



Central Florida Regional Planning Council

October 9, 2019

Okeechobee County Historical Courthouse, Commission Board Room
304 NW 2nd Street | Okeechobee | 9:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Chairman Mike Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Bryant Culpepper offered the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll was called with the following members present:

Chairman, Commissioner Mike Thompson, Hardee County
Vice Chair, City Commissioner Neda Cobb, City of Wauchula
City Councilmember Keith Keene, City of Arcadia
Jackie Tucker, DeSoto County Gubernatorial Appointee
Commissioner Don Elwell, Highlands County
Donna Howerton, Highlands County Gubernatorial Appointee; Highlands County School Board
Commissioner Bryant Culpepper, Okeechobee County
City Commissioner Bob Jarriel, City of Okeechobee
Commissioner Rick Wilson, Polk County
City Commissioner Nathaniel Birdsong, City of Winter Haven

Members absent:

Commissioner Buddy Mansfield, DeSoto County
Mayor John Shoop, City of Sebring
City Commissioner Bill Read, City of Lakeland
City Commissioner Morris West, City of Hanes City, Ridge League of Cities
Jeff Kincart, Polk County Gubernatorial Appointee
June Fisher, DeSoto County Planning Director, Ex-officio
Todd Miller, Hardee County Planning Director, Ex-officio
Ben Dunn, Highlands County Development Services Director, Ex-officio
Bill Royce, Okeechobee County Planning Director, Ex-officio
Deborah Chesna, Florida Department of Transportation, Ex-officio
Elizabeth "Libby" Maxwell-Pigman, South Fla. Water Management District, Ex-officio
Mary Yeargan, Department of Environmental Protection, Ex-officio
Cindy Rodriguez, Southwest Florida Water Management District, Ex-officio

A quorum was present.

Announcements

Bryant Culpepper thanked the Okeechobee County Administrator, Robbie Chartier, for attending the meeting.

Pat Steed, Council Executive Director, explained that an additional agenda item as it appears, was added to the meeting agenda. An amended agenda was distributed with a new Item #10, along with the exhibit for that item.

AGENDA ITEM #1 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jackie Tucker introduced her daughter, Carolyn Bluhm and Carolyn's husband Rudy Bluhm, who recently relocated to Mulberry from Denver, Colorado. Together, they are co-founders of the Christian Emergency Readiness Training Ministry.

Bryant Culpepper invited members to visit the Courthouse foyer to see the antique horse carriage, circa 1876, that was recently purchased by County Commissioners and donated to the County.

Chair Thompson stated that Hardee County conducted a search to fill the County Administrator position left vacant by Lex Albritton's recent retirement. An applicant was selected and will start in December, 2019.

AGENDA ITEM #2 COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

A. August 14, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes

Chair Thompson asked if there were any changes to the August 14, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes.

MOTION

There being none, Bryant Culpepper moved to approve the Council Meeting Minutes as submitted. Jackie Tucker seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Financial Report

Pat Steed reviewed the Statement of Activities and Statement of Net Assets for the month ended August, 2019.

MOTION

Keith Keen moved to accept the August Financial Report as presented. Jackie Tucker seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #3 OKEECHOBEE COUNTY ACTIVITIES REPORT

Robbie Cartier, Okeechobee County Administrator, thanked the Council for conducting their meeting in Okeechobee. She reported that Okeechobee County reduced their budget in 2019 and increased their taxes. Okeechobee's property values have increased and new homes are being constructed. Okeechobee has formed a new Economic Development Corporation and has hired Megan Smith from Texas to serve as its Executive Director. NexAir is expanding onto adjacent property in Okeechobee's Airport Commerce Park. NexAir has been in the Commerce Park for many years. Bautech is a new business soon to locate in Okeechobee's Commerce Park, that manufactures concrete products and is from Guatemala. This will be their SE headquarters in the US. Okeechobee County recently approved a rezoning for Kubota Inc. which will be locating on Hwy 98. She also reported that the County had resolved their issue regarding the conservation easement at the Airport Commerce Park by working with the SFWMD to reduce their credits, and now can begin expanding the airport. Ms. Cartier reported that the County has extended Bass Pro's due diligence period for another year. Bass Pro proceeds to work toward their plan to locate in Okeechobee County. The Okeechobee Music Festival is planned for March 5 – 8 in Okeechobee County and are expecting more than 40,000 in attendance. The County continues to look for ways to bring more affordable housing into the County. Also, the City of Okeechobee has a Wawa gas and convenience store under construction on SR 70.

AGENDA ITEM #4 CONTRACT FOR TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, Deputy Director, presented a summary of services provided by Cipher Integration, Inc. and stated that the Council utilizes this information technology company to provide support services for the Council's computer system and network. Staff recommends continuing services with Cipher Integration, Inc. for a contract period from October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 for \$31,000, which is a \$3,000 increase from last year due to more computer workstations.

MOTION

Rick Wilson moved to approve the agreement with Cipher Integration, Inc. as presented. Donna Howerton seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #5 2020 CENSUS

Reginald Earl, Partnership Specialist for the US Census Bureau, provided information on the upcoming 2020 Census. He discussed the importance of local government involvement and why local governments have a vested interest in the outcome of the Census. He pointed out the benefits to counting every citizen that resides in the state and the potential impacts if all are not counted. In an effort to make it easier for people to

respond to the 2020 Census, the primary method will be online, and he described how that will work. Mr. Earl presented an interactive map that identifies areas that typically have low response rates for censuses and surveys. He stated that local planners and officials can use the map to plan, focus and allocate resources for the 2020 Census. He discussed the outreach strategy that will be implemented including setting up Complete Count Committees in individual communities. Mr. Earl also described Census related job opportunities that will be available.

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, Deputy Executive Director, presented a Census Proclamation supporting the "Kick-off" of the 2020 US Census.

MOTION

Don Elwell moved to approve the Census Proclamation as presented. Rick Wilson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #6 RESOLUTION 2019-10A FOR FTA SECTION 5311 GRANT

Marybeth Soderstrom, Transportation Director, presented Resolution 2019-10A, which authorizes the Council to enter into the FTA Section 5311 grant contract with the Florida Department of Transportation to receive public transit funds for the Transportation Disadvantaged service area of DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties.

MOTION

Rick Wilson moved to adopt Resolution 2019-10A as presented. Bryant Culpepper seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #7 HEARTLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (HRTPO) UPDATE

Marybeth Soderstrom, stated that the HRTPO will meet on November 6, 2019. Staff anticipates presenting the FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program, which is a listing of all projects that are funded in the next five-year period. There will be several outreach efforts to involve the public sector and receive their input. She described the new grant cycle with a number of grants finishing as the new cycle begins. Local governments will begin assembling their applications for resurfacing projects.

Ms. Soderstrom congratulated Highlands County Commissioner Don Elwell for being recognized by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged as the Elected Official of the Year at their annual meeting in September 2019. Commissioner

Elwell serves as Chair of the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB) for the service area of DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties.

Ms. Soderstrom announced the upcoming Heartland Mobility Forum on October 30, 2019, at the Lake Placid Government Center at 9:00 a.m. David Darm, Executive Director of the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged will be the special guest speaker. The Forum is being held to bring together local elected officials, LCB members, partner agencies, and individuals that have a vested interest in helping residents of the Heartland region explore mobility options. She invited Council member to participate.

AGENDA ITEM #8 MULTI-MODAL CORRIDORS OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE (M-CORES) UPDATE

Pat Steed, Executive Director, reviewed the purpose and objective of M-CORES. The Southwest-Central Florida Connector is proposed to span approximately 140 miles from Collier County to Polk County, cutting through the Heartland. The next meeting of the Southwest-Central Florida Connector is scheduled for October 30, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at Polk State College in Lakeland. The Task Force meeting will be followed by a Community Open House in Hardee County on November 12, 2019, where members of the community can participate in the process. Staff will send notices of each Task Force meeting to Council members. Information regarding the three corridors can be found at www.floridamcores.com including the overall process, task forces and meetings.

AGENDA ITEM #9 HEARTLAND 2060 SUMMITS

Pat Steed, Executive Director, provided highlights of the Heartland 2060 Summit held on September 20, 2019, in Winter Haven, which explored trends in population, Florida job growth, the environment and transportation. The Summit was well attended and she thanked Council members for their participation. Florida Department of Transportation Secretary, Kevin Thibault provided a welcome via video. Ms. Steed provided the Council with highlights from the presentations by Dr. Thomas Hctor, professor at the University of Florida, L.K. Nandam, FDOT District One Secretary, Tony Carvajal, the Florida Chamber Foundation, and John Kaliski, Cambridge Systematics. The Summit was followed by a Stakeholder Roundtable discussion with key people from the entire region, where staff received input related to subjects discussed at the Summit. The next Summit is scheduled for Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. at Lake Placid Town Hall. The next Summit will focus on future trends of agriculture, education, workforce, and transportation in the Heartland communities.

AGENDA ITEM #10 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (HEMP) CONTRACT FOR FY 2019-20

Pat Steed, Executive Director, stated that this is a continuing contract with the Department of Emergency Management for hazardous materials preparedness. These funds are used

to train first responders on how to handle hazardous materials and also for planning training exercises. The contract amount is just over \$54,000. She asked for authorization for the chair to sign the contract and for the Executive Director to administer the contract.

MOTION

Rick Wilson moved to authorize the chair to sign the HMEP contract and the Executive Director to administer the contract. Donna Howerton seconded

Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #11 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR 2020

Chair Thompson presented the proposed 2020 Holiday Schedule.

MOTION

Rick Wilson moved to approve the 2020 Holiday Schedule as presented. Donna Howerton seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #12 APPOINT COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE 2020 COUNCIL OFFICERS

Mike Thompson, Council Chair, appointed DeSoto County Gubernatorial Appointee Jackie Tucker; Sebring City Commissioner John Shoop; and Highlands County Commissioner Don Elwell to serve on the committee to nominate officers of the Council for 2020. The election will take place at the December 2019 Council Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. FRCA Policy Board Meeting

Pat Steed, Executive Director, reported that the Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Policy Board meeting was held in August 2019 in Tallahassee. The new Florida Director of Emergency Management (DEM), Jared Moskowitz discussed the slow pace in which FEMA funds had previously been disbursed and how that pace had picked up in the last several months. He explained how DEM identified the issues and was making changes so funds could be disbursed quicker. Also, DEM is moving forward with requesting the funding for updates to the Regional Statewide Evacuation Study.

Jackie Tucker, FRCA Policy Board member, stated that this year's FRCA Board was engaging and she thought the FRCA Executive Director was exceptional. The presentation by DEM was great information to bring back to her community.

B. Return on Investment

Ms. Steed distributed a brochure containing return on investment (ROI) information regarding the Council's funding and current programs, along with a list of Council members.

C. Projects Update

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, Deputy Executive Director, announced that an Avon Park Air Force Range Joint Land Use Study Policy Committee is scheduled for October 10, 2019 in Avon Park Air Force Range from 10:00 a.m. to noon. There will be a tour of the Range and she invited the Council members to attend.

AGENDA ITEM #12 OTHER BUSINESS

Neda Cobb stated that she was currently serving as Vice President of the Ridge League of Cities. The City of Wauchula will be hosting the Ridge dinner meeting on December 12, 2019 at the Wauchula Civic Center and all Council members are invited.

Bryant Culpepper thanked the Council for traveling to Okeechobee.

Carolyn Bluhm, as public comment, stated that she formerly worked for the Office of Emergency Management of Homeland Security in Denver Colorado. She and her husband, Rudy, have started the Christian Emergency Readiness Training ministry for this region. This ministry addresses church safety and provides training for preparing for disaster events.

The next meeting was scheduled for December 11, 2019, at 9:30 a.m. in Polk County at the Bartow Public Library in Bartow.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Thompson, Chairman
October 9, 2019 Council Meeting Minutes