

Pinellas County



Minutes - Final

Thursday, August 6, 2020

9:30 A.M.

Virtual Regular Meeting

Board of County Commissioners

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

ROLL CALL - 9:30 A.M.

Present: 7 - Chair Pat Gerard, Vice-Chair Dave Eggers, Charlie Justice, Janet C. Long, Kathleen Peters, Karen Williams Seel, and Kenneth T. Welch

Others Present: Barry Burton, County Administrator; Jewel White, County Attorney; Jeanette Phillips, Chief Deputy Clerk; other interested individuals; and Jenny Masinovsky, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk

Office of Technology and Innovation Director Bryan Zumwalt introduced himself and announced that he would be the Technology Moderator for the virtual meeting; and that Chief Assistant County Attorney Don Crowell would serve as Process Moderator; whereupon, he conducted a roll call of the members.

Commissioner Eggers reminded everyone that tomorrow is a Purple Heart Day; and that Pinellas County recognizes local recipients of the award; whereupon, he asked for a moment of silence in honor of nine servicemen who died in a training accident off the coast of California on July 30.

1. Citizens To Be Heard

Dawn Bohler, St. Petersburg

Karen Mullins, Dunedin

2. Local State of Emergency

Mr. Burton introduced the item, indicating that various measures implemented to combat COVID-19 are producing positive results; whereupon, Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County Director Dr. Ulyee Choe discussed current trends and statistics, including improvement in terms of case numbers, percent positivity rates, and hospital capacity; a decrease in testing; and some disproportionate impacts due to a large vulnerable population. He underscored the importance of continuing social distancing, wearing masks, and working with long-term care facilities to control the spread of the virus.

Responding to queries by the Commissioners, Mr. Burton, Dr. Choe, and Emergency Medical Services Medical Director Dr. Angus Jameson addressed the following topics relating to COVID-19:

- Training and upgrades at long-term care facilities
- Establishing additional Super Skilled Nursing Facilities
- Reluctance to access hospitals by the public
- Various data trends
- Impact on vulnerable population
- Testing sites and turnaround times
- Research regarding virus immunity
- Convalescent plasma therapy/blood donations
- Pinellas CARES programs update

Mr. Burton indicated that the Board is not scheduled to meet for the last two weeks of August, and he and Attorney White presented the option and the associated resolution to delegate the authority for subsequent weekly Local State of Emergency extensions to the Chair or, in her absence, to the Vice-Chair or the Administrator, providing for any gaps in the meeting schedule.

Following discussion regarding the delegation authority specified in the resolution and the value in continuing to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the matter, the consensus by the members was not to delegate the authority.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Eggers, seconded by Commissioner Welch, that the order extending the Local State of Emergency be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Chair Gerard, Vice-Chair Eggers, Commissioner Justice, Commissioner Long, Commissioner Peters, Commissioner Seel, and Commissioner Welch

Resolution No. 20-72 adopted extending the Local State of Emergency established in Resolution No. 20-16 until 3:00 P.M. on August 14, 2020.

3. Comp Plan Update

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation titled *PLANPinellas Status Update*, Principal Planner Rebecca Stonefield provided background information and a progress update regarding the PlanPinellas project, a revision of the Comprehensive Plan containing various County policies in support of its goals, discussing the following:

- Project drivers
- Role of PlanPinellas
- Phased approach: guiding principles, policy consolidation, and updates
- Interrelationship of issues impacting the project, including housing, transportation, jobs, economic prosperity, livability, and more
- How the project advances County initiatives
- Development of plan chapters to address specific issues such as housing and transportation
- Update process
- Creation of a streamlined document
- Key changes to the plan
- Next steps

Commissioner Eggers commented on the streamlining process, the importance of health, comprehensiveness of the plan, and related matters, and responding to query by Commissioner Welch, Ms. Stonefield provided information regarding posting the Comprehensive Plan document on the County website.

4. Agenda Briefing

Mr. Burton and Attorney White provided a review of the agenda items to be addressed at the August 11, 2020 Commission meeting; whereupon, Mr. Burton responded to queries and comments by Commissioner Eggers pertaining to the following items:

- Item No. 6 An audit report by the Division of Inspector General, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
- Item No. 16 Notice of new lawsuit against the County for personal injuries allegedly arising out of a trip and fall accident

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Burton confirmed that the August 11 meeting will be virtual, with an opportunity for the public to comment either virtually or in person; whereupon, he provided a status update regarding the Tides Golf Club property development action, indicating that staff plans to work with the applicant and the community on scheduling a hearing by the Local Planning Agency in the fall; and that finding an adequate venue to accommodate a potentially large crowd of attendees is challenging.

5. Budget Feedback

Mr. Burton related that at a recent Board meeting, the members requested clarification regarding a plan to address the County's mental and behavioral health system based on recommendations by the KPMG consulting team and the Emergency Medical Services budget.

Mental and Behavioral Health system

Human Services Director Daisy Rodriguez referred to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Optimal Data Set (minimal data set)* and provided an overview of the Optimal Data Set (ODS) project benefits and the implementation timeline, discussing the following phases:

- Project mobilization
- ODS development
- Performance-based contracting
- Data warehouse development and pilot

Ms. Rodriguez indicated that the implementation is projected to take 32 weeks, after which the data set would be launched in order to capture and evaluate data to help inform the next steps; whereupon, Mr. Burton further discussed the timeline and funding, emphasizing that community partnership and understanding data are key in the establishment of the Coordinated Access Model (CAM).

In response to queries by Commissioner Peters, Mr. Burton and Ms. Rodriguez provided details regarding the ODS project and developing the CAM.

Commissioner Peters opined that the County should fund the CAM in order to ensure that providers utilize the data set; and that based on the KPMG report, the efforts to implement

the data set and the CAM should be simultaneous; whereupon, discussion continued on the following issues:

- Importance of provider utilization of the ODS
- Provider contracting
- Role of Central Florida Behavioral Health Network in the project
- Timing and funding of the CAM and the need to have data analysis in order to design the central coordinated access model
- Coordinating efforts with the Behavioral Health System of Care workgroup regarding the Pinellas County Behavioral Health Central Receiving System initiative
- Support of the County's behavioral and mental health system improvement plan by Suncoast Center, Inc. President and Chief Executive Officer Barbara Daire

Commissioner Peters voiced her concerns pertaining to the state of mental health in the county, including an increase in the number of drug overdose deaths and in HIV and Hepatitis A cases resulting from the opioid crisis, as well as a high number of Baker Act individuals, noting the urgency to improve the system; whereupon, she requested that a million dollars be budgeted for the upcoming fiscal year for the CAM to speed up the process.

Commissioner Gerard reiterated that the funds are available to be allocated as soon as the CAM is ready to be implemented; whereupon, responding to queries by Commissioner Eggers, Mr. Burton stressed that pertinent partnerships and data sharing are needed prior to designing the coordinated access system and pointed out that two staff members will be dedicated to working on the matter.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) budget

In response to inquiries by Commissioner Eggers regarding the state of the EMS fund and Pinellas County EMS-ALS First Responder Program Enhancement Requests for Fiscal Year 2021, Safety and Emergency Services Director Jim Fogarty referred to a spreadsheet titled *Emergency Medical Services Fund Forecast* and an associated chart and provided an overview of the EMS system and budget.

Mr. Fogarty explained that EMS contracts with local fire districts and departments to provide first responder service, which is paid for by the EMS fund; that various other services provided by the fire districts/departments are paid with their own budgets; that decisions regarding enhancement requests are driven by annual statistical data; and that the system is designed to apply funds consistently and fairly among the providers, in accordance with a resolution establishing the EMS levels of service. He discussed the

requests for new positions from Palm Harbor Fire District Station 65, City of Largo Fire Rescue Station 38, and the Pinellas Park Fire Department, indicating that two of the requests lack annual statistics; whereupon, he provided information regarding the potential impact of funding the three positions, including future expenditures and the amount remaining in the EMS fund reserves.

During discussion, Commissioner Eggers conveyed that Palm Harbor Fire District representatives feel strongly that the additional position is warranted and discussed the data supporting the demand, the need to fund all three positions, the impact on the budget, and related matters. Responding to his query, Mr. Fogarty indicated that distribution of funds would be fair if all three positions are funded; and that it would have to be acknowledged that the funding will not be based on annual statistics.

Commissioner Eggers suggested that the positions be funded at 50 percent and reevaluated in the future, requesting that the funding be considered by the Board prior to the budget hearings, and Mr. Burton and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Bill Berger provided information regarding doing so.

Commissioner Long reminded everyone of the value of the partnership between the County and EMS providers, and Messrs. Fogarty and Berger provided clarification regarding the EMS revenue budget line items in response to queries by Commissioner Welch.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Responding to query by Commissioner Welch, Mr. Berger provided information relating to the transition to new budget software. Commissioner Seel informed the Board that there is a possibility that the Human Rights Department budget may need to be amended to include a Digital Accessibility Coordinator position to ensure that County websites comply with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, and Commissioner Welch pointed out that the Business Technology Services Board is supportive of the position. Mr. Burton discussed the possible ways of accommodating the request, and Commissioner Peters provided input.

Commissioner Seel commended Office of Human Rights Director Paul Valenti and his staff for their work with regard to website accessibility and thanked Mr. Berger and the OMB staff for the Fiscal Year 2021 budget presentations, noting that the factual information provided was very thorough; whereupon, she remarked that the Commission has always been a collegial body working to improve the community and asked that the members be respectful of one another in serving the County going forward.

Mr. Burton and Attorney White provided information concerning a proposal to require advanced registration for participation in public comment during virtual Board meetings. Following discussion, the Chair expressed support for an alternative suggestion by Commissioner Justice to implement a cutoff time for public comment at a certain point after an agenda item is introduced, and Commissioners Seel and Welch agreed.

ADJOURNMENT - 12:11 P.M.

Pat Gerard
Chair

ATTEST: KEN BURKE, CLERK

By Kenneth Caputo
Deputy Clerk

