

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

September 28, 2011

A meeting was held at the Murdock Administration Complex in Room 119, Port Charlotte, Florida.

Members present were: Chairman Bob Starr (BOCC), Commissioner Christopher Constance (BOCC), Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch (BOCC), Commissioner Tricia Duffy (BOCC), Charlotte County Administrator Ray Sandrock, Charlotte County Attorney Janette S. Knowlton, Charlotte County Deputy Clerk Carleton, Chairman Jim Blucher (NP), Commissioner David Garofalo (NP), Commissioner Michael Treubert (NP), Commissioner Linda Yates (NP), North Port City Manager Jonathan R. Lewis, North Port City Attorney Robert K. Robinson, and North Port City Clerk Helen Raimbeau, MMC. The following members were absent: Commissioner Robert Skidmore (BOCC) and Vice Chair Tom Jones (NP).

The meeting was called to order at **1:00 PM**, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Starr welcomed the City of North Port participants and introduced the Charlotte County Commissioners. Chairman Blucher introduced the City of North Port Commissioners and noted Vice Chair Jones' absence.

1. River Road (North Port)

Commissioner Garofalo gave an update on River Road. Chairman Blucher commented on discussions with Sarasota County and mentioned the intersection of U.S. 41 and River Road. **Chairman Starr** discussed River Road as being a priority due to safety concerns and mentioned the expected completion of Winchester and Placida Roads. **Commissioner Constance** agreed and expressed appreciation for the cooperation of all municipalities involved. Chairman Blucher explained that Sarasota County, Charlotte County, and the City of North Port are the three entities involved with the River Road project and opined the City of Venice most likely would not be offering funding assistance. Commissioner Garofalo talked about possible funding options by the City of Venice. Commissioner Yates spoke in support of bringing Sarasota County into the project. **Commissioner Deutsch** commented further.

Bob Harrington, Director of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), gave related detail on the River Road project. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Garofalo mentioned the City of North Port having applied for a State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) Loan for Sumter Blvd. and requested a Letter of Support from Charlotte County (**Board Consensus to give a letter of support to the City of North Port.**)

Chairman Starr spoke in support of exploring borrowing capabilities through the State. **Commissioner Duffy** commented on meetings with the Lt. Governor regarding efficiency improvements, expense reductions, the removal of barriers to Economic Development, and gave detail related to right-of-ways and retention ponds.

2. Transit (County)

Fred McKenna described transit operations in Charlotte County, gave a presentation on the North Port/Port Charlotte Connection Route, paralleled visual slides, outlined Bus Stops, and responded to inquiries. **Commissioner Deutsch** expressed concerns with cost effectiveness issues. **Commissioner Constance** gave related detail. Commissioner Garofalo reported on his attendance at the Public Transportation Task Force Meeting, suggested the possibility of extending the route to Sumter Blvd. with a loop at City Hall, and mentioned efforts to get the Express Service at Sumter Blvd. and U.S. 41. Chairman Blucher commented on the ongoing amount of work force citizens traveling between Charlotte and Sarasota Counties, spoke in support of having a bus stop at North Port City Hall, and explained the importance of the transit rates not interfering with ridership. **Commissioner Constance** commented further regarding Park and Ride. Commissioner Yates agreed. Mr. Harrington reported on the Sarasota-Manatee MPO Meeting and the Task Force Meeting, noted the availability of grant funding, provided statistics on ridership, and responded to further inquiries. Chairman Blucher provided historical detail related to PGT Industries. **Commissioner Duffy** mentioned an earlier transit proposal, expressed concern with bus shelter costs, suggested the use of a jitney system, and referred to the creation of work force housing in Parkside. Commissioner Treubert spoke in opposition to the City of North Port subsidizing the Transit Program.

3. Economic Development (County)

Tom Patton summarized his background and accomplishments, commented on economic development opportunities in the area, and responded to inquiries.

Commissioner Garofalo inquired about a possible Joint Study between the two governments. Administrator Ray Sandrock described the Feasibility Study for Ripken Youth Baseball, mentioned the costs and regional benefits involved, asked if the City of North Port was willing to participate financially, and responded to questions. Commissioner Garofalo indicated he would bring the proposal to the Sarasota County Tourist Development Council Meeting if he is given Consensus. Mr. Sandrock offered to attend the meeting in order to provide more details. Commissioner Yates spoke in opposition to a joint participation in the Study and expressed concern with the support of duplicative items. **Commissioner Duffy** agreed. Discussion ensued. Chairman Blucher requested Consensus for Commissioner Garofalo to solicit money from the Tourist Development Council for the Feasibility Study (**No Consensus was received**). Commissioner Treubert discussed the importance of creating regional economic development and amenities rather than being in competition and spoke in opposition. **Commissioner Duffy** and Commissioner Garofalo addressed concerns raised by Commissioner Treubert. Mr. Sandrock explained the importance of communication between the two governments.

4. Water Issues (County)

Terri Couture distributed a memo to the Board Members and presented the proposal for an Interlocal Agreement between Charlotte County and the City of North Port.

Chairman Blucher praised the cooperative efforts of the staffs of the Water Utilities and requested support on water issues. Mr. Sandrock provided an update on Peace River/Manasota Water Authority issues.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Don McCormick commented on the direct cost involved in subsidizing transportation.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Treubert thanked the Charlotte County Commission for hosting the Meeting. **Commissioner Deutsch** suggested holding another Joint Meeting in December or January. Commissioner Garofalo agreed and proposed joint efforts on Legislative Priorities. Chairman Blucher thanked the Commission for their efforts and expressed the importance of interacting with one another. **Commissioner Duffy** commented on a previous discussion with Commissioner Jones related to new intersections on I-75. Commissioner Yates thanked the Commission for the opportunity to meet. **Commissioner Constance** echoed all comments made. City Manager Lewis mentioned meetings with Mr. Sandrock. **Chairman Starr** thanked all participants and staff for their efforts and mentioned the dynamics of the interaction of the group.

ADJOURNED: 2:45 PM

Chairman

ATTEST:

**BARBARA T. SCOTT, CLERK
OF THE CIRCUIT COURT AND
EX-OFFICIO TO THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

sfc