



Alachua County County Manager's Office

Communications

Mark Sexton, Communications and Legislative Affairs Director

July 11, 2014

MEMORANDUM

To: The Alachua County Board of County Commissioner

From: Mark Sexton, Communication and Legislative Affairs Director

Via: Betty M. Baker, County Manager

Via: Michelle Lieberman, County Attorney

Subject: Moving Alachua County Forward Public Education Campaign

At the request of Manager Baker I am providing this update on the planned public education campaign for the Moving Alachua County Forward sales surtax.

Manager Baker has put a team together that includes Michael Fay, Alan Yeatter, Bret Bostock, Takumi Sullivan and me, from her office; Steve Lachnicht, Jeff Hays and Jimmy Collins from Growth Management; David Cerlanek from Public Works; and Chris Nielsen from ITS. County Attorney Lieberman is advising, particularly on the legality of various public education campaign strategies and content.

Items of interest:

1. Attorney Lieberman has communicated the State law covering what is allowed in educating the public. As a safety measure, all new materials and outreach items will get her sign off prior to distribution.
2. I have met with Bob Woods, City of Gainesville Marketing and Communications Manager, Laura Rawson, Communications Assistant, and Chip Skinner, RTS Marketing and Communications Supervisor. They are fully on board with participating in the public education campaign. With their input, a logo has been finalized:



3. We are also working with the City of Gainesville and RTS on developing a social media strategy that will include all Facebook and Twitter sites from the County and all municipalities. Social Media will be a very important component of this outreach effort. Mr. Skinner discussed the possibility of interior signs on buses and at bus stops which would explain enhanced services on particular routes. The team will also meet with the other municipalities to discuss their participation in the campaign.
4. Chris Nielson from ITS and Jimmy Collins are taking the lead on developing a Moving Alachua County Forward website. The site will include project lists, an interactive map, FAQs, video content, and other information.
5. With the help of the cities and RTS we will produce video shorts for social media, the website, and channel 12. The shorts will include City and County commissioners and other prominent citizens doing short take interview about the surtax. When possible they will be done at project locations.
6. I will Interview David Cerlanek and others on Alachua County Talks. We will do a Take 5 segment also.
7. The team is developing a system to keep County and City employees involved and engaged in the campaign.
8. Communications will develop posters and printed materials for distribution at meetings, public presentations, and in County buildings.
9. David Cerlanek and Jeff Hayes, with the help of Latoya Gainey and Devin Dissell in the Commission Office, will organize presentations at organization and community meetings. County and City Commissioners are always welcome to attend.

10. David Cerlanek and Public Works staff will develop and coordinate road signs to be placed at project locations to inform the public. He will also coordinate with municipalities to make the signs available. The signs will include the logo and simply state that the road is an “eligible project.

11. We will watch local media stories and comment pages and, when appropriate, clarify and correct inaccuracies and confusing points. We will conduct a careful fact based conversation with citizens on our social media sites.

12. The team will coordinate letters to the editor, press releases, and guest editorials.

We have also begun work on a Moving Alachua County Forward Information Sheet (see next page). It will continue to expand.

We will keep you informed as this campaign moves forward.

Cc: Municipality Managers



INFORMATION SHEET

At their June 10, 2014 meeting, the Alachua County Commission voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance proposing to levy a one percent (1%) sales surtax for a period of eight years (to view the ordinance go to <http://tinyurl.com/ohw5j2f>) By taking this action a ballot question will appear on the November 4, 2014 ballot. They also unanimously approved ***Moving Alachua County Forward*** as the name of the surtax initiative.

Ballot language

MOVING ALACHUA COUNTY FORWARD ONE PERCENT TRANSPORTATION SALES SURTAX

To improve funding for the planning, development, financing, construction, reconstruction, operation, capital investment and maintenance of roads and bridges, bus systems, and bicycle and pedestrian projects, shall Alachua County levy a countywide one percent (1%) sales surtax for eight years, beginning January 1 2015, with funds to be applied to the transportation project lists adopted by Alachua County and the cities of Alachua County, and subject to citizen oversight and annual independent audit?

FOR the one percent (1%) transportation sales surtax.

AGAINST the one percent (1%) transportation sales surtax

Important Facts:

1. The State of Florida makes the Charter County Transportation Surtax, and other discretionary surtaxes, available to counties to raise the large sums of monies needed to pay for large projects such as healthcare, buildings, parks or in this case, transportation projects.
2. Of 67 counties in Florida, Alachua County is one of only 12 not levying a surtax.

3. The MOVING ALACHUA COUNTY FORWARD one percent transportation sales surtax requires a majority vote of the County electorate on the November 4, 2014 ballot.
4. If passed the surtax is subject to an oversight committee and an annual audit.
5. The ordinance authorizes a transportation surtax of one percent upon most taxable transactions within incorporated and unincorporated Alachua County. It will not be charged on food, medicines or housing. The sales amount above \$5,000 on any item of tangible personal property shall not be subject to the surtax. An estimated 30% of the surtax revenue will be paid by visitors to Alachua County.
6. If passed, the surtax proceeds will plan, develop, finance, construct, reconstruct, operate, provide capital improvements and maintain county and municipal roads and bridges, bus systems and bicycle and pedestrian projects.
7. The County will share the surtax proceeds with the County's municipalities based on the following percentages: Unincorporated Alachua County- 43.24%, Alachua- 3.74%, Archer 0.57%, Gainesville- 43.24%, Hawthorne- 0.87%, High Springs- 3.31%, La Crosse- 0.12%, Micanopy- 0.69%, Newberry- 3.67%, Waldo- 0.55%, for a total of 100% of surtax distribution.
8. 95% of Alachua County's funds will be used for road maintenance and 5% will be used for Bicycle/Pedestrian projects (To view Alachua County projects. go to <http://tinyurl.com/moflh3c>)