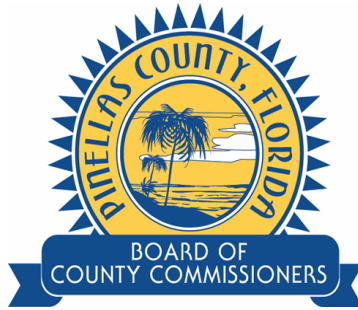


# **Pinellas County**

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



## **Minutes - Final**

**Tuesday, January 19, 2016**

**9:30 AM**

**BCC Assembly Room**

## **Board of County Commissioners - Work Session**

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

**ROLL CALL - 9:33 A.M.**

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

**Also Present:** James L. Bennett, County Attorney; Mark S. Woodard, County Administrator; and Christopher Bartlett, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

**Department Presentations**

Mr. Woodard related that the first half of the County Administration departments will be presenting today; and that the second half will be presenting at the January 21 work session.

Copies of PowerPoint presentations referred to in the minutes have been filed and made a part of the record.

**1. Public Works**

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Public Works*, Mr. Woodard related that the organizational structure of the department has been updated to focus on a strategic commitment to customer service; whereupon, he provided an overview of the new structure.

Natural Resources Division Manager Kelli Levy, referring to the presentation, provided an overview of the division's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures.

At the request of Mr. Woodard and referring to photographs, Ms. Levy provided information about the County's Kaiser AG walking excavator, noting that it was purchased in the first year of the surface water program and is used nearly every day; and that unlike traditional earth-moving equipment, the Kaiser excavator can maneuver through constrained space without causing damage. Responding to query by Commissioner Long, Mr. Woodard related that prior to acquiring the Kaiser excavator, the County would use draglines to clean and clear ditches; that draglines require a large work area to set up and use; and that the walking excavator has allowed the County to clear ditches that have not been cleared in decades, and discussion ensued.

In response to query by Commissioner Welch regarding mosquito borne diseases, Ms. Levy noted that cases are initially reported to the State Health Department, which is authorized to share information with the County; and that the County uses the information to target and treat specific breeding areas to minimize or eliminate further transmission of any disease.

Ms. Levy related that the County was recently awarded its first Tree City USA certification for the unincorporated area; that the County provides trees to the community to replace trees where feasible; and that the County practices superior environmental stewardship in order to protect and improve the quality of its water, air, and natural resources.

Responding to query by Mr. Woodard, Ms. Levy stated that County efforts have resulted in a 25-percent reduction in the flood insurance premiums of its citizens; and that further efforts could result in an additional five-percent reduction. She noted that the County is on track to replace all 24 miles of structurally deficient corrugated metal pipe within two years; that the channel maintenance cycle is at a ten-year average; and that educational outreach continues to promote awareness in the community to help minimize risks to water infrastructure.

Ms. Levy discussed customer expectations and survey results, employee retirements and career ladders, equipment transactions, and grant funding. Responding to query by Commissioner Eggers, she related that homeowner associations that maintain retention ponds can now apply for credits online; and that applications will be received through April; whereupon, she reviewed the key strategic measures of the department.

In response to query by Commissioner Welch, Ms. Levy stated that nourishment of the beach between Clearwater and North Redington Beach was completed in 2012 but must be repeated soon; that the Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for fill limits and has new standards that will apply to all projects; and that the County partnership with the Army Corps requires the use of best available science for climate change and sea level rise for any major capital improvement programs that receive federal funding.

Responding to queries by the members, Ms. Levy related that projects receive funding from federal and state sources; that T-groins will continue to be used for erosion control, as they retain sand longer and reduce the frequency of needed beach nourishment; and that environmental monitoring is performed about every six weeks, which is then compared to recorded data going back to 1991.

Ms. Levy noted that the County works with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Services (IFAS) to effectively landscape and limit pollutants from getting into waterways; that the County monitors Lake Seminole every six weeks, which has replaced the volunteer work previously completed through the IFAS Lake Watch program; and that there are approximately 170 County employees in natural resources and environmental management; whereupon, Commissioner Seel thanked Ms. Levy for her stellar leadership, and Commissioner Eggers concurred.

Discussion ensued, and in response to query by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Woodard noted that the number of employees in the department before and after realignment has stayed the same.

### Traffic

Traffic Division Manager Ken Jacobs referred to the presentation and provided an overview of the responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures of the division.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Eggers pertaining to traffic signs and signals, Mr. Jacobs noted that all school crossings operated by the County have been installed based on Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) standards; that municipalities have their own traffic control jurisdiction; and that a coordinated effort is made so that all entities utilize FDOT installation standards.

Mr. Jacobs discussed the additional responsibilities of his department and highlighted the following:

- Maintain all traffic cameras and overhead electronic message boards.
- Inspection services on all traffic-related construction.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety along the roadways.
- Conduct roadway safety audits.
- Monitor and adjust the timing of all traffic signals.
- Convert street lights to light emitting diode (LED) bulbs to reduce energy costs.
- Adapt school crossings and other signals to utilize solar energy.

Mr. Jacobs noted that Pinellas County has one of the more modern signal systems in the country; and that the department is working on a public awareness campaign through its various web services which will provide real-time traffic information to the public and local media.

In response to queries by the members, Mr. Jacobs related that electronic message boards are used primarily for emergency situations to help prevent secondary accidents from occurring; that travel time information will soon be added for the main corridors in the county; and that safety messages are rotated at various intervals regarding phone use while driving and other issues; whereupon, he identified the eight main traffic corridors with working message boards, and noted that three additional roads under construction have message boards installed which will be ready for use when the construction is completed.

Mr. Jacobs related that efforts have begun to implement infrastructure for vehicle automation technologies; and that the County has teamed with FDOT to coordinate its efforts. He further noted that all electronic flashers have been converted to LED lighting; that previous LED technology for street lights had limited its use to 30 feet, and most arterial street lights are at 45 feet; and that LED lighting is now suitable for street light replacement.

### Infrastructure

Referring to the PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Jacobs provided an overview of the responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures for infrastructure and roadways.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Jacobs provided background information regarding the Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) paving program and stated that unpaved roads are rated differently than paved roads needing resurfacing; and that funding for each is independent of the other. He related that the MSTU portion of the budget is \$650,000 annually; and that the resurfacing project is funded at \$7 million a year through the Penny for Pinellas, and discussion ensued.

Mr. Woodard related that the County has an initiative to begin identifying jurisdiction of roads within municipalities; that Safety Harbor was chosen as the first partner for the initiative; and that a template will be created which can then be scaled for use with the other cities.

In response to queries by the members, Mr. Jacobs noted that FDOT inspects all bridges in the state on a two-year basis; that it reports any criteria that need to be addressed by the County; and that when a bridge becomes structurally deficient, it is added to the capital improvement program for repair or replacement. He related that over 96 percent of potholes reported are repaired in less than 24 hours; and that the goal is to repair all of them within 72 hours of receiving the first report.

Mr. Woodard indicated that the current land development code does not provide for pavers to be used within the unincorporated areas; that pavers have become increasingly ubiquitous; and that some municipalities within the county allow greater flexibility for the use of pavers within the county right-of-way; whereupon, Mr. Jacobs stated that a policy could be created to allow pavers while requiring that Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards are adhered to; and that staff will bring a recommendation to the Board in the future, and discussion ensued.

## **2. Utilities**

Interim Utilities Director Jim Dulaney conducted a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures.

Mr. Dulaney noted that the William E. Dunn Water Reclamation Facility received a rare 100 percent compliance evaluation inspection from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection this past year. Responding to queries by Commissioner Eggers regarding the pelletization of biosolids at the South Cross Bayou reclamation facility, Mr. Dulaney indicated that capacity of the facility is limited by the size of the pelletizer unit; that enhancements through capital improvement projects have been able to increase capacity, which could allow for processing biosolids from municipalities; and that because it has chosen to pelletize, the County will not be impacted by new land

application rules.

Mr. Dulaney related that over five billion gallons of reclaimed water were distributed to customers in the previous year; that a goal is to improve to 100 percent beneficial reuse of any by-products of the process; and that installing pipes to expand the distribution system remains expensive, and discussion ensued.

Mr. Dulaney provided information on the following:

- Enhancing the waterway with high-quality water when there is a need for discharging that water into the aquifer.
- Implementing recommended improvements to the County's SCADA security systems as part of the requested Department of Homeland Security study.
- Maintaining certification of the County's water quality lab which participates in research projects with local universities and the Center for Disease Control on studies related to water and wastewater.
- Supporting neighborhood municipalities with sampling and regulatory requirements.
- Maintaining over 1,700 miles of potable water lines, 1,100 miles of sewer lines, 422 miles of reclaimed water lines, and 37,000 valves within the operating system.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Dulaney stated that the lines are continually evaluated, which includes annual closed-circuit video inspections; that a new enterprise management system will enhance the current level of assessment and should be in place in 18 to 24 months; that the majority of the systems are in good shape and the sections in need have been identified and have been reinforced or replaced; and that there is no fear of imminent failure in any of the systems, and discussion ensued.

Mr. Dulaney indicated that 676,000 meters are read by staff six times a year with over 99 percent accuracy. In response to query by Commissioner Welch regarding the installation of automatic meter readers, he indicated that it is the high cost of infrastructure, as opposed to the technology cost, that is prohibitive; and that the pilot program currently in place could be expanded or might include just commercial accounts. He noted that the Customer Service division handled over 160,000 phone inquiries and collected over \$800,000 in total revenue in 2015; and that staff processes over 3,300 billing components each day; whereupon, he provided an overview of the ongoing functions in Utilities.

In response to query by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Dulaney related that American Water Works Association (AWWA) standards have been adopted for measuring performance as of 2016, which will allow the County to measure itself against other organizations that utilize the same rating standards in their evaluations.

### 3. Solid Waste

Solid Waste Management Director Kelsi Oswald referred to a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, strategic planning,

opportunities, and key measures. She noted that the two largest operations are the landfill and waste-to-energy plant which operate under contracts monitored and supported by staff; and that additional programs include public education, waste diversion programs, a scale house, and an industrial water treatment plant used in support of the waste-to-energy plant.

Ms. Oswald indicated that the waste collection program in Lealman has been successful; that customer satisfaction with the service contractor is very high; and that it is time to renew and rebid the project. During discussion regarding recycling, she related that the focus is on recovering energy and value from the waste stream; that in addition to permanent collection centers in the county, the department sponsors *Haz-to-Go* mobile events for condominiums and mobile home parks; and that regulatory audits for commercial customers now include identifying and suggesting cost-saving solutions for handling their waste materials.

Ms. Oswald reviewed the reef program, indicating that reefs are built from recovered construction concrete to protect beaches and provide habitats for fish; and that the reefs create fishing and diving opportunities for local and visitor recreation.

Ms. Oswald discussed the current initiatives, including evaluating opportunities and interest for staff advancement; improving data management and analysis capabilities; maximizing the removal of hazardous materials from the waste stream; increasing the power generated from the waste-to-energy plant; and discovering ways to reduce the amount of ash that is deposited into the landfill.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Long, Ms. Oswald stated that as more waste is recycled, new waste streams are identified to keep the plant running at full capacity; that the current contract with the operator will expire in 2024; and that safety and environmental enhancements have improved conditions at the plant. She noted that a financial model is being developed that will minimize the impact of anticipated changes over the next several years; that the state has established a 75-percent recycling goal by 2020; and that the County currently recycles 63 percent of its waste and remains focused on reaching the 2020 goal.

In response to queries by Commissioner Welch, Ms. Oswald indicated that the impact of St. Petersburg's curbside recycling program shows a net reduction in waste of 3 percent; and that the program's total reduction may be somewhere between 12 and 13 percent when offset with the increase in waste generation of about 10 percent. She noted that generated waste has remained 9 to 10 percent higher each month over the previous year since September 2014; and that the 2015 report from the state will likely be released in April or May of this year.

**Meeting Recessed: 12:45 P.M.**

**Meeting Reconvened: 1:35 P.M.**

4. Real Estate Management

Real Estate Management Director Andrew Pupke introduced staff, referred to a PowerPoint presentation, and provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures. He discussed the following:

- Public safety, health and welfare, and collaboration with Emergency Management regarding a distribution site during hurricane season.
- Emergency generators throughout the county, including utility lift stations.
- Conservation opportunities such as LEED certification for new construction and renovation projects.
- Central energy plant and future co-generation plants as part of the jail infrastructure building, controlling ventilation systems when buildings are unoccupied.
- Solar power installation, hybrid vehicles, alternative fuels, and microbial-based cleaning.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Pupke noted that the Young-Rainey STAR Center's economic impact is over \$100 million annually; and that the Economic Development Authority is currently negotiating terms of its sale with a potential buyer. He indicated that the County is responsible for approximately nine brownfield projects including the 126th Avenue landfill and the Zero Manufacturing plant on 49th Street; that the state's space consolidation plan has been completed; and that proactive maintenance strategies have been implemented to ensure first-class services to the public; whereupon, he discussed workforce analysis and planning, and return on investment regarding conservation projects and solar power.

Mr. Pupke noted that an \$80,000 grant was received from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for the landfill; and that about \$300,000 more will come from the state based upon the County's participation in voluntary clean-up tax credits. In response to queries by the members, he indicated that there are no County-owned buildings that are functionally obsolete; that the Courthouse is not out of code compliance and could remain viable for another 20 years; and that conditional assessments are ongoing on all assets to help identify upgrade and replacement needs to help avoid disruptive and critical failures; whereupon, Mr. Woodard discussed the distinction between functionality and obsolescence, and discussion ensued.

Responding to query by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Pupke indicated that the City of Clearwater has explored the possibility of sharing infrastructure costs with the County; and that there has been no similar discussion with the City of St. Petersburg at this time.

5. Airport

Airport Director Thomas Jewsbury introduced his leadership staff, and referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an overview of the Airport's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures. He noted that there are 61 employees who collectively provide 24/7 operations, safety, and security for the Airport; that passenger



traffic has shown double-digit growth for the third consecutive year; and that the Airport's economic impact to the county and its communities is about \$752 million.

Mr. Jewsbury discussed public outreach and ways to foster economic growth, provided updates on expansion and rehabilitation projects within and as part of the Airport's infrastructure, and reviewed the efforts put forth to accommodate the FDOT's expressway project. He indicated that Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approval is required should the County desire to offer any surplus property for lease, and to continue collecting passenger facility fees; and that a new customer facility charge will be requested for Fiscal Year 2017; whereupon, he related that facility fees can be utilized by the airport for capital and land-side improvements.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Jewsbury noted that passenger facility fees are capped at \$4.50; that Tampa International Airport also assesses the fee; and that some organizations are working to increase the cap for the first time in 15 years. He related that the proposed customer facility charge would be assessed on car rentals, which could generate as much as \$2.57 million per year; whereupon, he discussed the following:

- Redevelopment opportunities and infrastructure regarding the Airport's surrounding properties.
- Customer service training for Airport employees.
- Future sustainability of Airport service.
- Enhancing passenger experience.
- Fiscal year 2017 budget.
- Annual FAA safety inspections (noting eleven consecutive years with zero discrepancies).
- Leveraging available federal, state, and other grants.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Jewsbury acknowledged that the press has not been kind to the Airport's main tenant, Allegiant Air; that the airline continues to grow along with the increasing demand for the destination; and that the FAA continues to monitor Allegiant along with all other airlines to ensure they operate safely. He indicated that should a tenant be lost or shut down, reserves are about \$24 million, which would provide a buffer for operating the facility; and that currently there is capacity to add another airline or charter tenant, and discussion ensued.

## 6. Convention and Visitors Bureau

Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Director David Downing referred to a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the Bureau's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures. He noted that there are 46 employees; that there are CVB offices or representatives in Washington D.C., Chicago, New York, Germany, United Kingdom, South America, Latin America, and China; and that the CVB is solely funded by the Tourist Development Tax.

Mr. Downing indicated that tax revenue is proportionate to the rise in tourism, which has shown a 54-percent increase since 2012; that the sixth cent added in January should generate six to eight million dollars this fiscal year; and that part of the total tax proceeds is used to pay for operations, with portions paid to the County for services rendered to the CVB. He noted that local non-stop air service to parts of the west coast has started; that CVB utilizes a broad range of advertising including television, radio, digital, and social media; and that its focus is on beaches, art, culinary, and other diverse interests found in the area. He further discussed the following topics:

- Local and state stakeholders and other important relationships.
- Sponsorships of various events that promote tourism.
- Importance of traditional and online agencies that offer travel packages to the region.
- Retaining existing and attracting new air service to Pinellas County.
- Increasing destination awareness of various sports, arts, and other attractions in Pinellas County.
- Supporting the efforts of Creative Pinellas.
- Allowing the market to determine its average daily room rate.
- Impacting the local economy through tourism by creating an authentic image and brand of the destination.

In response to queries by the members, Mr. Downing indicated that the number of area visitors continues to increase each year; that some stakeholders are concerned about the corresponding impact on transportation and traffic levels; and that the CVB monitors those and other related concerns; whereupon, he discussed the importance of marketing outreach, robust advertising, and social media.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Downing stated that the average daily bed rate in Pinellas is higher than it is in Tampa; and that the Pinellas Tax Collector began receiving tax payments related to Airbnb services as of January 1; whereupon, Mr. Woodard noted that staff is working with the Tax Collector to provide a report on the general impact of Airbnb-related tax revenue. Mr. Downing indicated that hotels which hire above minimum wage set themselves apart from the competition; that multiple hotels are under construction that will add thousands of additional rooms; and that the economic impact will be several billion dollars.

## 7. Parks and Conservation Resources

Parks and Conservation Resources Director Paul Cozzie introduced members of his staff and related that the department has approximately 206 employees within six program areas: air quality, horticulture, parks and preserves, resource and asset management; education and extension services, and administration. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures, noting that 1,200 volunteers performed over 140,000 hours of service to the department; that more than 300 special events were coordinated in county parks and facilities; and that the annual Holiday Lights event at the Florida Botanical Gardens set a new record, raising over \$229,000.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Cozzie indicated that the Green Pinellas new employee program is for all County employees and is included in their orientation; that 78 beach safety signs will be installed before the start of the tourist season; and that a junior lifeguard training program was discontinued by the County several years ago due to various difficulties. Mr. Woodard stated that parking fees at County-owned parks allow for greater improvements within the park system; and that some enhancements are completed more quickly because of the additional revenue.

## 8. Risk Management

Risk Management Director Virginia E. Holscher conducted a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures.

Responding to query by Commissioner Long as to whether insurance premiums could be reduced by combining assets with other governmental entities, Ms. Holscher stated that it would be a possibility for liability insurance, but as the amount of property to be insured increases, it becomes more difficult to attract providers; and that economies of scale relating to the casualty area may prove to be a positive opportunity to reduce premiums.

Ms. Holscher indicated that an OSHA training and certification initiative will be phased in over the next five years; whereupon, Mr. Woodard related that public entities are not required to follow OSHA standards, even though contractors working with the County are required to do so; and that implementing OSHA standards for County employees exemplifies the Board's strategic plan to prioritize workplace safety and employee wellness.

During discussion and in response to query by Commissioner Long, Ms. Holscher related that the County has contracted with Company Nurse to provide employees a 24/7 injury hotline should an injury occur.

## 9. Purchasing

Purchasing Director Joe Lauro referred to a PowerPoint presentation and provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, strategic planning, opportunities, and key measures, noting that building good customer relationships and establishing outreach opportunities will continue to improve the procurement process.

Responding to queries by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Lauro indicated that the transition of the purchasing system to Oracle is complete, and acknowledged Commissioner Welch's desire to spend County funds locally and to ensure contractors pay a minimum living wage standard of \$12.50 an hour.

In response to query by the Chairman, Mr. Lauro stated that use of purchasing cards saves approximately \$1.5 million annually in staff time and actual costs; whereupon, Chairman Justice thanked Mr. Lauro for his presentation.

Chairman Justice reported that House Bill 937, Tierra Verde Fire Control and Rescue District, passed its first legislative committee earlier today; and that Representative Dudley voted against the bill; whereupon, he announced that the cold weather shelters will be open this evening for those in need.

**ADJOURNMENT - 4:27 P.M.**