desires to continue to support efforts to raise additional private revenue for the public acquisition of the Property for a total acquisition cost not to exceed ten million dollars (\$10,000,000.00).

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS in a meeting duly-assembled on this 12th day of January 2021, adopted this Resolution providing a preliminary commitment of funding for the public acquisition of the Property, subject to the following:

1. Finalizing a funding agreement between the City of Dunedin and Pinellas County for the public acquisition of the Property with agreed upon terms and conditions, including but not limited to the ownership structure and maintenance responsibilities, in an amount not to exceed three million five hundred thousand dollars (\$3,500,000.00) in County funding. The County Administrator is hereby delegated with the authority to execute said funding agreement on behalf of the County, which shall be subject to ratification by the Board of County Commissioners. The County Administrator is also hereby delegated with the authority to enter into any and all additional contracts and agreements necessary for the effectuation hereof.
2. The County's funding contribution referenced herein is based on the conveyance of title acceptable to the County, ownership by a governmental entity, and an anticipated acquisition cost not to exceed ten million dollars (\$10,000,000.00) plus any associated closing costs. If the actual cost for acquisition is less than this amount, then the County may reduce the amount of its funding contribution.
3. If the Property will be owned by the City of Dunedin or governmental entity other than Pinellas County, the County's financial contribution will be subject to a conservation easement over the Rosemary and Sand Pine Scrub area of the Property, approximately 14.79 acres in size and further referenced on Exhibit A.
4. The County Administrator is hereby delegated with the authority to apply for and accept any and all grants received for the public acquisition of the Property on behalf of the County, including but not limited to the associated Florida Communities Trust (FCT) grant. The County will retain the proceeds of any and all grants it secures for the acquisition of the Property.
5. The County will continue to support efforts to raise additional private revenue for public acquisition of the Property.

6. This Resolution shall take effect upon its adoption.

Commissioner Flowers offered the foregoing resolution and moved its adoption, which was seconded by Commissioner Seel and upon roll call the vote was:

Ayes: Eggers, Justice, Flowers, Gerard, Long, Peters, and Seel

Nays: None

Absent and not voting: None

APPROVED AS TO FORM

By: Chelsea Hardy
Office of the County Attorney