

MINUTES OF THE VCOG GOVERNING BOARD

REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 25, 2008

MPO/VCOG/WAV CONFERENCE ROOM
2570 W. INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY BLVD., SUITE 120
DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Greg Northrup
Mayor George Coleman
Mayor Robert F. Apgar
Mayor Roland Via
Mayor Joan Duffy
Mayor Harley Strickland
Mayor James Sowell
Mayor Nancy Epps
Mayor Allen Green
Mayor Blaine O'Neal
Councilmember Art Giles
School Board Member Candace Lankford

REPRESENTING

Daytona Beach Shores
DeBary
DeLand
Holly Hill
Lake Helen
Orange City
Pierson
Ponce Inlet
Port Orange
South Daytona
Volusia County
Volusia County School Board

Members Absent: Commissioner Reynolds, Daytona Beach; Mayor Mulder, Deltona; Mayor Thomas, Edgewater; Mayor Mackay, New Smyrna Beach; Mayor Lauer, Oak Hill; Mayor Costello, Ormond Beach; Mayor Sowell, Pierson

NON-VOTING MEMBER ABSENT: Michael Mellon, Emergency Medical Foundation/EVAC

OTHERS PRESENT

Pat Kelly
J. J. Whitson
Ryan Houck
Betty Holness
Michele Moen
Andy Kelly
John Bozzo

REPRESENTING

Volusia County Fire Chiefs Association
Floridians for Smarter Growth
Floridians for Smarter Growth
Volusia County
Volusia Soil & Water Conservation District
Volusia County Council, District 1
DB News-Journal

VCOG STAFF PRESENT

Mary Swiderski, VCOG Executive Director
Herbert M. Seely, Chief Financial Officer
Mary Curran, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

At 5:02 PM, Chairman Apgar called to order the February 25, 2008, regular meeting of the VCOG Governing Board.

The roll was called and a quorum was declared present. Chairman Apgar then led everyone in the Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/PARTICIPATION

None

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/RECOGNITION

Chairman Apgar made comments regarding:

- VCOG Executive Committee's discussion of Mary Swiderski's dual role as executive director of VCOG and WAV; and undertaking tasks of Water Conservation Coordinator.
 - VCOG Executive Committee's request to WAV of compensating Mary Swiderski for her time as the Water Conservation Coordinator – after Deborah Green left – that was not part of the agreement between WAV and VCOG.
 - WAV Board is considering whether any additional compensation will be made.
 - VCOG Executive Committee has requested that Mary Swiderski give them a listing of the hours she has worked as the Executive Director of WAV.
 - VCOG is being paid \$1,000 a month by WAV for Mary Swiderski to provide administrative services since November 2007.
 - A special meeting of the WAV Board is scheduled March 4th to interview two candidates for the position of WAV Executive Director/Water Conservation Coordinator.

VCOG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

Mary Swiderski gave a verbal briefing [there was no written report]:

- Reminder to everyone of the luncheon on Thursday, February 28th, regarding Amendment 1 and the proposed Taxation and Budget Reform Commission Recommendation's effect on Volusia's future. She requested anyone who has not already responded to do so February 26th to assure they are on the list.
- An e-mail was forwarded to all elected officials and managers from Betty Holness of the registration form for Volusia Day which is scheduled April 3rd. Mary Swiderski requested all who plan to attend to read and complete the form.
- She is working diligently to set up a meeting of the VGMC with the VCOG Smart Growth Committee. Also, a meeting of the hospital district with the VCOG Property Tax Reform group.
- Mention that she is looking into software called "Dragon Naturally Speaking" that is designed to turn talk into type at over 180 words per minute. This would help with transcribing and would save hiring temporary services to keep up with summaries of meetings that VCOG does.

Board members' discussions ensued:

- Volusia School Board Member Lankford cautioned on application of the voice recognition software and advised to check with other entities using it because of the importance that it "gets it right."
 - Mary Swiderski reported of having made contacts regarding the system and has done extensive research on it.
 - This system has to learn your speech pattern, and it is becoming 99% accurate; that this is the best voice recognition software; it only works with one individual but if someone leaves, it can be reprogrammed for a new person to use.
- County Council-member Giles commended the two Marys; he expressed astonishment that minutes are provided to members so quickly.
- Mayor Epps inquired if the cost of the software is within budget threshold.
 - Mary Swiderski reported that is not stipulated in the bylaws, however, for any substantial purchase, there is a cap [she thought \$500] whereto staff goes to the Board for approval.

CONSENT AGENDA**APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2008**

Minutes of the January 28, 2008, regular meeting of the VCOG Board were mailed with the Board members' agenda packets.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER REPORTS FOR MONTH ENDED JANUARY 31, 2008

Treasurer Report for the period of January 1, 2008, through January 31, 2008, was mailed with Board members' agenda packets. *Note: Revenues and Expenditures were within the budget for the month.*

MOTION made by Mayor Via and **SECONDED** by County Council-member Giles for approval of all consent agenda items, as presented; the motion **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** on a voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

UPDATE ON THE VCOG PROPERTY TAX REFORM COMMITTEE

The Committee Chair, Mayor Robert Apgar provided a brief update:

- Committee has met on a regular basis. The next meeting is Wednesday, February 27, 2008.
- Dick Pollard, a member of Volusia Tax Reform, went to Tallahassee, February 11th, to speak before a committee of the Taxation & Budget Reform Commission of the VCOG Property Tax Reform [PTR] Committee's work in progress.
- Reference was made to a summary sheet, as distributed, of the proposal.
- Mayor Costello is in Tallahassee [February 25] to speak before a committee of the Taxation & Budget Reform Commission about some of the points that have been raised.
- The Committee realizes it needs to put together some final recommendation
 - The Committee wants to try and get the VCOG Board's acceptance; so the recommendation can be presented to the legislature during legislative session; as well as, to the Taxation & Budget Reform Commission.
 - If the Committee can reach an agreement [February 27] what this recommendation should be, it may be necessary to have a Special VCOG Board meeting before the legislative session opens as it needs to be in the hands of the legislators if it is going to have any meaning.
- Chairman Apgar requested that VCOG Board members review the summary sheet
 - He reminded everyone that it is a work in progress.

Board members' discussions ensued:

- County Council-member Giles reported on giving a brief synopsis to the County Council and that he did not hear any objection to what the VCOG PTR Committee is doing. He also mentioned to County Council that although VCOG PTR Committee members were not all in agreement, they are working towards something.
- School Board Member Lankford mentioned she wanted to bring final recommendations to the Volusia County School Board also.
 - She critiqued the written format of the proposal
 - She remarked that the work the VCOG PTR Committee had done is incredible
 - She had concerns that legislators will pick the proposal apart; she said it works as a whole but taken apart, it does not work
 - She reported that the School Board funding is going to be cut even more this year and next year there will be even further cuts for State education
- Chairman Apgar reported the VCOG PTR Committee has spent a lot of time trying to craft something that was overall constructive and workable, etc.
 - He acknowledged, if the Committee does come to some final recommendation, that it be formatted to be more readable and also made clear that it is a package, not to be picked apart.
- Mayor Northrup expressed concerns of public statements made by some Volusia Tax Reform members; he questioned their intentions. Mayor Via concurred.
- Chairman Apgar pointed out if the Committee is comfortable with its recommendation, ultimately, it becomes the VCOG recommendation; hopefully it will also have the Volusia Tax Reform group's endorsement.
 - He thought Mayor Northrup's concerns might be a good question to bring up at the Luncheon on February 28th
- Mayor Via mentioned having talked to people after some meeting; that they do not understand the affects amendment 1 will have on government entities; that the message is not getting across.

Chairman Apgar again requested Board members' to review the proposed recommendations.

VCOG SMART GROWTH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Committee Chair, Mayor Greg Northrup provided a brief update:

- One of the things the Committee is trying to do is work with the VGMC.

- Currently, the Committee is waiting for the subcommittee of planners [TAC] to bring back some recommendations.

Mary Swiderski recalled the Committee directed the TAC – on its recommendation of changing the map name from Map A to something else – to determine what that name should be and to bring a recommendation back to the Committee with more detail

A general discussion followed regarding Phil Laurien, of East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, attending meetings and providing models, studies, etc. to the Committee and the TAC.

VOLUSIA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT: MEMBERSHIP

Chairman Robert Apgar gave a report regarding:

- At the last VCOG meeting, Board members had discussion and asked questions of the Volusia Soil & Water Conservation members present [Michele Moen and Don Spence]
- At the Board's request, the VCOG Executive Committee discussed membership
 - The Committee recommends that VCOG encourage the Soil & Water Conservation members to attend VCOG Board meetings and become active; and at a future time, VCOG will discuss some form of associate membership for them
 - The Committee would like to see Soil & Water Conservation members working with VCOG and/or other organizations before membership is afforded

Board Members' discussions:

- Mayor Via mentioned they also hoped Soil & Water Conservation members would give input.
 - He recalled from the WAV meeting that Don Spence attended, that on water conservation items, Don brought up ideas and recommendations and he seemed willing to work with WAV
- County Council-member Giles commented on thinking it would be beneficial if Soil & Water Conservation members show interest by sitting in the audience and actively participating under Public Comments; then, next year the VCOG Board will do a review
- Michele Moen thanked the Board members for their time and she said the Volusia Soil & Water Conservation District will try to have someone attending

MOTION By a Mayor Via and **SECONDED** by County Council member Giles to accept the recommendation of VCOG Executive Committee to defer consideration of Volusia Soil & Water Conservation District membership in VCOG at this time; and to encourage their members to attend and participate in VCOG Board meetings; the motion **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY** on a voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

PRESENTATION FROM FLORIDIANS FOR SMARTER GROWTH, INC. – RYAN HOUCK, POLITICAL DIRECTOR

Chairman Apgar welcomed Ryan Houck of Floridians for Smarter Growth.

Mr. Houck expressed appreciation to the Board and to Mary Swiderski for the opportunity to speak before them. Following are highlights of his presentation:

- Floridians for Smarter Growth was founded about nine months ago by a group of business community leaders to oppose hometown democracy.
- He travels throughout the State to alert various communities about how this amendment would affect every facet of how we go about the democratic process.
- Floridians for Smarter Growth have articulated three primary messages why this amendment for hometown democracy can be disastrous.
 - It is the disruption this would cause to our voting process
 - It is the disorder in our communities – that someone living elsewhere from your home town is going to have a say in your democracy
 - It is one of cost -- it is not an inexpensive proposal; state elections can cost anywhere from a few thousand dollars to millions of dollars depending on the jurisdiction.
- Background on hometown democracy amendment – it will require that any time a city or county wants to change its comprehensive land-use plan that those changes be subject to the electorate.

- Local governments could face hundreds of amendments being placed onto the ballots
- Hometown democracy advocates say their amendment will empower voters. The question is how many of you would feel more or less empowered by seeing 200-400 comp plan amendments on a ballot?

Members' discussions ensued:

- Mayor Northrup posed a scenario, if Daytona Beach Shores wanted to change its comp plan to put in a two acre park; under hometown democracy, it would have to go on the ballot but who would be voting on it?
 - If it is a city amendment, it would be voted on by everybody in the city; if it is a county amendment, it would be voted on by everybody in the county. This would mean – because the City comp plan has to be consistent with the County's comp plan – that everybody outside of the City would be able to tell the City whether it could have a park.
- Mr. Houck pointed out that is not the way the comprehensive planning process was envisioned and that is not the way it functions best.
 - The amendment turns a planning process into a political process; where the power is no longer with the elected officials and neighborhood associations and regular voters.
 - If this amendment becomes law, the power will be with people like him, political consultants.
 - One thing hometown democracy requires is having to do a lot of voting; the premise is, the more time citizens spend in the voting booth, the more they are empowered.
- Mayor Via stated, "We have a republican form of government; we [elected officials] are the representatives of the people." He indicated that development will be even more stymied waiting until a [citizens] vote can be taken.
- Mr. Houck pointed out that hometown democracy is not designed only for the large-scale comp plan changes; that reading the particular text of the amendment – which Floridians for Smarter Growth had several attorneys do – that every change considered by local governments, whether it is small, large, or in between would also have to be voted on by the electorate.
 - Also, Florida has a very strict single subject rule – meaning you cannot place multiple amendments on one question in the ballot – they have to be separated by law.
- Mayor Epps learned that Floridians for Smarter Growth has a Speakers Bureau who regularly address various groups and several Executive Committee [chapters] who constantly message news outlets about the issue.
- The Floridians for Smarter Growth is made up of a number of different partners, including:
 - Florida Chamber of Commerce; a lot of local Chambers of Commerce; a variety of business groups; 1,000 Friends of Florida; Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association
- The Floridians for Smarter Growth circulated an alternative petition – to amendment for hometown democracy – as a starting point for discussion on better ideas for growth management
- School Board Member Lankford had inquiry about how long does Florida Hometown Democracy have to get enough signatures to get its amendment on the 2010 ballot and how many more signatures do they need.
 - Mr. Houck revealed that most of the petitions they have are still good for 2010; according to State law, the number of petitions/signatures required for certification depends on the turn out on a presidential election.
- School Board Member Lankford made comment why hometown democracy is resonating with people is because they were feeling disenfranchised
 - There followed discussions re growth; the myregion.org project; "one size does not fit all"; etc.

Chairman Apgar directed Mary Swiderski to send Ryan Houck the VCOG Board members' contact information.

Board members thanked Mr. Houck for his presentation.

COOPERATIVE PURCHASING COUNCIL

Mary Swiderski brought this item to the Board's attention because of a phone call inquiry she had received about what it was.

- This was a concept that had come up many years ago but it never fully materialized.

- She mentioned that the City of Daytona Beach is referencing this in their RFPs.
- She wanted to bring this up to see if the board wanted to proceed with this or to let it go.

Board discussions ensued:

- Mayor Epps remarked that it is worth looking at; it can be a way of consolidating things without consolidating municipalities into one entity; it offers the potential to take advantage of purchasing power by virtue of our numbers.
- Several members expressed that their respective governmental entities already do some type of piggyback purchasing.
- **SUGGESTION** made by Chairman Apgar that Mary Swiderski coordinate with the managers' group and get some recommendations from them regarding this and to determine if there is a role for the VCOG Purchasing Council to fulfill.

BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

MAYOR GREG NORTHRUP

- Daytona Beach Shores prides itself on making sure they have Public Comments at every workshop, every Council meeting, or any type of public meeting.
 - Representative Hukill and Senator Lynn have [filed] bills that are requiring this of local governments; it will not be applicable to the meetings of the legislature or state agencies

MAYOR ROLAND VIA

- Holly Hill allows Public Comments at all their meetings.
- The bill [vox populi-voice of the people] is from Representative Hukill and it would allow people to speak with no time limits and also allows them to speak on any issue at any time.
- Pointed out anticipated school facilities for the eastside that were promised at passage of the initial one-half cent sales tax. In 2015, the revenues from that one-half cent sales tax will sunset

MAYOR MIKE THOMAS

- Thought Mayor Northrup made a good and valid point re the [Citizen Participation at Public Meetings] bill
- Edgewater allows each person three minutes at the first of its meeting and three minutes at the end, and people can talk on any agenda item
- Thought Mayor Via brought up a valid point re amendment 1; that people do not realize its affect
- He remarked that he has learned so much from the VCOG meeting and he makes use of that

MAYOR NANCY EPPS

- Thanked Mary Swiderski for coming to the Ponce Inlet Council meeting to talk about WAV
- The Town Council's representative, Council-member Sturno, had wanted a discussion whether Ponce Inlet were going to stay in WAV and Mary Swiderski brought them facts, on her own time, which convinced the Council to stay in WAV for now

COUNTY COUNCIL-MEMBER ART GILES

- Brought up subject re school concurrency and that Saralee Morrissey, Dan Eckert, and Clay Henderson were working together to get DCA to accept keep schools out of Map A
- Referred to comment by Mayor Via about Volusia Tax Reform members public comments; Council-member Giles remarked that VCOG reps are never going to change the VTR thinking
 - He encouraged Mayor Via to continue attending the meetings for discussions
- The County allows any member of the public to pull items off their Consent Agenda; Council-member Giles was surprised most other government entities do not

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER CANDACE LANKFORD

She made comments in response to Mayor Via and County Council-member Giles

- Re school facilities – it was a 10 year building program that was to be finished by 2010; all of the buildings will actually be done by 2012. Actual revenues as of 2015 will stop coming in.

- Re school concurrency – Saralee Morrissey, Clay Henderson and Dan Eckert met with DCA; through their efforts it looks like DCA is going to accept Volusia’s school concurrency

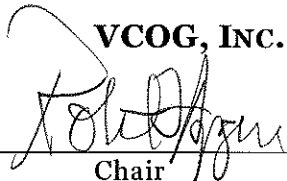
CHAIRMAN ROBERT APGAR

- DeLand Commission meetings, if Mayor Apgar sees that someone wants to speak about a Consent Agenda item, he will pull it
- DeLand allows a lot of Public Comment at their meetings
- He also pointed out that virtually no one is allowed to speak on the floor of the legislature.

ADJOURNMENT

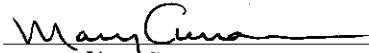
There being no further business to come before the VCOG Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 P.M.

AS SUBMITTED, THE FOREGOING MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE VCOG GOVERNING BOARD WERE APPROVED IN AN OPEN MEETING HELD ON MARCH 24, 2008, IN THE MPO/VCOG/WAV CONFERENCE ROOM AT 2570 W. INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY BOULEVARD, SUITE 120, DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA.

VCOG, INC.


Chair

ATTEST:



Recording Secretary