



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 20-2418A, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Resolution authorizing the County Administrator to negotiate and contribute County funds toward the purchase of the Gladys E. Douglas property in partnership with the City of Dunedin in an amount not to exceed \$3.5 million in County funding, and authorizing the County Administrator to enter into all contracts and agreements necessary for the effectuation thereof, including but not limited to grant and funding agreements, the latter of which is subject to Board ratification; and ratification of the County Administrator's approval of a grant application with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Florida Communities Trust Program for the acquisition of the Gladys E. Douglas property.

Recommended Action:

Approval of the resolution authorizing the County Administrator to negotiate and contribute County funds toward the purchase of the Gladys E. Douglas property (Property) in partnership with the City of Dunedin (City) in an amount not to exceed \$3.5 million in County funding, and authorizing the County Administrator to enter into all contracts and agreements necessary for the effectuation thereof, including but not limited to grant and funding agreements, the latter of which is subject to Board ratification; and ratification of the County Administrator's approval of a grant application with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Florida Communities Trust Program for the acquisition of the Property

- The resolution authorizes the County Administrator to negotiate and contribute County funds to the purchase of the subject property in partnership with the City and to enter into all contracts and agreements for the effectuation of the purchase, including a future funding agreement between the City and County, which will be brought back to the Board for ratification.
- The estate's firm asking price for the property is \$10 million.
- A total of \$7.5 million has been secured to date for the purchase of the property from the City, County, and private donations.
- An effort to secure additional private donations is underway.
- Representatives of the estate have agreed to extend the purchase deadline beyond January 18, 2021.
- The resolution also ratifies the County Administrator's approval of a grant request of \$2.4 million in FDEP Florida Communities Trust Program for the acquisition of the Property. Approval by the County Administrator was required to meet the Florida Communities Trust grant application deadline of December 15, 2020.

Authorize the Clerk of the Circuit Court to record the resolution in the public records of Pinellas County.

Strategic Plan:

Practice Superior Environmental Stewardship

3.2 Preserve and manage environmental lands, beaches, parks, and historical assets

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.1 Maximize partner relationships and public outreach

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources

Summary:

This action authorizes the County Administrator to negotiate and contribute to the purchase of the subject property in partnership with the City and to enter into all contracts and agreements for the effectuation of the purchase, under the terms defined in the resolution; and ratifies the County Administrator's approval of a grant request of \$2.4 million in FDEP Florida Communities Trust Program for the acquisition of the Property. This action is necessary in the furtherance of property purchase.

Background Information:

The City and the County offered to purchase the Gladys E. Douglas property for up to \$8.0 million, using public money up to the appraised value (\$5.5M) and supplemented with private donations, but the estate countered with a firm price of \$10.0 million. The appraisals were based on the current developable rights on the property, not the kind of density that the developer who made the previous offer was hoping to achieve.

The City has pledged to provide \$2.0 million to purchase the property and the County has matched that \$2.0 million, and is willing to front up to a total of \$3.5 million to support the sale, the remainder of which represents a grant the County applied for through the Florida Communities Trust. A private donor has committed another \$2.0 million, marking a major community commitment to the project.

The Sierra Club hopes to preserve this land as well, and has partnered with the Pinellas Community Foundation to accept donations, which can be made on the foundation's website.

County Administration worked with representatives from the estate to extend the original 90-day deadline, which is January 18, 2021. The estate has indicated that it would work with us at least through January 31, 2021 and then after, as long as we are making progress on raising the necessary funds.

Prior approval by the County Administrator of the grant request with FDEP Florida Communities Trust Program was required to meet the Florida Communities Trust grant application deadline of December 15, 2020; therefore, the Board of County Commissioners' ratification is retroactive.

Fiscal Impact:

Not to exceed expenditure of \$3.5 million from the Local Infrastructure Sales Surtax (Penny for Pinellas) for Environmental Lands Acquisition (project ID 002168A) within the Culture and Recreation function and Parks & Recreation activity. This not to exceed amount is comprised of up to \$2.0M County contribution and up to \$1.5M County advance pending reimbursement through the potential grant from the Florida Communities Trust.

This expenditure was not anticipated during FY21 budget development. The FY21 Adopted Budget includes \$1.5M appropriation for the Environmental Lands Acquisition project. An FY21 budget amendment will be brought forward for Board consideration on January 26 to carry-forward \$1.5M in unspent funds budgeted for environmental lands acquisition in FY20.

The FY21-26 Capital Improvement Plan includes \$10.5M (\$1.5M annually plus the \$1.5M unspent funds from FY20) for environmental lands acquisition across the County and is not currently committed to any specific acquisitions.

Staff Member Responsible:

Paul Cozzie, Director, Parks and Conservation Resources

Joe Lauro, Director, Administrative Services

Partners:

City of Dunedin

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Attachments:

Resolution

FCT Cover Letter from Pinellas County

FCT Cover Letter from the City of Dunedin

Intent to Apply

FCT Grant Application