

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP FOR THE JOINT CITY / COUNTY  
COMMISSION MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS FOR  
THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE FLORIDA AND THE GULF COUNTY BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN THE GULF COUNTY EMERGENCY  
OPERATIONS CENTER BUILDING ON October 1, 2012 at 6:00 P.M.**

The following were present: Mayor Magidson, Commissioners Buzzett, McCroan, Patterson and Kennedy. City Manager Jim Anderson, Attorney Tom Gibson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce, and Chief David Barnes were also present. Representing the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners were Commissioners Tan Smiley, Ward McDaniel, Warren Yeager, County Administrator Don Butler, Attorney Jeremy Novak, and Sheriff Joe Nugent.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues facing both entities and foster a better working relationship between the two Boards.

*Opening* comments were made by Commissioner Smiley and Mayor Magidson as each expressed their appreciation for the joint meeting of the Boards and welcomed those present to the meeting.

*Joint* comments were made by City Manager Jim Anderson and County Administrator Don Butler. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Butler have been working together to facilitate the meeting and shared of the budget challenges each entity has faced over the last several years and offered ways of working together to improve City and County efforts.

*City / County Infrastructure Projects – Sewer expansion to Beacon Hill*

Additional Revenue is anticipated from the state in the next few years and this would be an opportunity for the City and County to partner on projects.

The trunk line to Beacon Hill is in place and if the City and County would jointly request state funds the projects are more likely to be funded.

*Sports Complex*

Commissioner Yeager is willing to work with the City on this project. An Aquatic Center would have a very large impact on the City and County and Commissioner Kennedy would like to see this considered as an option.

Commissioner Smiley does not support the idea of a Sports Complex as he feels that what we currently have is being neglected. Play ground equipment in his neighborhood is not up to par and he feels that existing equipment should be upgraded. Commissioner Smiley's District is located in the Port St. Joe Redevelopment Area and there is a possibility that they can secure funding for equipment.

Commissioner McDaniel shared that he feels the complex would be great for the City and County as the sports complex in Wewahitchka is a great enhancement for their citizens.

Commissioners Kennedy and Yeager will work together on the project.

Terry Baxley advised the Commissioners of an example in Texas where working together provided a great complex that is being enjoyed by many today.

*Chamber / EDC Contribution*

Mr. Anderson shared that the City's FY 2012 – 2013 Budget includes \$20,000 contribution for the Chamber / EDC.

*Consolidation of Law Enforcement, Building Department*

Commissioner Smiley feels that the Port St. Joe Police Department and the Gulf County Sheriff's Department should be combined and would be a savings to the citizens of Port St. Joe.

Mayor Magidson responded that this has been looked at before and there was no savings to be utilized from combining the services but could actually be a reduction in services provided to the citizens.

Mayor Magidson and Commissioner Smiley agreed to meet to discuss this issue.

#### Building Department

It was noted that there is a difference in what a building permit cost in the City and County.

#### *Lighthouse*

Commissioner Yeager shared that he had met with Mayor Magidson, Dr. Pat Hardman, and Charlotte Pierce to discuss the lighthouse issue. He noted that grants had been used to restore the structures at the Cape San Blas Lighthouse Complex and that Eglin will be relocating the structures 100' to 150' inland within the compound to protect the two keepers' quarters and the oil house from the rapid erosion occurring on the Gulf beach. Commissioner Yeager requested that he be allowed to continue meeting with the Committee to work on the preservation of the structures.

#### *Utility Rates*

Mayor Magidson noted that the Utility Rate increases are a result of a rate study done by Burton and Associates. Water consumption determines the monthly bill. The Mayor shared that the City Commission recently voted to reduce the irrigation rates in hopes of increasing the number of customers.

*RESTORE Act* Committee meetings will be held at 11:00 A.M. each Tuesday until November. The Committee is working on the criteria to include what the money can be used for.

Mayor Magidson reminded the Commissioners that citizens have asked to have input and be allowed open access to the meetings.

Commissioner McDaniel feels that a good Committee has been put together and contrary to some rumors, meetings are being held in public places and not in the woods. He anticipates a report from the Committee in approximately a month.

#### *Water Quality Report*

County Administrator, Don Butler, shared that the water at the courthouse has been much clearer.

Mr. Anderson noted that Phase I of the Water Distribution is anticipated to be completed in March of 2013. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application was submitted in Tallahassee today for the North Port St. Joe Water Improvements. The City is working with CDM on improvements.

Commissioner Buzzett related that he, Attorney Tom Gibson and Mr. Anderson met with the new Northwest Florida Water Management District Director, Jonathan Steverson, and he seemed concerned with the water issues the City is having. The change from ground water to surface water has caused a change in the chemicals that are being used.

Commissioner McCroan stated that he had collected water from the Surface Water Treatment Plant and the water leaving the plant is very clear.

#### *Langston Drive Lighting*

This has been a collaborative effort with the Port St. Joe Redevelopment Agency and the City of Port St. Joe.

Commissioner Yeager questioned if there were any solar lights that might be available for the City to use as the County is cutting off 52 or 53 lights. After discussion, it was determined that the lights were not in great operating shape.

Commissioner Patterson noted that the road has some dark areas and he is concerned about the safety of those using the road.

*Road Paving / Road Bonds*

Re-stripping of several streets can be accomplished and the County will cover Avenue A. The contractor doing the work should be here next week

The City's Gas Tax Revenue is obligated until 2031. Road improvements are needed in both the City and County and this might possibly be a good time for review bonding opportunities with Ralph Cellon of Morgan Keegan. County Administrator Don Butler will contact Mr. Cellon about the possibilities.

*Tipping Fees*

Mr. Butler noted that area rates for Tipping Fees and been check. It is costing the County \$75 per ton to run and they are currently collecting \$35 per ton. A change in the charge may need to be made at a later date.

*Interlocal Agreement – Fire Tax*

Currently, the money paid to the St. Joe Beach and highland View Fire Departments is not being escrowed. A suggestion was made that the funds be allocated at 1/3 to the St. Joe Beach, Highland View and Port St. Joe Fire Departments. The City off Port St. Joe covers many of the calls out of the Port St. Joe City Limits. Commissioner Yeager agreed to be the Point of Contact for this issue.

Several months ago Attorney Gibson provided copies of the current and proposed changes to the Interlocal Agreement. Commissioners were asked to review these documents and work towards resolving the issue.

*Lighting Issues*

Scott Warner, Gulf County GIS, suggested that the City verify the number of lights and poles they are currently being charged for. The County compared their list and found a number of discrepancies.


*Hear From Public*

Christy McElroy thanked both Commissions for coming to the table to discuss issues.

Dr. Pat Hardman asked those present to review the proposed Constitutional Amendments and know the impact they will have if approved.

The joint meeting was adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Approved this 16<sup>th</sup> day of October 2012.

  
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Mel C. Magidson, Jr., Mayor

  
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Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk