

Pinellas County

*315 Court Street
Clearwater, Florida 33756*



Minutes - Final

Thursday, April 4, 2019

9:30 AM

Work Session/Agenda Briefing

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 - 9:30 A.M.

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

Others Present: Barry A. Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; and Jenny Masinovsky, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

1. Agenda Briefing

Commissioners Eggers and Welch indicated that they received feedback from the public subsequent to the recent change in venue for agenda briefings, previously held in the Commissioners' offices, and work sessions, typically held in the Assembly Room, and the decision to combine the two meetings in the Clerk's 4th Floor Conference Room; whereupon, discussion ensued regarding openness and accessibility relating to the present location, the benefits of holding joint rather than individual Commissioner agenda briefings, the need for and possibility of videotaping the meetings, and how similar meetings are conducted in the municipalities.

Some members indicated that it was their understanding that the agenda briefing would be held in the Clerk's Conference Room, and the work sessions would continue to be held in the Assembly Room, noting that presentations such as those scheduled for today have historically been held there and televised; and that the public may be interested in the topics. Mr. Burton explained that the current location allows for more efficient use of staff resources without compromising transparency, and in response to comments by the members, related that there would be signage placed on the first floor to inform the public of the meeting location; and that the possibility of equipping the Clerk's Conference Room with static cameras would be explored.

Referring to the agenda briefing, Commissioner Eggers requested that Mr. Burton mention any items that the members discuss today at length at the upcoming BCC meeting, to let the public know that pertinent discussion took place, and Commissioner Long requested an update regarding the prospect of a joint-use facility for the County and the City of Clearwater.

Attorney White advised the members regarding limitations on engaging in discussion of public hearing items included on the April 9 BCC meeting agenda, noting that the hearings are scheduled and noticed for that date; and that potentially important information could be obtained between now and then; whereupon, she suggested that the members use the opportunity today to ask questions of staff and receive the answers between now and April 9, encouraging them to have a full discussion during the hearings. Chair Seel indicated that doing so was the original

intent; and that she will discuss the members' concerns and ideas regarding the meetings with Mr. Burton, noting that it is an evolving process.

Thereupon, Mr. Burton reviewed the agenda for the April 9 meeting and responded, with input by staff, to queries by the members with regard to Items Nos. 6, 8, 24, 25, 26, 30, 33, 40, and 42, on which brief discussions were held, and the members requested additional information or discussion with regard to Items Nos. 26, 33, 40, and 42.

Attorney White introduced Items Nos. 37 through 39, noting that 37 and 38 pertain to proposed settlements of lawsuits and involve matters which are currently exempt from public records and Sunshine Law requirements. She advised that they not be publicly discussed today, noting that her confidential memorandums containing recommendations are available in the Chair's office, and encouraged the members to review them and call her with any questions.

2. 2019 Citizen Values Survey
- Robert Allen, Vice President, HCP & Associates

Mr. Allen conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Pinellas County Citizen Research: Telephonic Study of Citizen Values, 2019 Survey Results*, which has been made a part of the record. He noted that the level of trust and confidence in Pinellas County Government, reported at 97 percent, reflects an increase from prior years and is extremely high, significantly exceeding the national level of 70 percent for local governments. He briefly discussed the survey methodology, relating that a total of 800 interviews with local citizens were completed in the beach communities and north county, mid county, and south county regions with a 3.5-percent margin of error; and that the Random Digit Dial software that was utilized reached 80 percent land line and 20 percent cellular phone users, noting that the aggregate data was weighed based on the regions' populations; whereupon, he provided an overview of the results and responded to queries by the members, highlighting the following:

- While shifts in participation rates among different age and ethnic groups have been observed over the survey history, it generally offers an aligned representation of the population.
- Traditionally positive recommendations of the county as a place to work and raise children have recovered from a slight dip noted in 2018.
- While the number of residents who perceive the quality of life to be better or just as good compared to five years ago stayed roughly the same as in 2018, the number of residents optimistic that the next five years will be better or just as good as the present decreased by 9 percent.
- Open-ended research conducted to understand the reasons for the decline in the future quality of life response revealed that traffic and crime are the top concerns;

however, the importance of the media effect in the perception of growing crime cannot be discounted, since the residents also reported “feeling safe” as one of the top five ranked experiences.

- Concerns about sea level rise have risen from 8 percent last year to 22 percent this year
- The largest expectation gaps include residents’ dissatisfaction with traffic flow on major roads and support services for the community. Conversely, the residents’ expectations are met or exceeded in matters related to parks, community functions, availability of jobs for individuals’ skillsets, and personal safety, which is also reflected in the top-ranked experiences.
- The slight increase from 1.6 percent to 2.9 percent in the number of residents reporting plans to move from the county in the next year is statistically insignificant.

During discussion regarding the survey process and results, the members expressed a concern regarding the majority of calls being made to land line phones and that many people, regardless of the phone type they use, disregard unknown calls as spam, and Commissioner Long proposed allowing HCP to have “Pinellas County Government” displayed for caller identification when dialing to conduct the survey.

The members discussed the importance of obtaining additional information about the residents’ top concerns, such as traffic, and considered whether the next Citizen Values survey should include more detailed open-ended questions; whereupon, Mr. Berger provided input, noting that the survey has historically been broad-based; and that other strategies or methods of getting public input may be used to obtain information about traffic concerns. Chair Seel pointed out that raising public awareness of various support services currently provided by the County may address the aforementioned expectation gaps.

The members noted that it would be valuable to present the survey information at a Commission meeting and seek the residents’ feedback, and Chair Seel indicated that Mr. Burton will discuss the results at the upcoming BCC meeting; whereupon, Commissioners Welch and Justice requested that the detailed survey report mentioned by Mr. Allen be provided to the members.

3. Creative Pinellas
- Barbara St.Clair, Executive Director

Creative Pinellas Executive Director Barbara St. Clair indicated that Creative Pinellas is the local arts agency which serves in partnership with the BCC to support the arts, artists, arts community, and community museum of arts, noting that it is located in the the former Gulf Coast Museum of Art building in Pinewood Cultural Park, next to the Florida Botanical Gardens and Heritage Village.

Ms. St. Clair introduced the agency's new employees, Kim DiVito and Leigh Davis, and Creative Pinellas Board member Carlen Peterson; whereupon, she conducted a PowerPoint presentation titled *Doing Things! (lots and lots of high value things) Creative Pinellas*, and discussed the following:

- Strategic focus and plan
- Ongoing outreach programs/Arts Business Incubator
- Available grants
- Upcoming community events and arts projects
- Website resources and growth
- Community partnerships and joint programs, including collaborations with Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater to enhance the visitor experience and with Forward Pinellas to establish U.S. Highway Alternate 19 as a cultural corridor

Ms. St. Clair noted that Strategic Plan brochures are available at the staff table.

During brief discussion, the members expressed their enthusiasm about the upcoming projects and commended Ms. St. Clair and the staff on their hard work. Commissioner Welch noted the importance of the County providing continuing financial support to local arts organizations, including allocating a portion of the Tourist Development Tax going forward, and requested that the topic be discussed during an upcoming budget work session. Responding to query by Commissioner Long, Ms. St. Clair clarified that a celebration of reinstalling the *Face the Jury* sculpture of 13 red chairs outside the County Courthouse in downtown St. Petersburg will take place on April 13.

Meeting Recessed: 11:05 A.M.

Meeting Reconvened: 11:16 A.M.

4. North County Reclaimed Water Master Plan
- Megan Ross, Director, Utilities

Utilities Director Megan Ross referred to a PowerPoint presentation titled *North County Reclaimed Water Master Plan* and indicated that the Master Plan was completed in December of last year by the Utilities Department in coordination with Carollo Engineers, Inc. She discussed the north county reclaimed water system, the purpose and intent of the plan, data regarding current water availability and historical supply and demand, and the plan recommendations, implementation, and costs, and responded to queries by the members, highlighting the following:

- The north county reclaimed system consists of the William E. Dunn Water Reclamation Facility and storage pond and the Clearwater/Oldsmar intertie.

- The purpose of the plan is to enhance reclaimed water availability, which is one of the County's strategic goals, by evaluating the current demands on the system and identifying opportunities for improvement without changing the current infrastructure, as well as evaluating future demands and planning for infrastructure improvements.
- During the dry months of March, April, and May, and sometimes September and October, customer demand exceeds the amount of available water, requiring occasional system shut downs.
- The customer base is roughly 6,200 single-family residences, plus golf courses and schools. Approximately 3,100 customers, to whom the service is available, are not currently utilizing the system and represent additional capacity of 2.2 million gallons of reclaimed water per day.
- Potential demand based on an increase in the customer base must be considered in the plan.
- A three-phased implementation plan of action addressing current and future demands includes operational improvements to enhance existing supply capabilities, meter installation, customer education and outreach, and supply and storage alternatives providing for storage of available excess water to be used during the dry season.
- The plan will be presented to the Council of North County Neighborhoods on May 21.
- Based on customer feedback, Utilities staff held a number of irrigation contractor forums to discuss alternatives relating to watering restrictions and established a line of communication informing of any changes in the watering schedule.

Responding to query by Chair Seel, Ms. Ross indicated that Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club and East Lake Woodlands Country Club already pay a metered charge, not a flat rate; and that she will provide additional information regarding the payment amount.

Commissioner Eggers thanked Ms. Ross for the customer outreach and briefly discussed the importance of customer education, the potential positive effect that metering and adopting Florida-friendly landscaping would have on the system, and how the City of Dunedin controls excess usage during the dry season. Responding to his queries, Ms. Ross indicated that based on past trends, the customer base is expected to increase; and that she will be making recommendations to the Board after evaluating different options and costs to address potential demand; whereupon, she pointed out that the goal for metering is to incentivize conservation.

Commissioner Eggers noted that all available financing alternatives should be considered, including the County paying for meter installation. Mr. Burton provided input relating to meter installation options and technology, indicating that all options will be considered, and Ms. Ross noted that reclaimed water meter installation will coincide with the upgrade of potable water meters to electronic, reducing the installation costs.

Adjournment - 11:46 A.M.