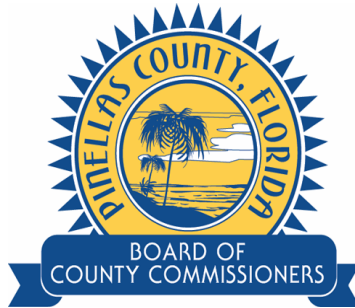


# Pinellas County

315 Court Street  
Clearwater, Florida 33756



## Minutes - Final

Tuesday, January 15, 2019

9:30 AM

9:30 AM - BCC Assembly Room / 12:30 PM - Clerk's Conference  
Room, 4th Floor

## Board of County Commissioners - Work Session

*Karen Williams Seel, Chair*

*Pat Gerard, Vice-Chair*

*Dave Eggers*

*Charlie Justice*

*Janet C. Long*

*Kathleen Peters*

*Kenneth T. Welch*

**ROLL CALL - 9:34 A.M.**

Present: Karen Williams Seel, Chair; Dave Eggers; Charlie Justice; Janet C. Long; Kathleen Peters; and Kenneth T. Welch

Absent: Pat Gerard, Vice-Chair

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; and Michael Schmidt and Lynn Abbott, Board Reporters, Deputy Clerks

**1. Tampa Bay Water Update - Matt Jordan, General Manager**  
(Location: BCC Assembly Room)

Tampa Bay Water General Manager Matt Jordan referred to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Reliable, Diverse Water Supplies for Today and Tomorrow*, and discussed the following:

- Regional Water Supply System; Sources of Supply
  - Long-Term Master Water Plan
  - Board-Approved, Decision-Making Criteria
  - Shortlisted Projects for Additional Study
  - Next Steps
- 
- Tampa Augmentation Project Background and Timeline
  - Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding
  - Next Steps

Throughout the presentation, Mr. Jordan, executive team members, and legal counsel responded to comments and queries by the members.

During discussion, General Counsel Donald Conn and Special Counsel Peter Dunbar provided information regarding the Tampa Augmentation Project (TAP), South Hillsborough Aquifer Recharge Program (SHARP), and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD); whereupon, they presented information pertaining to the memorandum of understanding, interlocal agreement, and benefits summary, and discussed the financial obligation of the City of Tampa to Tampa Bay Water, the sale of water to member and nonmember governments, and issues relating to precedent.

Responding to queries by the members, Tampa Bay Water Chief Science and Technical Officer Ken Herd discussed his education and experience in water supply development and presented information regarding the proposed injection of wastewater into the Florida Aquifer; whereupon, City of Tampa Water Department Director Chuck Weber, with input by Assistant City Attorney Jan McLean and Mr. Jordan, discussed the following:

- Factors concerning cooperative funding and a feasibility analysis
- Bill Young Regional Reservoir water sources
- Wastewater treatment processes and risk
- Upcoming Executive Committee meeting
- Water supply development projects
- TAP versus deep well injection
- Pilot testing and permitting
- Regional cooperation
- Capacity

The members provided their final thoughts regarding the item; whereupon, responding to the Chair's call for persons wishing to be heard, David Ballard Geddis, Jr., appeared and expressed his comments and concerns.

#### Federal Government Partial Shutdown

Commissioner Long discussed consequences relating to the federal government partial shutdown, reporting that she has been receiving telephone calls and texts from concerned seniors regarding the matter. In response to her queries, Mr. Burton related that he will be providing the members a complete report, and indicated that local veterans are not being impacted with respect to their benefits, and brief discussion ensued.

Thereupon, Chair Seel related that the work session would resume at 12:30 P.M.

**Meeting Recessed: 11:13 A.M.**

**Meeting Reconvened: 12:35 P.M.**

**2. St. Petersburg College Update - Dr. Tonjua Williams, President  
(Location: Clerk's Conference Room, 4th Floor)**

St. Petersburg College (SPC) President Dr. Tonjua Williams provided an overview of her childhood growing up in St. Petersburg and her educational background in the county; whereupon, she described the student body at SPC, noting that many of the students have similar backgrounds to hers and live with many of the same economic hardships she had experienced in her youth.

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Economic Prosperity through the Educational Ecosystem*, Dr. Williams noted SPC's open door admission process and discussed the importance of providing parents with an educational roadmap early that explains the available options and guides them in making decisions for their child; whereupon, she reviewed the recent and evolving partnership of SPC, the University of South Florida, and Pinellas Technical College as the three educational systems work together to meet the workforce needs in the county, create an educational ecosystem that guides students in choosing and enrolling on a pathway, and assist them along the way to graduation.

Dr. Williams quizzed members on SPC statistics as part of her presentation, and related that while SPC enrollment rates are increasing, more students are earning higher grades, and withdrawal rates are declining, several challenges remain, including the following:

- Motivating students to enroll
- Issues related to poverty
- Affordable housing
- Lack of childcare on campus

Dr. Williams related that students from high poverty areas have a ten percent lower success rate than other students, according to an analysis of the five areas of poverty in the county, and specifically pointed out the disparity in certain neighborhoods in St. Petersburg. She stated that in order to help economically-challenged students, SPC provides free tutoring, bus passes, free mental health counseling, culturally sensitive training for faculty, and short-term certificates that allow students to become credentialed quickly and that can be applied in the future towards a degree.

Dr. Williams reported that one of the biggest challenges to keeping students enrolled is transportation, indicating that it is difficult for some students to return home by bus after class due to recent changes made by the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA); that PSTA does not consult or inform SPC about route changes in advance; and that communication with the public transportation provider is not as good as it was previously; whereupon, Commissioner Long indicated that she will investigate the issue and expressed her support for offering free public transportation to all students beginning at the high school level and encouraged a partnership between public schools, SPC, and PSTA.

Dr. Williams explained that a digital divide among students is another obstacle to their success during the first semester; that some students are unfamiliar with how to operate a computer, deficient in typing skills, and lack Internet or Wi-Fi access at home; and that the St. Petersburg campus is attempting to install Wi-Fi towers on buildings to provide Internet access for students in the area; whereupon, Commissioner Welch expressed his support for the effort and requested updates.

Responding to queries by Commissioners Welch and Eggers, Dr. Williams stated that the ecosystem for education needs to start in late elementary to early middle school in order to put students on the pathway towards higher education; that SPC has installed advisors in certain high schools, but not in middle schools; that it hopes to rebuild its relationship with CareerSource Pinellas; that SPC offers public schools the opportunity to bring students on campus to use their facilities, such as the mock courtroom and hospital; and that her goal is to have a STEM-based collegiate middle school. Commissioner Peters opined that advisors might not be useful in middle schools due to the different stage of child development and suggested partnering with the college to create a feeder system to train students for hard to fill positions in the County.

In response to query by Commissioner Justice, Dr. Williams related that employers tell her that workers have the technical skills but lack soft skills, and singled out the different attitudes towards career and aspirations held by the new generation of young adults; whereupon, Chair Seel related that when she attended a meeting on campus, the lack of soft skills was mentioned repeatedly by company representatives.

Responding to query by Commissioner Welch regarding the legislative funding outlook, Dr. Williams related that Florida state colleges have not been permitted to raise tuition for the past nine years; that she has been told that this year SPC will be funded better than in the past; and that she is preparing a report on college funding needs that she will make available to the Board.

Commissioner Long requested that the Board receive updates from SPC more frequently in order to stay in touch and be aware of new trends and emerging issues, such as cybersecurity; whereupon, Dr. Williams suggested that an educational presentation take place once or twice a year and encouraged members to reach out to her with concerns or questions about the college.

Mr. Burton concurred that creating a pipeline that fosters and supports people in improving their lives should be a priority, and indicated that the issues will be part of future strategic planning discussions; whereupon, Dr. Williams requested that the Board include SPC in future planning sessions on related topics.

Responding to query by Commissioner Welch, Dr. Williams related that the student success center that will consolidate all support services in one location is scheduled to open in January of next year.

**ADJOURNMENT - 1:41 P.M.**