



Board of County Commissioners

#020108
6/24/02
ALACHUA COUNTY

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Commission

Robert Hutchinson
Chair

Rodney J. Long
Vice Chair

Mike Byerly

Dave Newport

Penelope Wheat

Administration

Randall H. Reid
County Manager

June 6, 2002

Mayor Thomas Bussing and
Members of the City Commission
P. O. Box 490
Station 19
Gainesville, FL 32602

Re: Public Information Program

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

The City and County Commissions, at their joint meeting of March 21, 2002 considered several motions which dealt with extending the Interlocal Agreement on a Combined Emergency Services System and assigned specific tasks to the Transition Board.

One of the actions considered at this meeting was the development and implementation of a public information program for the proposed referendum on the issue which will be before the public at the November 5, 2002 election.

The County Commission approved this action at the March 21st meeting. The City Commission neither discussed or approved the action. Therefore, the Transition Board, at its meeting of June 6, 2002 directed that I write you requesting that you consider the approval of the development and implementation of the above mentioned program.

In addition, if the program is approved, the Transition Board would like the comments of the various City Commission members as to questions, issues and information which each feels should be covered in a public information program.

Your attention to this would be appreciated.

Willing to Serve,

Rodney J. Long Chair
Combined Emergency Services System Transition Board

cc: Transition Board Members
Board of County Commissioners
Randall H. Reid, County Manager
Wayne Bowers, City Manager



ALACHUA COUNTY

County Administration Building
12 Southeast First Street
Gainesville, Florida



COUNTY COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, March 21, 2002
12:00 P.M.

Gainesville City Hall Auditorium

COUNTY COMMISSION

Commissioner Mike Byerly (District 1)
Commissioner Dave Newport (District 2)
Commissioner Penelope Wheat (District 3)
Commissioner Robert Hutchinson (District 4)
Commissioner Rodney J. Long (District 5)

Clerk to the Board J.K. "Buddy" Irby

Thursday, March 21, 2002 - 12:00 P.M.
Gainesville City Hall
Gainesville, Florida

The Alachua County Commission and Gainesville City Commission met in joint session.

PRESENT: County Commission Chair Robert Hutchinson; Vice Chair Rodney J. Long; Commissioners Mike Byerly, Dave Newport and Penny Wheat.

Gainesville Mayor Tom Bussing; City Commissioners John Barrow; Pegeen Hanrahan, Chuck Chestnut and Warren Nielsen.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Randall Reid; County Attorney Dave Wagner and Deputy Clerk Shirley A. Lane.

City Manager Wayne Bowers; City Attorney Marion Radson and Clerk Kurt Lannon.

The meeting was televised.

Chair Hutchinson called the County Commission to order at 12:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Long moved to amend the agenda to include any Board action as deemed appropriate. The motion carried unanimously.

(The Approved Agenda Documents are attached and made a part of these minutes.)

A. Report from the Combined Emergency Services System Transition Board.

Barry Evans, Project Manager, stated the purpose of this special joint meeting is to receive the report and recommendations of the Transition Board.

Thursday, March 21, 2002 - 12:00 P.M.

George Nickerson, Transition Board Attorney, presented the governance structure and recommendations of the Transition Board.

Steve Carr, County Finance Director, presented the Finance Team Report relating to the budget and asset assumptions.

After discussion, Commissioner Long moved that the Alachua County Commission extend their existing Interlocal Agreement with the City of Gainesville with the assignment of specific additional tasks to the Transition Board which include: 1) Preparation of a special act [the special act would create an independent special district to operate the combined emergency services department; and is to be proposed to the Legislative Delegation]; 2) The review of personnel, labor and pension issues attendant to consolidating emergency services; including an actuarial study to determine the fiscal impact of the City and County pension plans; 3) An analysis of the affect on consolidation resulting from any new capital initiatives or programmatic changes to emergency service delivery; 4) Resolution of the issues relating to fire-rescue services delivered to or by the smaller municipalities; 5) The development of a recommended appropriate level of service for urban and rural areas and a special assessment methodology consistent with the levels of service to provide greater equity in funding fire services; 6) The development and implementation of a public information program for the proposed referenda; and 7) The research, development and, if specifically approved by the parties, consolidation of specific fire-rescue activities, such as training and inspection.

Chair Hutchinson recognized citizen Sarah Poll and Joe Little who stated their opposition to the motion.

Commissioner Byerly moved to divide the question by separating the last two additional tasks 6) and 7) of the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

After discussion, Chair Hutchinson called the roll on the motion, as divided.

Commissioner Wheat - Nay
Commissioner Long - Aye
Commissioner Byerly - Aye

Thursday, March 21, 2002 - 12:00 P.M.

Commissioner Newport - Aye
Chair Hutchinson - Aye

The motion carried with Commissioner Wheat voting "Nay".

Commissioner Long moved that a "straw ballot" referendum on the proposal to combine emergency services should be conducted in November 2002 and that the proposed ballot language and public information program be presented to the Joint City/County Commission prior to July 31, 2002.

After discussion, Commissioner Byerly moved to divide the question. The motion to divide the question carried unanimously.

Chair Hutchinson called the roll on each Commissioner for the divided question as follows: "That the "straw ballot" referendum on the proposal to combine emergency services should be conducted in November 2002 and that the proposed ballot language be presented to the Joint City/County Commission prior to July 31, 2002."

Commissioner Byerly - Aye
Commissioner Long - Aye
Commissioner Newport - Aye
Commissioner Wheat - Nay
Chair Hutchinson - Aye

The motion carried with Commissioner Wheat voting "Nay".

Chair Hutchinson called the roll on the vote on the Proposed Public Information Program be brought to the Joint City/County Commission prior to July 31, 2002.

Commissioner Byerly - Nay
Commissioner Long - Aye
Commissioner Newport - Aye
Commissioner Wheat - Nay
Chair Hutchinson - Aye

Thursday, March 21, 2002 - 12:00 P.M.

The motion carried with Commissioners Byerly and Wheat voting "Nay".

Commissioner Long moved that the City and County Commissions adopt the critical events schedule, as amended by adding that the proposed ballot language be presented to the Joint City/County Commission prior to July 31, 2002, as a timeline for accomplishing the fire/emergency merger.

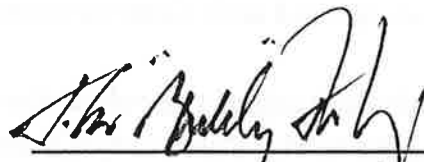
Chair Hutchinson called the roll on the motion.

Commissioner Byerly	- Aye
Commissioner Long	- Aye
Commissioner Newport	- Aye
Commissioner Wheat	- Nay
Chair Hutchinson	- Aye

The motion carried with Commissioner Wheat voted "Nay".

Commissioner Long moved that the Transition Board provide its next report to the City and County Commissions in December 2002. The motion carried unanimously.

There being nothing further to come before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.



J.K. "Buddy" Irby, Clerk to the
Board of County Commissioners

City of Gainesville

*City Hall
200 East University Avenue
Gainesville, Florida 32601*



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 21, 2002

12:00 PM

Joint City/County Commission Special Meeting

City Hall Auditorium

City Commission

Mayor Tom Bussing (At-Large)
Commissioner Warren Nielsen (At-Large)
Commissioner Chuck Chestnut (District 1)
Commissioner John R. Barrow (District 2)
Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Pegeen Hanrahan (District 3)

CALL TO ORDER - 12:07 PM**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Hanrahan moved and Commissioner Nielsen seconded to adopt the agenda.

(VOTE: 5-0, MOTION CARRIED)

ROLL CALL

Present: Chuck Chestnut, Warren Nielsen, Pegcen Hanrahan, John R. Barrow and Tom Bussing

002548**Combined Emergency Services System Transition Board (NB)**

Combined Emergency Services System Project Coordinator Barry Evans, Transition Board Counsel George Nickerson, Alachua County Finance Director Steve Carr, Alachua County Manager Randy Reid, Alachua County Attorney David Wagner and City Manager Wayne Bowers gave presentations.

FIRST MOTION:

Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Hanrahan moved and Commissioner Barrow seconded that Alachua County and the City of Gainesville extend the existing interlocal agreement with the assignment of specific additional tasks to the Transition Board which include:

- 1. Preparation of the draft special act for an independent special district;*
- 2. Review of the personnel, labor and pension issues attendant to consolidating emergency services including an actuarial study to determine the impacts on the City and County Pension Plans;*
- 3. Analysis of the effect on consolidation resulting from any new capital, initiatives and programmatic changes to emergency service delivery;*
- 4. Resolution of the issues relating to fire/rescue services delivered to or by the smaller municipalities;*
- 5. Development of a recommended appropriate level of service for urban and rural areas and a special assessment methodology consistent with the levels of service to provide greater equity in funding fire services.*

(VOTE: 4-1, Mayor Bussing - No - MOTION CARRIED)

Chair Bussing recognized Joe Little, Sara Poll and Jeff Lane who spoke to the matter.

NOTE: Commissioner Chestnut moved and Commissioner Hanrahan seconded to move the previous question.

(VOTE: 5-0, MOTION CARRIED)

SECOND MOTION:

Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Hanrahan moved and Commissioner Chestnut seconded to ask that a straw ballot referendum be prepared and brought back to the joint City and County Commissions prior to July 31, 2002; including asking for a

separate ballot for City voters.
(VOTE: 4-1, Mayor Bussing - No - MOTION CARRIED)

Chair Bussing recognized Citizen Sara Poll who spoke to the matter.

THIRD MOTION:

Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Hanrahan moved and Commissioner Chestnut seconded that the City Commission endorse adopting the Critical Events Schedule as a timeline and recommend that the inter-local agreement be amended to reflect the new dates in that schedule.

(VOTE: 4-1, Mayor Bussing - No - MOTION CARRIED)

FOURTH MOTION:

Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Hanrahan moved and Commissioner Chestnut seconded that the Transition Board should provide it's next report to the City and County Commission by December, 2002.

(VOTE: 5-0)

NOTE: Commissioner Chestnut left the meeting room at 3:34 PM.


Mayor-Commissioner Pro Tem Hanrahan moved and Commissioner Barrow seconded to adjourn the meeting.

(VOTE: 4-0 - Commissioner Chestnut - Absent - MOTION CARRIED)

RECOMMENDATION The City and County Commission hear a report from the Combined Emergency Services System Transition Board and take whatever action deemed appropriate.

Approved, as shown above

ADJOURNMENT - 3:37 PM


Kurt M. Lannon, Clerk of the Commission

Alachua County Emergency Services Transition Board ***Proposed Public Education Program Update***

Prepared by Alachua County Communications Coordinator Chris Eversole
June 6, 2002

On May 16, 2002, a proposed public education program on the proposed merger of emergency services was presented to the Transition Board. This update answers questions the Transition Board asked at that time.

Fire Merger Team

A team of City and County staff would work with Transition Board members, emergency services labor organizations and community organizations in the public education program.

Overview

As the May 16 report discussed, the public education program would follow the model of the One Cent, One Year, One Courthouse public education program. The program would be conducted in an open, informative manner and would engage citizens throughout the community in a dialogue on the best means of administering and financing emergency services.

A key to the program would be providing answers to questions that concern citizens and making contact through speaking engagements, a Web site, news stories and other communications tools.

Budget

The costs of the program would include:

Video—A video would be an effective tool in illustrating the impact of merging emergency services. It would display the public education program's message through the eyes of emergency workers. **Cost—\$5,000**

Four-Page Flyer—This publication would simply and effectively present information about the merger proposal. Two options exist for distribution of the flyer—mailing or insertion in newspapers.

	Mailer		Newspaper Insert
Printing	\$6,000	Printing	\$6,000
Mailing Prep	\$3,600	Alligator	\$1,600
Postage	\$13,000	Gainesville Sun	\$3,000
		High Springs	
		Herald	\$300
Total	\$22,600		\$10,900

Educational Materials—Material such as buttons and bumper stickers could be effective. **Cost—\$1,000**

Mailings to Key Communicators—Correspondence with citizens who are especially active would be developed, as it was during the One Cent, One Year, One Courthouse program. Groups covered might include religious and minority leaders and County advisory board members. **Cost—\$500**

Advertising—Advertising could inform citizens about upcoming speaking engagements and the program's Web site and provide other information. **Cost—\$2,500**

Intern and temporary assistance—Assistance in preparing material, scheduling speaking engagements and performing other duties is needed. **Cost—\$5,000**

Total Budget

With mailer—\$37,000

With newspaper insert—\$25,000

Timeline

July 16—Joint meeting of City and County Commissions

August—Begin speaking engagements and other outreach

Oct. 28—Distribution of four-page flyer

Nov. 5—Election Day



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MAY 17 2002

ALACHUA COUNTY
BOARD OF CO. COMMISSIONERS

Commission

Robert Hutchinson
Chair

Rodney J. Long
Vice Chair

Mike Byerly

Dave Newport

Penelope Wheat

Administration

Randall H. Reid
County Manager

May 17, 2002

MEMORANDUM

To: Rodney Long, Chair
Alachua County Emergency Services Transition Board

From: Randall H. Reid, County Manager *RHR*

Subject: Public Education Program Proposal

As requested by the County Commission, Alachua County and the City of Gainesville staff participated in a discussion of how a Public Education Program could be initiated to provide education on the issues related to the Fire Merger straw ballot in November. We believe that the one percent optional sales tax is a good model for any referendum educational campaign and reflects the techniques I have used on numerous successful campaigns.

We have included a summary of critical issues in any referendum, a summary of the actual one cent/one year/one courthouse program, sample questions and budget options for various communication tools that the Transition Board could choose from and fund. The County has been assigned to conduct a major public involvement program during the same period of time on comprehensive transportation plan. I do not believe the City of Gainesville has a full communication staff to dedicate to this issue. Both Fire Rescue Departments have Public Information Officers who could assist in the program and I believe in this case Transition Board members and the members of the IFF will also have to fulfill the role of spokespersons. Interns could assist in the preparation materials and would be less expensive.

If the educational program involves public speaking engagements the Transition Board may anticipate a greater degree of detail and intensity in the questions asked by the public as they will be traditionally oriented to the impact on their pocketbooks. Although this is a "straw ballot" and the merger analysis is not complete the failure to answer questions may be viewed negatively by audiences. Likewise, all speakers will need to speak from a prepared outline or script so that information is correctly presented. The hardest part of a speakers program is generating and scheduling the opportunities to efficiently present your program to audiences.

Should the Transition Board hire a replacement for Mr. Barry Evans, experience in dealing with public education campaigns and public speaking could assist the effort. Mr. Evans would need to judge how much time he could be involved in such a process if he continues.

RHR/smb



Alachua County Emergency Services Transition Board

Public Education Program Proposal

Prepared by Alachua County Communications Coordinator Chris Eversole
May 16, 2002

Lessons from One Cent, One Year, One Courthouse Program

The Message

- An easily understood theme must be used
- A clear message that answers possible questions is essential
- The message must discuss pros and cons
- The message must represent a consensus view of those placing the issue on the ballot (transition board)
- Spokespersons must stay focused on the theme
- The program must evolve in response to citizens' concerns

Leadership and Support

- A champion must put a human face on the issue
- Credible spokespersons to carry the message are needed
- Support of citizens and community groups is vital

Activities

- Broad outreach to community groups is crucial
- Multiple communications tools must be used

Budget Discussion

The Transition Board could choose options from among the items included in the Courthouse program.

Production of a video at a cost of \$2,500 to \$5,000 should be considered.

Budget for One Cent, One Year, One Courthouse	
Postage to all 101,144 households	\$12,036.14
Mail processing	\$3,337.62
Printing (includes 4,000 extra)	\$5,987.00
Photos	\$379.00
Postage for mailings to community leaders	\$335.05
Advertising	\$2,382.91
Buttons	\$513.00
Scheduling and research intern	\$5,646.09
TOTAL	\$30,616.81

Questions that need to be answered

Possible Benefits

- Will the merger provide more effective service countywide?
- Will the merger be cost-effective?
- How will the merger affect planning for future facilities and staffing?

Financial

- How much will the merger cost?
- How will it affect existing employees?
- How can money be saved if no one loses his or her job?
- How will the merged department be funded?
- Will County and City taxes go down?
- Will the County and City get a return on their investment in current facilities?

Accountability

- Will voters have a chance to approve the final merger plan?
- Will the governing board be appointed or elected?
- If the governing board is appointed, who will make the appointments?

Transition

- Would the changes be phased in?
- How would the merger affect small cities?
- How will annexation affect the merger?
- What could be accomplished by cooperation that would not require a merger?

Administrative

- Who will be the champion for the merger?
- When would the departments merge?
- Who would be in charge?
- What will be the management structure?

Benchmarks

- How has merger worked elsewhere?
- What have other communities learned in the process of merging?

Summary of One Cent, One Year, One Courthouse Program

The Board of County Commissioners authorized an awareness program for the March 20, 2001, referendum on a one percent optional infrastructure sales tax for construction of a new criminal courthouse and related parking facilities, as authorized by Florida law.

The awareness program was conducted in an open, informative manner and reflected the vision and value statement of Alachua County by engaging citizens throughout the community in a dialogue on the best means of financing this facility. A broad group of organizations and individuals endorsed the one cent sales tax. The sales tax was approved by a 61 percent margin.

Accomplishments under the program included:

- Completing 99 appearances before organizations and churches, to employee groups and on television and radio programs
- Distributing a publication about the sales tax and the courthouse to all households in the county
- Mailing information to key communicators, including business, religious and minority leaders, advisory board members and beauticians
- Making story suggestions to the media
- Preparing oped pieces for area newspapers
- Conducting tours of the current courthouse
- Creating a courthouse Web site
- Responding to calls from citizens

Team

A staff team made an extraordinary commitment to the program, including working many nights and weekends. The team consisted of County Manager Randall H. Reid, Communications Coordinator Chris Eversole, Sheriff Steve Oelrich, Victim Services Director Loretta Golden, Sentencing Alternatives Director Larry McDaniel, Customer Service Representative Shirley Bryan, Intern Mark Carlton and Video Technician Alan Yeatter.

Cooperation

Many people joined forces to make this program successful, including:

- County and City Commissioners
- Judges from the Eighth Judicial Circuit
- County employees
- Constitutional officers
- Community volunteers
- Endorsing organizations